

The Effect of Integrative Motivation on Students' Achievement among the Intermediate French
Language Learners in a Community College Speech Community

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Abstract

This study examined whether integrative motivation would improve academic achievement in a French language learning classroom. The study was conducted with a speech community in the Intermediate French classroom at a midsize university outside of Baltimore, Maryland. The sample consisted of 27 students. It used a quasi-experimental pretest/posttest design to determine and compare the effects of integrative motivation on students' achievement produced by cultural teaching strategies. The instrument used to measure the students' achievement was the pretest/posttest designed by the researcher. Another instrument that was used in this experiment was questionnaires to measure students' integrative motivation. The study began in September 2013 and concluded in October 2013. It was determined that integrative motivation has no significant effect on the students' achievement. However, the survey produced a positive result by indicating that cultural instruction helped students. It is suggested that longitudinal research be conducted to confirm the results of this study.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Overview

This study investigated whether the integrative motivation improves student achievement among the intermediate French language learners in a speech community at a midsize university outside Baltimore, Maryland. The study looks at the relationship between students' integrative motivation and their academic achievement in French language learning.

This study is important because, without sufficient motivation, students cannot be successful in learning languages. Appropriate curricula and good teaching alone cannot ensure student achievement. Identifying the strategies which motivate students to learn French and to attain higher level of French proficiency is important for students, teachers, and researchers to be aware of. With this awareness, the teacher can work on enhancing students' interest in learning foreign languages. This can help the students to participate in a French language class; in turn, they may not ignore the teacher by doing mathematics in the French classroom, or by falling asleep. If the students are motivated, they may not use the excuse that there is no necessity for other languages because English is spoken by the majority of the citizens of the country. In addition, integrative motivation has not been investigated among this specific population yet. It is still unknown whether or not this type of motivation can affect the intermediate language learners.

Speaking only one language is not enough in this century. The ability to work in more than one language becomes important globally. For example, sometimes many English-speaking people do not bother to learn other languages because they believe that most of the people with whom they do business in foreign countries can speak English, and if those people do not speak

English, interpreters can be used. The lack of foreign language knowledge puts English speakers at a disadvantage. In a business meeting, for example, people with the ability to speak several languages may discuss key elements among themselves in their own language without the English speaker understanding; further, using interpreters slows down the momentum of the meeting. Another disadvantage is the inability to connect with others based on a common language. Consequently, teachers must motivate students to learn a foreign language so that these students may be able to communicate not only in one culture but also in more than two cultures (Winke, 2005).

A study conducted by Li and Pan (2009) concerning integrative motivation reveals the relationship between motivation and achievement. Instrumental motivation influences both high achievers and low achievers. High achievers have greater integrative motivation than lower ones. Interest plays an extremely important role in the study, and high achievers have a strong sense of achievement.

Achievement in French language does not mean only being able to do grammar, to conjugate verbs, and to listen, write, and read; achievement also involves being culturally competent. Cultural competency is the ability to work effectively across the cultures. For individuals, it is an approach to learning and working respectfully with other people (Reeser, 2003).

In achieving high motivation, culture classes and group activities serve a great role in student success. For example, when some teachers introduce French cultures in class, learners' interest in those classes increased a lot and the classes based on culture and group activities became the way to increase student achievement. This strategy is highly preferred over traditional classes (Rueda & Chen, 2005).

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine whether integrative motivation, which consists of learning about another culture and being a part of it, may improve students' achievement in French language learning.

Hypothesis

Integrative motivation will have no effect on student achievement.

Operational Definitions

The dependent variable in this study was the level of *student achievement*, which was measured with a pre- and posttest designed by the researcher. The independent variable is the *integrative motivation*, which was operationalized via the cultural instruction that students received through group work. At the end of the study, a survey was administered to measure students' motivation. The results from the two administrations were then compared.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review investigates motivational techniques used to improve students' achievement in learning foreign languages when students view this accomplishment as unimportant for their immediate needs but necessary only to pass required examinations. The first section describes various types of motivation. The second section discusses how motivation is related to achievement. The third section examines strategies that teachers can use to increase students' motivation.

Types of Motivation

According to Brown (2005), motivation determines the goals that students want to achieve and how much effort is expended to achieve these goals. Motivation is an internal drive, stimulating power, wish, or desire. Deniz (2010) defines motivation as “a state of arousal determining the priority of wishes and desires of individuals either negatively or positively affecting learning” (p. 5). These researchers also indicate that motivation can be construed as a state of cognitive and emotional arousal which leads to a conscious decision to act and which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual or physical effort in order to attain previously set goals. According to Keller (as cited in Deniz, 2010), motivation refers to the choices people make and the experiences or goals they will approach or avoid. It also affects the degree of effort people will exert in that respect. Individuals' motivational tendencies are directly related to their opinions, beliefs, and judgments about objects, events, and subject areas (Deniz, 2010).

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Deci and Ryan (2000) make the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation theory. Intrinsic motivation derives from within people or from the activities which positively

affect behavior, performance, and wellbeing. This motivation exists when behavior is performed for its own sake rather than to obtain material or social reinforcement. Students are intrinsically motivated when they are interested in doing the assignment. Intrinsically-motivated behavior is based in an individual's need to be competent and self-determining; it arises from an internal locus of causality in which individuals undertake behavior for its "internal reward," (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 10) including interest and mastery.

Baker (2004) also proposes the same view of intrinsic motivation by saying that intrinsic motivation derives from within the person or from the activity itself which positively affects behavior, performance, and wellbeing. This motivation exists when behavior is performed for its own sake rather than to obtain material or social reinforcement. The students are intrinsically motivated when they are interested in doing the assignment. Researchers often use the terms intrinsic motivation and interest interchangeably, and even though they seem to be different, they are closely related. Interest in the concept of intrinsic motivation is pointed out by White (1985), who argues that curiosity, exploration, and attempts at mastery can be considered expressions of intrinsic motivation. In fact, White's studies in the 1980's indicate that there is evidence that high-interest learners achieve deeper understanding than low-interest learners.

Extrinsic motivation, however, is behavior that results in the attainment of external rewards, including high grades, admission to a university, and/or prestige. Students' desire to earn peers' respect and teachers' praise is part of extrinsic motivation. Persons who are extrinsically motivated will work on a task even when they have little interest because of the reward. Extrinsically motivated students, for example, may dislike the French language or may find it boring, but the necessity of the requirement will be enough to keep them motivated in order to finish the program.

Extrinsic motivation has been categorized into four types of regulation: external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). External regulation is at the lower end and closer to amotivation. At this level, motivation is spurred on solely by rewards or avoidance of punishment. Introverted motivation is more internalized but is still linked to external reasons. The activity is beginning to take on value, but individuals engage out of guilt or obligation rather than choice. Identified regulation occurs when individuals freely choose to participate in an activity because they begin to value it and feel that it is important. Relating this motivation to exercise, individuals who fall in this category exercise because they value the benefits of exercise. At this level, the individual is moving closer to becoming more self-determined and is approaching an autonomous level (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Integrated regulation is the highest level of extrinsic motivation; it is close to intrinsic motivation. The two are similar, but people who are motivated at this level do not exercise for the sake of the activity itself, for example, but they instead regulate their behavior to achieve some outcomes. Carron and Estabrooks (2003) developed a self-determination theory in relationship to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation make up the continuum that distinguishes individual self-determination. Intrinsic motivation is the highest level of self-determination.

Integrative and Instrumental Motivation

Other types of motivation are integrative and instrumental motivation. Wang (2008), as well as Gardner (2001), emphasizes the notion of instrumental and integrative motivation. Integrative motivation refers to the desire to learn a language to become a member of that speech community or target language culture. An integrative orientation occurs when learners hold favorable attitudes to the language and culture (Wang, 2008).

Gardner's (2001) definition of motivation suggests that integrative motivation can be assessed in terms of the reason why the person is learning a language. Reasons for learning a language are sometimes seen as a motive. Attitudes toward the learning situation constitute the second component of Gardner's theory of integrative motivation. In the classroom context, the motivated student has desires and enjoys the activities in the classroom. For example, students who are motivated want to learn a particular language because it will help them learn about other cultures, or so that it will be possible to make friends easily with people who speak the same language. These motives seem to reflect an interest in integration into the group who speaks the language. Integrative motivation and attitudes towards the learning situation contribute to overall motivation to learn the language (Bernard, 2010).

In contrast, instrumental motivation is characterized by a desire to gain social recognition or economic advantages through knowledge of foreign language. At the other extreme, instrument motivation language learners are mainly interested in using the cultural group and their language as an instrument of personal satisfaction (Engin, 2009). According to Rueda and Chen, people may want to learn a language to achieve some utilitarian goals, such as to get good grades, to pass an examination, to be admitted to university, or to get a better job and may have little interest in the target language and culture. All of these examples reflect an instrumental motivation because each statement has a goal that does not seem to involve any identification or feeling of closeness with the other group, but instead focuses on a more practical purpose of learning the language for individual interest.

Noels examines how the integrative and instrumental orientation relates to the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Although some scholars suggest that the integrative and instrumental distinction parallel the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, others argue that these motivational

constructs represent different processes. According to Noels, extrinsic motivation and instrumental motivation are similar. Integrative motivation is most strongly correlated with intrinsic motivation and the most self-determined types of extrinsic motivation. Wang (2008) points out that integrative motivation regroups both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Pae and Shin's (2011) research discusses that instrumental orientation and external regulation are basically the same, whereas integrative orientation and intrinsic motivation are different.

Motivation and Achievement

Much of the research on motivation utilizes some framework to examine relationships between motivation and achievement. Research has shown that intrinsic motivation is associated with higher levels of engagement and achievement. Deci and Ryan (2000) point out that intrinsically motivated learners who are interested in learning tasks and outcomes for their own sake (intrinsic), rather than for rewards (extrinsic), are more likely to become effective learners and successful students. The tangible rewards tend to have a negative aspect on intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Gardner and Lambert (1972) believe that learners' ethnocentric tendencies and attitudes toward the other group are believed to determine this success in learning the new language. Students must be willing to adopt the appropriate features of behavior which characterize members of another speech community.

According to Deci and Ryan (2000), intrinsically motivated behavior is based in an individual's need to be competent and self-determining and arises from an internal locus of causality in which individuals undertake behavior for its "internal reward," (p. 10) including interest and mastery of the goal. However, tangible rewards tend to have a negative aspect on intrinsic motivation. Baker (2004) points out that intrinsic motivation has been found to contribute positively to the learning process and the quality of learning. In particular,

intrinsically motivated individuals have been found to be more likely to engage in deep-level study. More recent research assessing motivation in a multidimensional fashion suggests that the link between extrinsic motivation and educational outcomes is complex and depends on the types of extrinsic motivators.

Gardner and Lambert (as cited in Engin, 2009) examine the type of motivation students need to learn a foreign language successfully. They argue that second language learners' feelings about a foreign language, its cultural values and living styles, and their individual reasons for learning the language are related to overall learning success and achievement with learning foreign language. These researchers also show that success in foreign language is linked to integrative and instrumental motivation. Integrative and instrumental motivation help language learners to learn more easily (Engin, 2009). Rueda and Chen also point out that integrative motivation is found to sustain long term success and to be related to greater motivational effort in learning a second language and to gaining better second language competence.

Strategies to Promote Motivation

To motivate students to learn, teachers must consider the students' interests. Interest is an important factor that drives them to become independent learners. If the students are interested, they will be motivated to learn. To be intrinsically motivated, students must see the activity as enjoyable or interesting (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Heikkila's (2009) study explores how new university students in three different fields of study explain their academic choices and successes based on their interests. Despite the differences among their academic fields, the new students' answers often included the word "interest." Interest is linked to a high quality of learning; the students seem to have a good starting point for their studies. Consequently, the teacher can tap into students' interests by selecting the materials that relate to their interests.

Phillips and Brown (1999) also point out the importance of learning culture by saying that through the study of other languages, students may acquire the knowledge and the understanding of the cultures that use that language. Students cannot truly master any language until they have also acquired the cultural contexts in which the language occurs. By learning the culture, the students can compare and contrast it with their own. Through these methods, the students may develop greater insight into their own language and culture and be aware of the different ways of viewing the world. All of these points enable students not only to succeed in school, but also to participate in the multilingual communities at home and around the world.

Genc and Bada (2005) show that in achieving motivation, cultures have a great role to play. This involvement is possible because learners usually enjoy culturally-based activities such as singing, dancing, role playing, and researching countries and people. The study of culture increases learners' curiosity about and interest in target countries and also their motivation. The above researchers give an example by saying that when some professors introduce the cultural aspect in learning, the learners' interests in those classes increase greatly. The class based on culture becomes the preferred one.

Reeser (2003) also points out that proficiency is achieved when the learner is capable of decoding the specific aspects of the culture. In other words, the learner can use culture as a tool to master the language. Reeser proposes a more analytical approach to teaching culture in which the students have a more active role to play. Reeser believes the teacher must provide analytic models as a starting point and then assist students in developing critical thinking.

There are also studies conducted regarding the importance of using technology in language education. A study done by Zhao (2003) points out that the existing literature on the effectiveness of technology uses in language education is very limited. However, the limited

number of available studies does show that technology in language learning can be a superb way to motivate students to learn because it has positive effects on the students. Zhao also points out that the applications of technology to enhance language learning have been wide ranging in terms of the types of technology use in language education. The studies propose the uses of most available technologies such as CD players, games, computer games.

Planned educational activities play a critical role in student success. Bernard (2010) finds that the activities play an important role in students' motivation and success in school, so the students' interest in the activities is an important factor that drives them to succeed in foreign language classrooms. If the students are interested in activities, they may be motivated to learn language. The teacher can tap into students' interests by selecting the activities that relate to those interests. If the activities are not focused on the students' interests, the learning of the language may become a painful experience. As a result, students may miss the opportunities for practice, putting themselves further behind in successful learning. Incorporating fun activities in class is predictive of students' decisions to continue in foreign language studies.

Wachob (2004) finds that the activities must be done as teamwork. Team activities, or cooperative learning, are the main methods of organization for the course. Teams must be formed at the beginning of the semester, and most activities must be done within these teams. Teachers must make sure that teams are diverse and all members contribute. He also points out the reflective activities that allowed students opportunities for individual review of work, such as portfolios.

Van Grinsven and Tillerman (2006) illustrate the need for teachers to provide environments for students to learn and participate in organizing their own learning and knowledge acquisition. Appropriate learning environments enhance student motivation and self-

regulated learning, so the teacher must create a favorable learning environment that supports the students' motivation. A safe and inviting environment facilitates the learning; it also increases school attendance and encourages students to stay connected and to be involved both academically and socially. Therefore, the teachers must create a welcoming environment that provides clear guidelines and multiple opportunities for the success of all students including the students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

This was a quasi-experimental study consisting of pre and posttest design. The study used an achievement test to measure students' French ability to determine which skills the course contributed to the most. Students received general instruction in reading, writing, listening, grammar, and French culture. Cultural instruction was manipulated in groups to determine its effect on students' achievement. Student cultural competency was determined prior to implementing cultural instruction to see the area of strengths and needs for improvement. Additional questionnaires measured students' language skill, cultural awareness, and attitude towards the target culture.

Participants

This research study was conducted among the intermediate French learners at a midsize University outside of Baltimore, Maryland. Approximately 20 students from 18–26 years old were participants. Regarding the gender profile, there were 15 females and 10 males. Students came from various ethnic backgrounds: 2 Indian, 10 African American, and 8 Caucasian/White. The majority of the participants were Liberal Arts majors.

Instrument

The instrument used for this study was created by the researcher. The test was designed to measure student achievement in three areas: reading, grammar, and francophone culture. These three areas measured student comprehension of the French language as defined by the researcher. There were 60 questions with the total of 100%. The test contained multiple choices, fill in the blank, and short answer questions. Besides this test, students also answered questionnaires to assess the language skills, cultural awareness, and attitude toward the target

culture, reading, and listening. These questionnaires were adapted from work by Genc and Bada (2005) but modified by the researcher. They asked the participants whether the culture course provided any kind of contribution to any of their language skills, and if so, which particular skills were improved compared to others. The second questionnaire aimed to investigate whether the participants of this study became more aware of their own and the target culture's characteristics. The third questionnaire was concerned with the attitude change in the participant toward the target culture. The achievement test and questionnaires have not been tested for validity and reliability.

Procedure

Students were trained for one month. Students were given the cultural awareness activities which required the participants to understand the aspects of the culture that are universal and specific. It assumes that in order to successfully interact with people from other cultures, individuals have to understand their own and others' cultural norms, customs, and social systems. The cultural awareness model aimed to teach the participants to overcome ethnocentrism and to help them understand that their own cultural identity is only one possibility among others. For these reasons, at the beginning of the class, students were given activities to help the researcher to determine what students already knew about French and Francophone culture and to assess the areas of weakness that remain so that the culture instruction could be directed toward the problem areas. After these teacher-centered activities, students were placed into groups according to the treatment. Students were placed into groups called "Literature Circle or Reading Circle Activity" (Irvin et al., 2007) to discuss the topic on nonverbal communication, market, principle of conversation, restaurants, and couple. Each student assumed a role and utilized a role sheet which guided his/ her preparation for the discussion. The researcher served

as a facilitator, not as a group member or instructor. Each student in the group made three types of connections such as text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world. Text-to-self describes a connection between the text and something in a student's own life experience. Text-to-text is a connection between the text and another story or text that one has previously read. Text-to-world is the connection between the text and something that is occurring or has occurred in the world (Irvin et al., 2007)

Through these connections, the study endeavored to help students develop greater insight into their own language and culture and become aware of the different ways of viewing the world. All of these points enabled students who were learning languages to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world. Making connections to students' lives can play a pivotal role in maintaining student motivation and achievement in foreign language.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Analysis of the pre and posttest results revealed a slight increase from pre to posttest, but that difference was not significant. $t(26) = -.11, p = .91$. The mean score on the pretest was 73.48 and increased to 74.33 on the posttest.

An analysis of the survey results revealed that 76% of students indicated that cultural instruction contributed to their French language achievement with 32% indicated that listening contributed most to the course. Of the students polled, 84% indicated that the course contributed to raising their awareness about both cultures, and 56% indicated that their attitude towards French and francophone culture change. In addition, 63% of the students indicated cultural instruction contributed to success and they were taking French class to learn about the French culture. Finally, 62% of the students indicated that cultural instruction helped them to raise awareness of both cultures and their attitude towards the French culture change during the course, and 32% indicated that the cultural instruction contributed to their achievement and knowing French is not really an important goal in their life.

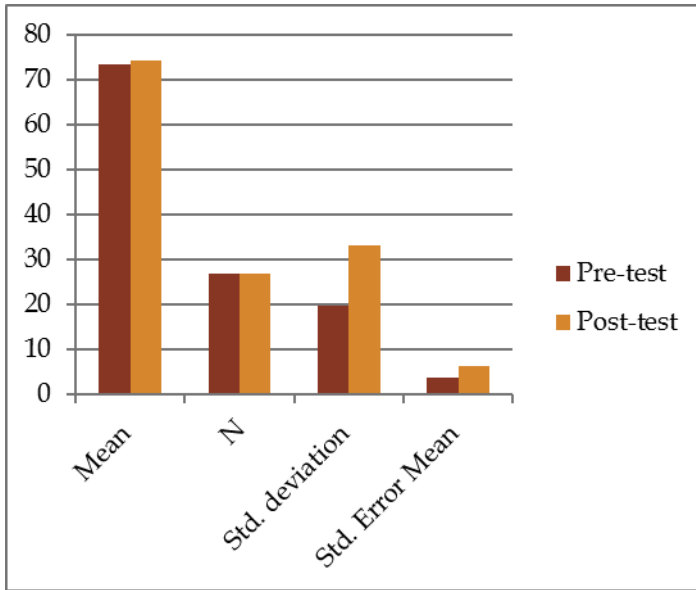


Figure 1

Mean Scores on Pre (73.48) And Posttest (74.33)

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The results supported the null hypothesis of no significant difference between pre- and posttest. The results of the survey slightly support the idea that cultural instruction can affect students positively, but for the definition of the integration motivation to be a part of the culture, students' responses were negative. Had students been given a greater amount of time to receive instruction about the culture instruction and given the pretest at the beginning of the class, the results may have been more positive.

Implications of Results

In order to investigate the research question concerning whether the integrative motivation has an effect on students' achievement in French language learning, the results showed that there was no significant difference between the pretest and the posttest. Therefore, the hypothesis was supported for this part of the experiment. When the students in the experimental group were taught via cultural instruction, there was no significant difference in achievement test. The descriptive statistics showed that there is no significant difference between the pretest and posttest. Despite the points increase, the difference is not significant. The null hypothesis that posited that integrative motivation (which consists of cultural instruction) would have no effect on student achievement was supported. However, analysis of the results of the survey produced a different result. The hypothesis in this case was not totally rejected. The students demonstrated that cultural instruction contributed to their achievement; however, when asked about the integration to the French culture, the result was negation. The students want to learn about other cultures but don't want to integrate into francophone culture.

Threats to Validity

There are several factors that pose a threat to the validity of this study. Because the study was conducted over only a one-month period, time did not allow for significant improvement. Providing a longer period of instruction and using technology in the instruction could provide different results. Also, the type of sampling used in this study was convenience sample which is a nonprobability and nonrandom sampling method. Thus, it was limited to a specific population, one classroom. Therefore, the findings could not be generalized to other populations. In addition, all the ethnic groups were not represented, so the results could not be generalized. Had the students been given the pretest at the beginning of the class, the results may have demonstrated a greater increase. The instrument that was used in this study was created by the researcher and, as such, was not tested for validity. The researcher also did not report demography data pertaining to the research question which would include the percentage of male and female. However, the findings of the current study provided a foundation for further research.

Similar Research

According to previous research, a positive relationship between integrative motivation and language achievement was found. Gardner and Lambert (1972) investigated the relationship between integrative and instrumental motivation and L2 achievement of students enrolled in French courses. Their research reported a significant positive correlation between integrative motivation and achievement in French. A subsequent research conducted by Hernandez (2008) pointed out a positive relationship between integrative motivation and the final exam grades; therefore, instructors should promote integrative motivation as an avenue to increase student achievement. However, the current study didn't mesh with Hernandez's or Gardner's (2001) definition of integrative motivation which suggested that integrative motivation has a greater influence toward language learners in learning the target culture and being a part of it. The result

of the survey pointed toward the different outcome. The overall survey pointed out that cultural instruction did contribute to student achievement but that students were not interested in being a part of it.

Implications for Future Research

The results from the study showed that integrative motivation via cultural instruction has no effect on students' achievement. The study could have been done differently in a way that would lead to more reliable and dependable results. If the researcher had a chance to conduct similar research, he or she would first give the pretest at the beginning of the class and would use a control group instead of one class. The researcher would also increase the duration of the study as well as the number of participants.

Since most of the research on the topic of integrative motivation notes an increase in students' achievement in English classroom, it would be important to perform a long term study in this topic in French area to determine whether a teacher could find a positive results. The result of the survey contributed to student motivation. The result of achievement tests should also be positive so that the null hypothesis can be rejected immediately with no reserve; but since the null hypothesis was supported, it would be beneficial to know which technique of motivation would improve students' achievement in the French language classroom.

Despite the unexpected findings, the researcher observed during the experiment how students were motivated when cultural instruction was given. The students were asking questions about other cultural groups and seemed very motivated to learn. It would be possible that longitudinal research would allow researchers to study changes over time to allow students to acquire the achievement throughout the course of their study, not just for a single module. A gender difference might also be observed during the longitudinal study.

Conclusion

The important factor that drives students who are learning a foreign language to reach their goals is motivation. It is often described as being intrinsic or extrinsic, integrating or instrumental. The review of the literature investigated integrative motivation on students' academic achievement. It was hypothesized that integrative motivation would increase academic achievement. As integrative motivation increases, academic achievement may also increase. However, the research revealed that integrative motivation does not increase students' achievement. The survey, however, pointed out that culture class did contribute to their motivation. According to previous research, it was hypothesized that instrumental motivation would lead to academic achievement, but this study did not support that finding. Longitudinal research must be conducted in the same context to determine whether integrative motivation could be proved to be a vital component of language learning and teaching.

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