

ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION TOWARD LEARNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN MODERN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT OF GEORGIA

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Abstract

The aim of the research is to identify an achievement goal as a motivational factor of learning the English language among Georgian students. In the current research, a four-factor structure of achievement goal orientation (master-approach, master-avoidance, performance-approach, performance-avoidance) and attitude toward the language acquisition were researched. The data obtained were evaluated using the Achievement Goal Questionnaire (AGQ) (2008) and Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The main finding of this research is that in different forms of language learning are different leading achievement goals. The results showed that different speciality learners were determined to achieve different motivational goals. Different forms of language learning cause differences between strong and weak learners and raise different goal orientations. Students, who have high scores and are successful, have strong ability of the Master Goals. Language learners, who do not have high grades and are not successful, have a high level of Performance goals. The 2x2 achievement goal framework (master-approach, master-avoidance, performance-approach, performance-avoidance) were closely connected with a positive attitude. Positive attitude defines language learning effectively and stimulates students to perform their goal perfectly.

Key words: achievement motivation, achievement goal orientation, master approach, master avoidance, performance approach, performance avoidance.

Introduction

Motivation is one of the main determinants of successful foreign language learning. It plays the fundamental role in learning. Motivation has a long history in educational research. The results of such finding led to the development of a battery of testing instrument, the Attitude. Motivation Test Battery AMTB, which has stimulated many other empirical studies and helped Gardner to synthesize a model called 'the socio-educational model' (Gardner, 1972). Gardner's motivation theory (Lambert & Gardner, 1972) includes an educational dimension, which contains several items focusing on the learner's evaluation of the classroom learning situation. However, the main emphasis in Gardner's model is on general motivational components grounded in the social milieu rather than in the foreign language classroom. Gardner's motivational construct has often been understood as the interplay of two components, *integrative* and *instrumental* motivation. According to Gardner integrative motivation is defined as a positive attitude toward the target language group and the potential for integrative into the group, while instrumental motivation refers to more functional reasons for learning a language, to get a better job or a promotion, or to pass the examination and have a better salary. Therefore, one of the motivational variables was the attitude toward learning a foreign language which was connected to learning a foreign language successfully. How

the attitudes and social motivation of the student of a second or foreign language can affect his rate and efficiency of learning. Canadian researchers Clement and Kruidenier (Dornyei, 1994) found in addition to an instrumental orientation three other distinct general orientations to learning L2, such as knowledge, friendship, and travel orientations, which had traditionally been lumped together in integrativeness. Dornyei discussed Gardner's social psychological approach. He extends the Gardnerian construct by adding new components, such as intrinsic/extrinsic motivation, intellectual curiosity, attribution about past successes/failures, needs for achievement, self-confidence, and classroom goal structures. Foreign language motivation is multifaceted by nature and it involves social and individual components, like communicative coding system, integrative part of the individual's identity, the channel of social organization (Dornyei, 1994). In the educational system, learning involves personal and social components and for this reason, an adequate foreign language motivation construct is bound to be eclectic, bringing together factors from different psychological fields. Motivational psychologists, on the other hand, have been looking for the motors of human behaviour in the individual being rather than social, focusing traditionally on concepts such as instinct, drive, arousal, and on personality traits like anxiety and need for achievement (Dornyei, 1994).

A central element of classical achievement motivation theory (McClelland, 1953), need for achievement is a relatively stable personality trait, that is considered to affect a person's behaviour in every facet of life, including language learning. Individuals with a high need for achievement are interested in excellence for its own sake, tend to initiate achievement activities, work with heightened intensity at these tasks and persist in the face of failure. Later in the 90s and early in 21st century Andrew Elliot explored achievement motivation and achievement goals. The achievement goals construct from decades of research into the different motives people have in achievement settings (Elliot, 2005). Initially, the primary emphasis of achievement goal was on two types of achievement goals: mastery and performance goals (Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1984). Master goals are focused on the development of competence through task mastery, whereas performance goals are focused on the demonstration of competence relative to others. The main difference in these goals is how individuals define their competence in an achievement situation. Competence and, therefore, achievement goals, may be differential on two fundamental dimensions- according to how it is defined and how it is valenced. The two definitions of competence and two types of valence converged in the current theoretical approach known as the 2x2 achievement goal framework (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). There are four types of goals: *master-approach*, *master-avoidance*, *performance-approach*, and *performance-avoidance*. The four types of achievement goals have distinct patterns of antecedents and consequences (Baranik, Stanley, Bynum, & Lance, 2010; Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Van Yperen, 2006).

Master-approach orientation focuses on attending positive possibilities such as acquiring new skills and improving one's competence, whereas a *Mastery-Avoidance* orientation focuses on avoiding negative possibilities such as losing skills or becoming incompetence (Sara J. Finnelly, 2004). *Performance-Approach* goals emphasize doing well compared to others, and they are related to both positive and negative effect. In the opposite extreme; *Performance-Avoidance* goals emphasize avoiding incompetence relative to others and they are related to negative constructs, including anxiety, negative affectivity, motivation, and lower performance attainment (Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Van Yperen, 2006; Kira O. McCabe, 2013). Over the past decade, the relationship between the big five personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience) and achievement motivation was investigated. Motivation is a phenomenon with a lot of factorial structure. Each factor has its place in the learning process. Although achievement motivational factors are considered one of the most important factors toward learning the language, nevertheless, there was not done any research about achievement motivation toward learning a foreign language in Georgia. The aim of my research is to identify an achievement goal as a motivational factor of learning the English language among Georgian students.

Problem of Research

Researchers have shown that many different and usually very complex causes for the difference in the achievement level. A rich history of motivation research in education has consistently linked achievement motivation. However, recent research has been driven by a predominant focus of personal and contextual factors in the relationship between motivation and academic achievement in the English language.

It is expected to identify dependence between learning an English language and achievement goals. Especially on a four-factor structure (master-approach, master-avoidance, performance-approach, and performance-avoidance) of achievement goal orientation in the modern educational context of Georgia.

The main research questions were:

1. What is the predictive utility of the four goal orientations (*master-approach*, *master-avoidance*, *performance-approach*, and *performance-avoidance*) for different forms (school, university) of language learning?
2. What connection exists between attitude (positive/ negative) toward English learning and achievement motivation?
3. What correlation exists between successful language learning and achievement motivation?

Methodology of Research

General Background

The research was done in different learning forms in Georgia. It was built on quantitative data collected through the analysis of evaluation questionnaires. Participants of the research studied English as a foreign language. All learners were given time to complete scales individually. The research was administrated near the end of the semester, approximately two weeks before their final term exams. For the purposes of analysis, participants' scores of English language (previous semester) were obtained from the university/school register.

Sample

A total of 399 participants (233 female, 131 male) in this research were second-year students at Ilia State University - all faculties (School of Arts and Sciences; School of Natural Sciences and Engineering; Business School; School of Law). 308 participants were interviewed at Ilia State University. Moreover, participants were tenth and eleventh grade learners from primary and private schools. 46 learners (28 female, 18 male) were interviewed at Newton Free School, where students have an intensive English language learning course. It is one of the most popular private schools in Tbilisi. 40 participants (24 female, 16 male) were interviewed in public school N82 in Tbilisi.

Instrument and Procedures

The survey used a close-ended questionnaire (semantic differential). The assessment battery included two inventories: the Attitude /Motivation Test Battery - (AMTB) and the Achievement Goal Questionnaire (AGQ).

The Attitude /Motivation Test Battery- (AMTB) was developed by Gardner. AMTB is a research instrument, which has been developed to assess the major affective components shown to be involved in second language learning. The questionnaire was assessed: Attitude

toward learning English (sample item: 'Learning English is really great'), diagnosed of interest in foreign languages (e.g. 'I would really like to learn a lot of foreign languages. '), Integrative orientation (e.g. 'Studying English can be important for me because I will be able to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups. '), and Instrumental orientation (e.g. 'Studying English can be important for me only because I will need it for my future career. '). This measure consisted of 32 items. Participants responded to each items using a scale of 1 (not true) to 7 (very true).

The second section was a modified version of the Achievement Goal Questionnaire (AGQ) by Elliot, A.J., & Murayama, K. 2008. AGQ consisted of four items representing each achievement goal orientation: master-approach, master-avoidance, performance-approach, and performance-avoidance. This measure consisted of 12 items and the items were averaged to form the mastery-approach, performance-approach, master-avoidance, and performance-avoidance indexes. Participants responded on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). AGQ was used first in Georgia and the questionnaire was piloted with a sample size of 80 persons.

Data Analysis

The research is built on quantitative data collected through the analysis of evaluation questionnaires and participants' scores on English course from the previous semester. Data were collected in December, 2016. The test data were processed under the SPSS program and the following results were obtained: A net statistically significant difference in the average of different achievement motivation between more and less successful students. In order to analyse the students' attitudes towards achievement motivation, the mean, standard deviation was computed. To evaluate the relationship between learners' attitudes and achievement motivation according to grades and faculties, Pearson correlation was computed. Standardized coefficient of regression shows how strong is the influence of the factor-the higher the coefficient the stronger the influence. If the regression coefficient is negative then the influence is opposite.

Results of Research

The research showed that there is correlation between the four-goal orientations. Specifically, the highest correlation .71 was between performance-approach and performance-avoidance, similar to Elliot and McGregor's (2001) CFA results, we found master-avoidance had a positive relationship with mastery-approach, the correlation between them was .59. Correlation between master-approach and performance-approach was .40 and correlation between master-approach and performance- avoidance was.36. (see Table 1)

Also, it was found that the mean score for mastery-approach in Georgia was higher than the other achievement goals were (see Table 1), and they are similar to the patterns found in past research by Eliot and McGregor in 2008.

Table 1. The four-goal orientations for language learning effectivity / Descriptive Statistics

Variable	M	SD	Variable			
			1	2	3	4
1. Master Approach	6.05	1.18	-	.59**	.40**	.36**
2. Master Avoidance	5.67	1.36	.59**	-	.27**	.44**
3. Performance Approach	4.93	1.75	.40**	.27**	-	.71**
4. Performance Avoidance	5.04	1.58	.36**	.44**	.71**	-

***p* < .01. *M*=mean; *SD*= Std. Deviation. All regression coefficients are statistically significant when $\alpha = .05$

The research showed that there were differences according to the forms of learning. In public school and university students had the highest correlation between performance-approach and performance-avoidance. Although, learners in Newton Free School showed the highest correlation between master-approach and master-avoidance .79. (see Table 2)

Table 2. The four-goal orientations for language learning effectivity (Newton Free school)

Variable (Newton Free School)	Variable			
	1	2	3	4
1. Master Approach	-	.79**	.50**	.44**
2. Master Avoidance	.79**	-	.40*	.59**
3. Performance Approach	.50**	.40*	-	.63**
4. Performance Avoidance	.44**	.59**	.63**	-

** . $p < .01$; * . $p < .05$

Table 3 presents correlation between positive attitude during language learning and achievement motivation. The highest correlation exists between a positive attitude and master-approach .45. Correlation between a positive attitude and performance-approach was less than .30. There is no big difference according to the gender (see Table 4) Females like males have the highest correlation between master-approach and positive attitude (male- .56, female .24). In contrast with the lowest correlation for females exists between a positive attitude and performance-approach .17. Meanwhile males - exists between a positive attitude and performance-approach -.04. According to the faculties have different correlations (see Table 4). Psychology department's students (School of Arts and Sciences) have the highest correlation between performance-avoidance and positive attitude .36, like learners in public school .60. Meanwhile, students from Business School have the highest correlation between master-approach and positive attitude .48. Learners in Newton Free School also have a high correlation between positive attitude and master-approach .65. Moreover, students from Psychology department and public school have a general high index in each goal.

Table 3. Correlation between Attitude (positive/negative) and Achievement motivation (four-goal orientation).

	Master Approach	Master Avoidance	Performance Approach	Performance Avoidance
Positive Attitude	.45**	.35**	.25**	.30**
Negative Attitude	-.29**	-.20**	-.06	-.07

** . $p < .01$; * . $p < .05$

Table 3 presents correlation between negative attitude during language learning and achievement motivation. The highest correlation exists between a negative attitude and Master-approach -.29. According to the gender, for males like females, the highest correlation exists between negative attitude and master-approach.

Table 4. Correlation between Positive Attitude and Achievement motivation according to gender and faculties.

Positive Attitude	Master Approach	Master Avoidance	Performance Approach	Performance Avoidance
Female	.24**	.20**	.17**	.23**
Male	-.28**	-.15**	-.04	-.03**
Psychology department (School of Arts and Sciences)	.31**	.32**	.29**	.36**
Public school	.57**	.57**	.43**	.60**
Business School	.48**	.33**	.14	.20*
Newton Free School	.65**	.58**	.22	.22

***p* < .01 ; **p* < .05

Table 5 presents the correlation between successful and weak language learners and four achievement goal orientation according to the faculties. Successful language learners have a high index of Master goals. (Students from Psychology department (School of Arts and Sciences) mean of master- approach is 6.49; learners from Business- 5.98; Public School- 6.28; Newton Free school- 5.93). Weak language learners have a high index of Performance goals. Students from Psychology department (School of Arts and Sciences) mean of performance-approach is 5.50; learners from Business- 4.87; public school- 5.09; Newton Free School- 2.85).

Table 5. Means of Achievement motivation (four-goal orientation) according to Grades and Faculties.

	Master Approach			Master Avoidance			Performance Approach			Performance Avoidance		
	α	M	SD	α	M	SD	α	M	SD	α	M	SD
Grade 100-71 (Psychology department)	.67	6.49	.72	.83	6.25	.78	.70	5.50	1.89	.54	5.47	1.28
Grade 70-40 (Psychology department)	.63	5.69	1.17	.67	5.38	1.30	.78	3.55	1.85	.60	4.43	1.55
Grade 100-71 Business School	.66	5.98	1.29	.74	6.03	1.11	.41	5.05	1.74	.42	5.16	1.94
Grade 70-40 Business School	.68	5.17	1.32	.68	5.43	1.29	.66	4.87	1.42	.71	4.32	1.53
Grade 100-71 Public school	.70	6.28	.64	.68	6.00	1.03	.52	4.93	2.37	.52	5.42	1.5
Grade 70-40 Public school	.67	5.75	1.31	.53	6.03	.87	.73	5.09	1.52	.74	5.72	1.10
Grade 100-71 Newton Free School	.55	5.93	1.32	.51	5.95	1.17	.67	5.31	1.63	.64	5.72	1.07
Grade 70-40 Newton Free School	.70	4.00	.80	.67	3.50	.70	.72	2.85	1.62	.68	3.50	.82

M=mean; *SD*= Std. Deviation. All regression coefficients are statistically significant when $\alpha=.05$

Discussion

The aim of the research was to identify an achievement goal as a motivational factor of learning the English language among Georgian students. The major findings of the research were to confirm predictive utility of the four goal orientations (*master-approach*, *master-avoidance*, *performance-approach*, and *performance-avoidance*) for different forms (school, university) of language learning; find connection between attitude (positive/ negative) toward English learning and achievement motivation; correlation between successful language learning and achievement motivation. The results of the research show that the highest correlation was found between performance-approach and performance-avoidance. Similar to Elliot and McGregor's (2001) was found master-avoidance has a moderate positive relationship with both mastery-approach and performance-avoidance while having a weaker relationship with performance-approach orientation. It is interesting that we also found the mean score for mastery-approach was higher than were the other achievement goals, as was found by Elliot and McGregor (2001) and Finney and Pieper (2004). After the results, we can confirm the predictive utility of the four goal orientations.

The second specific finding of this research was to find a correlation between attitude toward language learning and achievement motivation. Learners with low interest in an English language area, they often have poor achievement; conversely, when they have high interest, they often achieve well. Positive attitude stimulates students to perform their goal perfectly. It is an interesting fact that age did not define positive or negative attitude toward language learning. Students of Business School and learners in Newton Free School have a high correlation between a positive attitude and master-approach. In such environment, where learners have their own created high standards their positive attitude has a strong correlation to master-approach. Learners are focused on the development of competence through task mastery. Whereas, they have a very weak correlation between positive attitude and performance-approach. According to this result, we can discuss that language learners from Business School and Newton Free School have realized the need for a foreign language. The English language is one of the most important factors of future professional success. They develop competence through the language learning and experience less influence on the competitive environment. Students of the Psychology department and learners in public school have a high correlation between a positive attitude and performance-avoidance. In such environment, where learners have a competitive environment, positive attitude had a strong connection to performance-avoidance. Learner goals are focused on the demonstration of competence relative to others.

The results of the research show that exists a statistically significant distinction between different forms of achievement goals and academic achievement. The third specific finding of the research was to find a connection between successful language learning and achievement motivation. Data gave different results after divided samples into weak and strong learners. Successful language learners are oriented to master goals; learners with less success are oriented to Performance goals. Nevertheless, the differences between weak and strong learners are noticeable. The weak students of Psychology department realize their weakness in language learning, consequently, they are not oriented to competitiveness, which is rather different for strong students. The master goal for Business students is statistically different, although weak students, like strong students, are focused on the development of competence. The noticeable difference exists between weak and strong learners at school. In public school have little differences in Master goals between weak and strong learners, although weak students have higher scores in performance goals than strong learners. However, In Newton Free School, where students have an intensive English language learning course, exist considerable differences in Master goals between weak and strong learners. Although, exist important differences in Performance goal. Weak students realize their knowledge and are not oriented to competitiveness. Important determinants for learners from Business School and Newton Free School, who has an intensive English language learning course, exist Master goals, while the most important determinant

of the Psychology department's students exists Performance goal. The main innovation of my research is that in different forms of language learning are different leading achievement goals. The reason for these results should be several factors: some learners realize that the English language is an important factor for their future successful careers, they are oriented to master goals and are successful language learners. The different learning environment should be the reason of distinct achievement goals. The high-tech learning environment should be unfair to limit students to traditional methods. Furthermore, different teaching methods indicate distinct motivational goals. Motivational teaching strategies can easily increase positive attitude and language learners' motivation levels. Teachers should use strategies that they believe will motivate learners, improve skill development and promote achievement goals. Furthermore, a teacher should be one of the most important factors to determine the motivational factor of the learning language. However, it is difficult to verify it without a statement, so my future research should be to explore the teacher's role in achievement goal as a motivational factor of learning the English language among Georgian students.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the key finding of this research is that in different forms of language learning are different leading achievement goals.

2x2 achievement goal framework (*Master-Approach, Master-Avoidance, Performance-Approach, Performance-Avoidance*) were closely connected with each other to different forms of language learning in Georgia.

Achievement goal framework was closely connected with other motivational factors (attitude). Positive attitude defines language learning effectively and stimulates students to perform their goal perfectly. There was no difference either in females or males. It is interesting that age did not define positive or negative attitude toward language learning. Students of Business School and learners in Newton Free School have a high correlation between a positive attitude and master -approach. However, Students of the Psychology department and learners in public school have a high correlation between a positive attitude and performance-avoidance.

Interestingly, different forms of language learning cause differences between strong and weak learners and raise different goal orientations. Which goal orientation would be chosen, it depends on learning forms. Focused on the development of competence through task mastery or have own created high standards. In the school, which has intensive English course, exists a noticeable difference between weak and strong learners. Successful learners are more motivated on Master goals than Performance goals. Whereas, learners in public school are less oriented to performance goals and the difference between successful and unsuccessful learners is weak.

The results showed that different speciality learners were determined to achieve different motivational goals. Language learners, who have high grades and are successful, are oriented to perform their aim perfectly and have high scores of Master goals. They have fear of making a mistake, consequently, they do not want to destroy the positions they have in the society. Language learners, who do not have high grades and are not successful, have a high level of Performance goals. They have fear of failure.

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