

ADULTS' MOTIVATING FACTORS TO STUDY A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

FACTORES MOTIVACIONALES DE LOS ADULTOS PARA EL ESTUDIO DE UNA LENGUA EXTRANJERA

FATORES MOTIVACIONAIS DE ADULTOS PARA O ESTUDO DE UMA LÍNGUA ESTRANGEIRA

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ABSTRACT: This study arises from questioning the reasons why students study foreign languages and the variables that may influence their choice. The sample consists of 90 individuals enrolled in foreign language courses through the UNED Associated Center in Pontevedra. They are mostly women (70%), with an average age of 42.23. An adaptation of the Educational Motivation Scale (EME-E; Nunez, Martin-Albo and Navarro, 2005) was used as a research tool for this study. This new scale includes 28 items which assess three types of learning motivation (extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation and lack of motivation) and seven subtypes. Regarding the motivation dimension ($\alpha = .87$), the factor analysis determined that the seven subscales corresponding to knowledge-oriented intrinsic motivation, achievement-oriented intrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation oriented towards stimulating experiences, external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation and lack of motivation are consistent for its construct. A demographic questionnaire was also used to collect information on gender, age and education level. Descriptive and inferential analyses of the data were performed. The results show significant differences between the variables under study. They pointed out the importance of encouraging intrinsic motivation and professors' role in motivating students' learning process. This clearly shows the need for faculty training programs. The discussion revolves around potential implications of motivational nature, based on students' job, age, and gender, to learn foreign languages.

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<p>PALABRAS CLAVE: motivación intrínseca motivación extrínseca desmotivación aprendizaje lenguas extranjeras</p>	<p>RESUMEN: El presente estudio nace del cuestionamiento acerca de cuáles son los motivos que impulsan al alumnado a estudiar idiomas y cuáles son las variables que pueden incidir en su elección. La muestra está integrada por 90 individuos matriculados en cursos de formación en lenguas extranjeras desarrollados en el Centro Asociado de la UNED en Pontevedra. La mayoría del sexo femenino (70%) y con una edad promedio de 42.23 años. Como instrumento de investigación se ha utilizado una adaptación de la Escala de Motivación Educativa (EME-E; Núñez, Martín-Albo y Navarro, 2005) que incluye 28 ítems que evalúan tres tipos de motivación para el aprendizaje (motivación extrínseca, motivación intrínseca y desmotivación) y siete subtipos. Para la dimensión motivación ($\alpha = .87$) el análisis factorial determina que las siete subescalas que se corresponden con motivación intrínseca orientada al conocimiento, motivación intrínseca orientada al logro, motivación intrínseca orientada a las experiencias estimulantes, regulación externa, regulación introyectada, regulación identificada y desmotivación son consistentes para su constructo. Además, se incluyó un cuestionario demográfico para recabar información acerca del sexo, la edad y la titulación. Los datos obtenidos se sometieron a análisis descriptivos e inferenciales. Los resultados muestran diferencias significativas entre las variables objeto de estudio. Así mismo, se pone de manifiesto la importancia de fomentar la motivación intrínseca y la relevancia del papel del profesor como motivador para el aprendizaje, evidenciando la necesidad de programas de formación al respecto dirigidos al profesorado. La discusión gira en torno a potenciales implicaciones del perfil motivacional en función de la actividad laboral, edad, titulación académica y sexo de los estudiantes para el aprendizaje de los idiomas.</p>
<p>PALAVRAS-CHAVE: a motivação intrínseca a motivação extrínseca desmotivação aprendizagem línguas estrangeiras</p>	<p>RESUMO: Este estudo surge de questionamento sobre quais são os motivos que levam os alunos a estudar línguas e quais são as variáveis que podem influenciar sua escolha. A amostra é constituída por 90 indivíduos matriculados em cursos de formação em línguas estrangeiras desenvolvidas no Centro Associado da UNED em Pontevedra. A maioria das mulheres (70%) com idade média de 42.23 anos. Como uma ferramenta de pesquisa foi utilizada uma adaptação da Motivação Educacional escala (EME-E; Nunez, Martin-Albo e Navarro, 2005), que inclui 28 itens que avaliam três tipos de aprendizagem motivação (motivação extrínseca, motivação intrínseca e desmotivação) e sete subtipos. Para a dimensão motivação ($\alpha = 0,87$), o factor de análise determina os sete domínios correspondentes a intrínseca conhecimento orientada motivação, intrínseca motivação para a realização orientada, de motivação estimular experiências intrínsecas orientadas, regulação externa, regulação introjetada, regulação identificada e motivação são consistentes para construo. Também incluiu um questionário demográfico para reunir informações sobre sexo, idade e qualificação. Os dados obtidos foram submetidos à análise descritiva e inferencial. Os resultados mostram diferenças significativas entre as variáveis estudadas. Da mesma forma, ele destaca a importância de promover a motivação intrínseca e a importância do papel do professor como um motivador para a aprendizagem, destacando a necessidade de programas de formação para professores. A discussão gira em torno de potenciais implicações de perfil motivacional com base na atividade de trabalho, idade, habilitações académicas e sexo dos alunos para aprender línguas.</p>

1. Introduction

The present society is diverse and complex, as a result of the historical evolution, the dynamics of political decisions, and the socio-economic context. All of this is particularly important when analyzing the real motivations that drive adults to expand their knowledge. In other words, socio-cultural transformations arise from the needs of the individuals that compose the social structure. Therefore, when thinking about addressing which type of motivation characterizes students attending Foreign Languages courses, we refer to a space in which each student should build processes of analysis and reflection on oneself, the socio-economic context, their training, expectations and professional development. Given these circumstances, a concept of educational process is raised, in which the educator's role is reconsidered, and the importance of lifelong learning

is emphasized. Teachers should analyze in depth all the implications of the process in order to be able to make innovation proposals that provide students with the competence to deal with learning challenges (González-Peiteado & Pino-Juste, 2014; Pino & Rodríguez, 2010). One should also note the importance of promoting the use of learning strategies as important factors for the success of a good command of a foreign language (Blanco, Pino & Rodríguez, 2010). Although it may seem logical to think that motivation in language learning can be explained according to general theories, the truth is that its study has been an independent field of research. From the start, it attempted to cover the social, psychological and cultural complexity implied by the acquisition of a new communicative code (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Guillén, Pérez-Luzardo & Arnaiz, 2013).

Thus, the study of a foreign language is conceived as a training and communication activity

with others, in a context that favors the acquisition of knowledge and the possibility of transforming achievements into significant experience. Consequently, the learning sequence is synthesized in three dimensions: outer activity + inner activity + outer activity. This situation leads us to recognize the importance of generating motivating communication spaces within the Foreign Language courses. Errors should be seen as a useful source to correct and adjust the teaching-learning process, in a context that prioritizes verbal interactions and makes us intensify our efforts, in spite of being more likely to make mistakes. Teachers cannot effectively address the task of optimizing their performance in the classroom if they do not pay attention to their students' characteristics. Analyzing how our students approach knowledge is fundamental to activate the educational gears: making decisions, planning activities and resources, and making assessments, among other things (González-Peiteado, 2013).

Obviously, it is not enough for the teachers to acquire academic competences. They should also acquire a high level of commitment with pedagogical methods that encourage students' motivation, participation, cooperation and autonomy. One should also not forget about the challenges of a society that demands teachers enthusiastic about achieving excellence and questioning their professional work. All this results in acquiring and providing new strategies, values and behaviors consistent with a notion of the educator as a motivating agent and promoter of innovative situations. Some studies have pointed out that the classroom climate and the teaching style affect the levels of intrinsic motivation (Wijnia, Loynes & Derous, 2011). Other authors have attached greater importance to the context in which learning occurs when assessing motivation (Wong, 2014).

Professional development cannot be the result of improvised decisions, it must be the consequence of a critical reflection process, group work, classroom research, the integration of a body of scientific, pedagogical and technical knowledge, contextualized and updated. This leads to new and personal ideological-educational conceptions, which will break all the molds, causing a change in the way of perceiving the educational action and the task that is carried out.

2. Influence of motivation on the study of a foreign language

The teaching of a foreign language has been mediated by several teaching and learning theories and by active linguistic conceptions that have led to substantial methodological changes over the past

decades. However, the debate is continuing about the most effective way to achieve this.

Learning a language means learning how to interact with it, it is therefore necessary to prioritize communicative approaches in motivating contexts (González-Peiteado & Rodríguez-López, 2014). That is why, it is necessary to employ a functional perspective that leads to the knowledge of grammar and to the acquisition of vocabulary, favoring the communication process. Therefore, in addition to contents, students should also work on their skills and abilities that help them interact in different situations. Consequently, the traditional structuralist and decontextualized paradigm, which prevailed in previous decades and advocated for the study of language elements in isolated sentences, was replaced. Instead, an active paradigm was developed, based on expression, which studies language through communicative situations, connection between vocabulary, their contexts and the communicative circumstances in which they occur (González-Peiteado & Rodríguez López, 2015).

Within the context of a set of affective factors whose influence is traditionally linked to successful language learning, motivation is one of the most determinant elements (Barrios Espinosa, 2015; Ramos Nieto, 2011) of success or failure in language performance. It is the responsibility of the teacher to influence the degree of motivation according to the nature of communicative circumstances, and students' skills, interests and needs. Generating and maintaining motivation among students is a challenge for the educator, but all this will not be achieved if the teachers are not sufficiently involved and motivated in carrying out their work. Learning a second language requires assimilation, persistence, sustained intellectual effort and dedication, behaviors which do not occur if one is unmotivated. The individual, contextual, and pedagogical variables are constructs that may enrich or hinder the interaction between motivation and learning.

Knowing how motivated a person may be is important, but equally important is knowing why they are motivated (Schwinger, Steinmayr, & Spinath, 2012). Obviously, the reasons that shape academic behavior are diverse. However, most students are usually involved in the educational process for two different reasons: the desire to learn, develop and improve their abilities (learning-oriented) or to demonstrate their ability or protect their personal image by seeking positive assessment of self by others (performance-oriented) (Valle *et al.*).

The performed studies have argued that individuals with a high degree of motivation make

adequate progress toward meeting their academic goals, have high beliefs about their abilities to achieve a good task performance, and develop positive expectations about academic life, based on the existence of social support for their educational goals (Medrano and Pérez, 2010). Students who are satisfied with the training received identify and confirm its quality, which results in greater motivation and involvement, but also in the development of a feeling of belonging and desire to intervene in the different channels of participation, favoring a positive dissemination of the academic activity and longer time spent in the classrooms (Sánchez-López, 2012). This leads us to assess the affective dimension as a factor that significantly affects the acquisition of content, and allows us to predict the interindividual differences when approaching the process (Bernaus & Gardner, 2008; Rodríguez-Pérez, 2014; Khodadady & Hassan Khajavy, 2014). Motivations, understood as impulses that lead us to action, stimulate us to reach a goal, even if the learning process is complicated (Baker and McIntyre, 2000). Consequently, if students are not sufficiently motivated, their learning will be impaired, possibly resulting in failure (Pintrich & Schunk, 2006). Therefore, teachers should know the type of motivation that students adopt, in order to provide them with individualized and quality teaching, and contribute to the achievement of positive and lasting outcomes.

In view of the above, it is vital to generate a climate of positive feeling and thinking towards one another, increasing the satisfaction in a job well done, their involvement and efforts.

It is well known that a motivated individual will achieve a satisfactory academic performance, which will require professional and quality performance, resulting in the construction of knowledge

of excellence (Liu & Huang, 2011; Bernaus & Gardner, 2009). Consequently, motivation leads to learning and increases the ability to acquire quality education, establishing a directly proportional relationship between both constructs. Likewise, Liulienė and Metiūnienė (2006) have argued the importance of motivation in second language learning, given that the more motivation, the more autonomous learning.

The present study considers three general types of motivation, differentiating between intrinsic motivation, which refers to the particular interest in learning a foreign language, extrinsic motivation, and lack of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). As described in Table 1, each type presents a different structure (Brière, Vallerand, Blais & Pelletier, 1995; Vallerand, 1997).

Intrinsic motivation is oriented towards knowledge, it leads to satisfaction due to the achievement of goals and promotion of the professional competence. It focuses on the process rather than the product. It leads to the acquisition of a high level of linguistic proficiency (Gardner & Lambert, 1972) and seems to benefit the long-term retention of information (Brown, 1990).

Extrinsic motivation corresponds to behaviors that are performed to obtain a reward or to avoid punishment. Students with this kind of motivation have low autonomy, low self-esteem and insecurity. They seek social recognition and exhibit excessive dependence on teachers to solve problems and make decisions.

The lack of motivation characterized by the perceived lack of control of the situation, makes them feel that success or failure does not depend on them, thus there is a strong possibility of quitting the activity. Such lack of interest, and consequently low linguistic performance, seriously hamper the development of skills and competences.

Table 1: Types of motivation according to Vallerand

Motivational dimensions	Motivational subdimensions	Characteristics
Intrinsic Motivation	Motivation oriented towards knowledge	Participates in an activity for pleasure (personal satisfaction).
	Motivation oriented towards achievement	Participates in an activity to overcome him/herself. Enjoys personal challenges and has a competitive attitude.
	Motivation oriented towards stimulating experiences	Experiences positive feelings with the accomplishment of the activities (Vallerand y Bissomette, 1992).
Extrinsic Motivation	External regulation	The goal is to satisfy an outside demand to obtain a prize or avoid punishment.
	Introjected regulation	The purpose is to obtain approval so he/she behaves according to the rules set by society.
	Identified regulation	The person, prior analysis, identifies him/herself with the behavior even if it is not pleasant to him/her due to the benefit it means for his/her personal fulfillment.
Amotivation	Amotivation	He/She leaves an activity soon due to lack of motivation (Noels, 2001)

There is scientific consensus that intrinsic motivation leads to positive outcomes, whereas extrinsic motivation may have a negative impact (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Richer, Blanchard & Vallerand, 2002), since the external incentive provided can completely govern the language learning process. This approach prompts us to consider the existence of a close relationship between motivation, academic performance, and persistence in achieving the goal. In short, motivation encourages people to start learning a foreign language, influences the maintenance of such behavior, and plays an important role when learning proves difficult.

Basically, this study emanates from the restlessness to discover the ties that link motivation and learning. This is done in such a way that it reveals how the adult approaches learning within the global age of knowledge in which we live. In this context, there is a need to think about an adult education that takes into account its learning processes, characteristics and motivations, which differ significantly from those of the individual of school age.

This work is a new contribution to this field of research, given that the motivation construct, despite having been studied by numerous authors, has not been analyzed in the context of foreign language courses at university level.

The aim is to know, analyze and reflect on the different motivation factors that language learning students show, and what variables influence the type of motivation that they display while taking

second-language training. To this end, socio-demographic factors, including academic training, occupation, age and gender are taken into account.

3. Method

This study is part of an interpretive approach with the purpose of knowing, analyzing and interpreting what type of motivation students display while taking language training. A quantitative methodology was selected when considering that the analysis and detailed interpretation of the participants' contributions are unavoidable for the achievement of the objectives set in this study. Consequently, the research procedure corresponds to the evaluative method, since it is a social study which focuses on the assessment of motivation among students attending Foreign Languages courses. In fact, the performed analysis offers interesting information, able to foster the application of innovation processes and improvement of teaching.

Our purpose is to: a) find out the type of motivation experienced by the students during their learning process, in order to assess the expressed trends, assuming that the type of motivation influences the different factors making up the teaching-learning process. b) find out whether there are significant differences in the type of motivation acquired depending on their education level, occupation, age or gender.

Therefore, the hypotheses that guide this research are the following:

1. The type of motivation changes according to previous academic training.
2. The employment status influences the motivation for studying.
3. The type of motivation is different according to age.

3.1. Participants

Among adults, there are people who study second languages, either as members of specific programs for older adults (UNED Senior) or in courses comprising adult students of different age ranges, as in our sample, which is made up of 90 subjects. Out of these, 59 are women and 31 are men. The average age was 42.23 years and the age range was between 21 and 68 years. The response rate was 95%.

The education level, the type of occupation, age and gender were taken into account as socio-academic study variables. Table 2 shows the sample and the profile of the sample members.

The questionnaires were administered in the classroom to all the participants at the same time. All those attending the courses filled in the instrument items individually and there was no set time limit. They were previously informed as to the importance of providing honest answers.

Previously, the pertinent orientations were provided, so that the scale and the socio-demographic questionnaire could be properly filled in. Voluntariness, purpose, and anonymity of the research results were at all times kept in mind, following the recommendations of the American Psychological Association.

Data	Categories	Dimensions	Frequency rates	%
ACADEMIC DATA	LEVEL OF EDUCATION	Secondary Education	28	30.8
		Mid-level University Education	27	29.2
		Higher University Education	35	40.0
		Total	90	100.0
EMPLOYMENT DATA	WORKING LIFE	Employed	38	48.0
		Unemployed	33	38.0
		Retired	19	14.0
PERSONAL INFORMATION	GENDER	Male	31	30.0
		Female	59	70.0
	AGE	20-40 years old	42	52.5
		41-60 years old	28	29.5
		Over 61 years old	20	18.0

3.2. Data collection: Instruments

In order to reach the proposed goal, the Education Motivation Scale (Vallerand, Blais, Briere & Pelletier, 1989) was used. It was translated into English by Vallerand and Bissonnette (1992) and later translated into Spanish and validated by Núñez, Martín-Albo and Navarro (2005), whose results reveal satisfactory levels of internal consistency. This instrument was selected based on its capacity to analyze the motivation shown by individual

participants, adapting it to foreign language courses. It is a tool that encourages students to analyze and look more closely into the reason why they are doing the course, by answering the question "Why study a second language?". The scale consists of 28 items and seven four-item subscales, each measuring the three types of intrinsic motivation (knowledge-oriented IM, achievement-oriented IM and IM oriented towards stimulating experiences), the three types of external or extrinsic motivation (external regulation, introjected

regulation and identified regulation) and lack of motivation.

The data analysis was conducted using the SPSS (V.20.0.) statistical package. First, the study focused on the frequency rate, description of the sample and each of the variables (mean, standard deviation, trend). Pearson's correlation analysis was performed to check whether there was a relationship between the dimensions of the scale. Next, the differences between mean values were examined using the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of a factor such as the parametric test of K independent samples, the Holm-Bonferroni method for multiple comparisons and t-tests to compare independent means. The effect sizes (ES) of the sample were also calculated, understood as the degree to which the effect studied is present in the sample. It was considered to be a significant difference when the effect size exceeded .40.

4. Results

The analyses corresponding to the internal consistency of the scale were carried out through Cronbach's alpha coefficient, in the current study obtaining a satisfactory value ($\alpha = .87$). In addition, this study was conducted for each of the identified factors. Table 3 shows the dimensions and

their reliability ranging from .61 to .82. These data are similar to those obtained by Guillen, Pérez Luzardo and Arnaiz (2013) and by Núñez Alonso; Martín-Albo Lucas and Navarro Izquierdo (2006). All these values are significant, as the confidence level is 95%. Therefore, the reliability is acceptable and significant from a statistical perspective.

Considering the values obtained by the means of each of the factors under study, it was observed that the highest scores were recorded by the components of intrinsic motivation (knowledge-oriented IM, achievement-oriented IM and IM oriented towards stimulating experiences). It is deduced that the subjects making up the sample learn a foreign language driven by knowledge acquisition, for which they initiate cognitive processes such as examination, inquiry, analysis, and reflection. Therein lies the reward, in the interest and satisfaction caused by the process of personal enrichment. Moreover, the values collected in relation to the extrinsic motivation dimensions (external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation) are lower. In this case, the purpose is no longer oriented towards personal satisfaction, but towards the external recognition through prizes and praises. They are linked to a more superficial learning, based on the economy of time and effort. The lack of motivation factor obtained the lowest score.

Table 3: Measurement of the internal consistency of variables

Factores	Nº Items	Cronbach's alpha	MEAN	Standard deviation
IM orientation towards knowledge	4	.61	17.26	1.96
IM orientation towards achievement	4	.80	14.93	3.04
IM orientation towards stimulating experiences	4	.60	15.13	2.40
EM External regulation	4	.82	12.00	3.94
EM Introjected regulation	4	.75	11.83	3.48
EM Identified regulation	4	.80	13.08	3.70
Amotivation	4	.73	5.87	2.70

Table 4 show that the higher means correspond to the items referring to the knowledge-oriented intrinsic motivation, with the item "it is a satisfaction for me to acquire new knowledge", obtaining the highest mean. On the contrary, the

items referring to the variable lack of motivation obtained the lowest means, with the item "I don't understand why I enrolled in this course" obtaining the lowest value.

Table 4: Descriptive analysis

FACTORES	ÍTEMS	MEAN	MODE	SD
AMOTIVATION	Honestly, I don't know; I really feel that I am wasting my time.	1.40	1	.95
	I once had good reasons to learn languages however, now I wonder whether I should continue.	1.70	1	1.05
	I can't see why I go to the course and honestly I couldn't care less.	1.46	1	.91
	I don't know; I can't understand why I enrolled in this course	1.33	1	.74
EM EXTERNAL REGULATION	Because I need to know another language to access the job market more easily	3.37	4	1.18
	In order to obtain a more prestigious job later on.	2.94	4	1.22
	In order to have a better economic position	2.84	3	1.15
	Because I want to have "the good life" later on.	2.71	3	1.16
EM INTROJECTED REGULATION	To prove to myself that I am capable of studying.	3.23	4	1.30
	Because advancing in my academic training makes me feel important	2.93	4	1.12
	To show myself that I am an intelligent person.	2.40	2	1.07
	Because I want to show myself that I can succeed in my studies.	3.29	4	1.20
EM IDENTIFIED REGULATION	Because I think the course will help me better prepare for the career I have chosen.	3.54	4	1.20
	Because eventually it will enable me to enter the job market in a field that I like.	3.10	4	1.26
	Because this will help me make a better choice regarding my career orientation.	2.91	3	1.08
	Because I will improve my professional competence	3.69	4	1.18
IM ORIENTATION TOWARDS KNOWLEDGE	Because I experience satisfaction while learning new things.	4.60	5	.69
	For the pleasure I experience when I discover new things.	4.20	4	.76
	For the pleasure that I experience in broadening my knowledge about subjects which appeal to me.	4.23	4	.73
	Because the studies allow me to continue to learn many interesting things.	4.26	4	.77
IM ORIENTATION TOWARDS ACHIEVEMENT	For the pleasure I experience while surpassing myself in my studies	3.83	4	.96
	For the pleasure that I experience while I am surpassing myself in one of my personal accomplishments	4.07	4	.84
	For the satisfaction I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult academic activities.	3.43	4	1.07
	For the satisfaction I experience when I feel personally fulfilled	3.60	4	1.01

IM ORIENTATION TOWARDS STIMULATING EXPERIENCES	Because I really like going to study and communicate with others	3.87	4	.95
	For the high feeling that I experience while reading about various interesting subjects.	3.99	4	1.18
	Because for me, learn is fun	3.97	4	.98
	Because I share interesting experiences and situations	3.30	4	1.07

With respect to the construct validity and in order to complete this preliminary data analysis, a matrix of correlations between the scale factors was carried out using Pearson's coefficient. Table 5 shows the correlations obtained between the

different factors. The seven dimensions presented very acceptable correlation indices, with values ranging from .20 to .86 following a pattern of moderate and high correlations, and meaningful statistical data at levels .01 and .05.

Table 5. Correlations

	IM knowledge	IM achievement	IM stimulating experiences	EM external regulation	EM introjected regulation	EM identified regulation	Amotivation
IM knowledge	1	.641(**)	.704(**)	.178	.326(**)	.222	-.381(**)
IM achievement	.641(**)	1	.695(**)	.217	.623(**)	.241(*)	-.190
IM stimulating experiences	.704(**)	.695(**)	1	.196	.455(**)	.314(**)	-.310(**)
EM external regulation	.198	.217	.196	1	.381(**)	.858(**)	.072
EM introjected regulation	.326(**)	.623(**)	.455(**)	.381(**)	1	.341(**)	.134
EM identified regulation	.222	.241(*)	.314(**)	.858(**)	.341(**)	1	.021
Amotivation	-.381(**)	-.190	-.310(**)	.072	.134	.021	1

**The correlation is significant at the level of 0.01 (bilateral).
*The correlation is significant at the level of 0.05 (bilateral).

The normality analyses of the seven motivational dimensions for the overall sample showed that, in all cases, the assumptions of normality ($p > .05$) were met. Regarding the differences in the category "occupation", the results of the ANOVA and the *post hoc* Holm-Bonferroni method show

in Table 6 the existence of significant differences in the variable "External Regulation" (extrinsic motivation) among the unemployed and employed workers, resulting in the unemployed exhibiting a higher mean value in this construct.

Table 6: ANOVA and Holm-Bonferroni method, according to the employment situation

FACTORS	Occupation	Mean	F	Sig.	Bonferroni Sig		
External regulation	Retired	11.43	5.80	.00	Retired	Unemployed	.182
	Unemployed	14.53				Employed	1.00
	Employed	10.80			Unemployed	Retired Employed	.182 .00
					Employed	Retired Unemployed	1.00 .00

*The mean difference is significant at the level of .05.

With respect to the motivation experienced in relation to the age of the sample members (see Table 7), a significance level was observed by means of an analysis of variance, which was corroborated by Holm-Bonferroni method, indicating statistically significant differences in the factors “External

Regulation” and “Identified Regulation”. In both cases, the differences were established between the ranges 20-40 and 41-46 years old, with people aged between 20 and 40 years old showing higher means in both dimensions.

Table 7: ANOVA and Holm-Bonferroni method according to age

FACTORS	Mean	F	Sig.	Bonferroni Sig		
External regulation	20-40 years old: 13.50	5.90	.00	20-40	41-60	.00
	41-60 years old: 10.11				Over 61	.16
	Over 61 years old: 11.09			41-60	20-40 Over 61	.00 1.00
				Over 61	20-40 41-40	.16 1.00
Identified regulation	20-40 years old: 14.56	4.90	.00	20-40	41-60	.04
	41-60 years old: 11.17				Over 61	.09
	Over 61 years old: 11.90			41-60	20-40 Over 61	.04 1.00
				Over 61	20-40 41-60	.09 1.00

*The mean difference is significant at the level of .05.

For the analysis of differences-in-means in the different motivation subscales according to gender, the Student’s t-test was used, taking into account Levene’s test to estimate the equality of the variances. Table 8 does not show any differences in terms of gender. This result is corroborated in some factors when calculating the effect size, following the criteria proposed by Cohen (1988), since the differences were small (around $d=.20$) in IM towards Stimulating Experiences, External Regulation, Introjected Regulation and Identified Regulation. On the other hand, there are

moderate differences between knowledge-oriented IM ($d=.38$) and achievement-oriented IM ($d=.36$). When interpreting these effects, one should keep in mind that, in research studies in the area of education, with values of .30 or higher, differences of practical significance can be considered (Morales, 2010), since in this area effect sizes are smaller than others. Accordingly, the relevance of the differences between men and women in these two dimensions should be taken into account, women showing a higher level of intrinsic motivation in both cases.

Table 8: Student t-test for comparison of mean values of independent samples

FACTORES	GENDER	MEAN	SD	S	Sig.	ES
IM towards knowledge	Male	16.72	2.22	-1.52	.67	.38
	Female	17.49	1.83			
IM towards achievement	Male	14.09	3.76	-1.51	.38	.36
	Female	15.28	2.65			
IM towards stimulating experiences	Male	14.71	2.51	-1.02	.39	.25
	Female	15.30	2.35			
EM external regulation	Male	11.71	4.59	-.43	.80	.10
	Female	12.14	3.51			
EM introjected regulation	Male	11.28	4.03	-.85	.14	.21
	Female	12.06	3.24			
EM identified regulation	Male	12.90	4.25	-.30	.13	.06
	Female	13.16	3.47			
Amotivation	Male	5.43	2.20	-.89	.38	.24
	Female	6.06	2.93			

5. Conclusions and discussion

Learning a second language does not only imply achieving linguistic competences linked to the acquisition and use of vocabulary, comprehension, and verbal and written expression. It also involves assuming new socio-cultural roles. A relevant aspect in the study of a language is the attitude shown by the students, as it affects their readiness to learn (Lirio & Morales, 2012). The motivational differences, like other individual differences, should be taken into account in classrooms for effective learning. The growing concern about creating favorable conditions for quality education motivated several researchers to explore constructs such as motivational styles. This is the case of Bernaus, Wilson and Gardner (2009), Saravia and Bernaus (2008) and Zenotz (2012), who agree that motivation is key in the language teaching-learning process. The European framework also highlights the importance of promoting the study of languages, pointing out the importance of taking into account students' motivation to learn a language (Council of Europe, 2000).

However, the studies published so far have not focused on adult Foreign Language courses offered through a distance learning university.

Since the type of motivation can affect the acquisition of a second language, this research is aimed at exploring and analyzing the motivations of the students enrolled in English courses offered through UNED. To this end, some features or significant aspects are taken into account, with the conviction that their possible effects influence the outcomes of language learning.

Given the employment status of the sample members, significant differences were found in extrinsic motivation among unemployed and employed participants in the "external regulation" subtype. It was substantiated that unemployed individuals expressed a desire for broadening their training in order to improve their employment status. Regarding the academic training, there were no significant differences.

In terms of age of the course participants, there were significant differences between the ranges 20-40 and 41-60 years old in the factors referring to "external regulation" and "identified regulation". The younger group presented a higher level in both subtypes of extrinsic motivation. Therefore, it is apparent that those showing higher values in external regulation, learn a second language with the only objective of obtaining an external stimulus. On the other hand, those who

show higher values with respect to an identified regulation value the benefits of the activity they perform, thus their purpose is also to reach an external goal. It follows that the sample members aged between 20 and 40 years old need more attention from the teacher and they present low levels of self-confidence and self-esteem (external motivation). In addition, due to the higher values obtained in identified regulation, it is noted that students within this age range recognize to a greater extent the implicit value of the behavior to be performed, thus they do it voluntarily, even if it is not a pleasant task. It is often associated with feelings of competence and self-esteem, and positive coping with failure.

Considering the motivation shown by the participants according to gender, significant moderate differences were found in knowledge- and achievement-oriented intrinsic motivation, with women having the highest values in both dimensions. This prompts us to consider that women learn a language better than men because of the satisfaction they experience by acquiring new knowledge (knowledge-oriented IM), thus showing an intrinsic curiosity. Likewise, women's motivation is associated to a greater extent than that of men with the satisfaction they feel when meeting the set goals (achievement-oriented motivation), associated with personal challenge. Consequently, there is statistical evidence that lead us to believe that the type of intrinsic motivation is different for men and women.

Throughout our research, it was observed how adults' motivation in language learning can be generated by multiple factors, such as attitudes, skills, education, self-improvement, career advancement, desire of personal fulfillment. That is why, the objectives of adult learning go beyond academic performance and results, these draw closer to all the aspects that improve their quality of life, thus raising their level of satisfaction.

In agreement with Martínez Lirola (2005), it is argued that motivation is an important factor to be taken into account in the teaching-learning process, since students showing predominantly intrinsic motivation are oriented towards learning more and better. It is a psychological component that highlights people's success when attempting to learn a foreign language. "Students with a high degree of motivation learn faster and obtain better results in learning a foreign language" (Martínez

Lirola, 2005, p. 26). However, "more unmotivated students show higher levels of pessimism, and the greater students' pessimism, the more affected is knowledge-oriented intrinsic motivation" (Guillén, Pérez Luzardo & Arnaiz, 2013, p. 121).

In short, the purpose is for students to feel more motivated in order to increase their effectiveness when interacting in another language and, consequently, one should pay attention to all the skills conducive to their development (García Sánchez & Cruz Vargas, 2013) and the implementation of an active teaching style, which favors students' interaction and participation. This would mean overcoming a traditional teaching style, turning instead to a proposal that promotes the acceptance of reflexive, communicative and critical practices as a way to improve the teaching-learning process, and designing the theoretical knowledge according to students' needs and the realities of the classroom. The role of the teacher becomes a transversal factor that should facilitate the adaptation of methodologies, contents and the pedagogical process itself. However, this is not enough, and besides, one should know the characteristics that drive an adult student to learn (Cuenca París & Ortega Sánchez, 2015). The improvement and effectiveness of the foreign language teaching process should go through teaching styles that promote flexible, participative, and innovative communicative approaches (González-Peiteado & López-Rodríguez, 2014) and the consideration of training as the ability to turn the knowledge acquired within a personal and social project into a meaningful experience.

Among the limitations, the sample is limited to the context of the Distance University, which implies limitations on the generalization of results. Future research should focus on comparing these results with larger samples. It would also be appropriate to test the convergent validity of the scale using other tools which assess motivation for learning a second language.

Taking into account that the socio-educational context is becoming increasingly complex and changing, giving way to a multilingual and multicultural reality, further studies should analyze how students enrolled in training courses face the learning process of a foreign language, and how the type of motivation they show affects the selection of the learning strategies they use.

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