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FACTORS INFLUENCING UZBEK STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TO LEARN FOREIGN LANGUAGES: A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC AND SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: This study, entitled "Factors Influencing Uzbek Students' Motivation to Learn Foreign Languages: A Psycholinguistic and Sociocultural Perspective," is devoted to examining the key motivational factors that shape foreign language acquisition among Uzbek students. The primary objective of the research is to identify the psychological, social, cultural, and educational determinants that enhance or hinder students' motivation in the context of English and other foreign language learning. The study employed a semi-structured interview to collect data from students manually. The interview questions explored three main dimensions: intrinsic motivation: personal enjoyment, satisfaction with progress, extrinsic motivation: career goals, teacher and family influence, and sociocultural factors: media, globalization, social advantages. The findings reveal that Uzbek students' motivation is significantly influenced by instrumental goals, particularly career advancement and academic success. Integrative motivation also one of the crucial factor. Teacher behavior, peer influence, classroom atmosphere and interesting lessons emerge as critical situational factors. At the same time, the analysis demonstrates that intrinsic motivation, when nurtured through supportive learning environments, leads to more sustainable language acquisition outcomes. The results of the research contribute to the further development of psycholinguistics, language pedagogy, and sociolinguistics, and may serve as a valuable resource for curriculum designers and language educators in Uzbekistan.

Keywords: foreign language motivation, Uzbek students, instrumental orientation, integrative motivation.

Introduction

The rapid development of globalization processes, the expansion of international academic mobility, and the growing demand for multilingual competence in the labor market necessitate a deeper understanding of the factors that drive students to learn foreign languages. In the context of Uzbekistan, where educational reforms have placed significant emphasis on language learning, particularly English, understanding student motivation has become a critical area of scholarly inquiry. Language acquisition is not merely a cognitive process but a complex psychosocial phenomenon shaped by internal dispositions and external conditions. From this perspective, motivation — containing both integrative and instrumental dimensions — generates special scholarly interest as a determining factor in language learning success.

A psycholinguistic and sociocultural analysis of the motivational landscape among Uzbek learners makes it possible to reveal the interplay between personal aspirations, societal expectations, and educational practices unique to the post-Soviet Central Asian context. In the present study, the concept of motivation is interpreted through the lens of self-determination theory, expectancy-value frameworks, and the socio-educational model proposed by Gardner and Lambert. Motivational factors are examined in terms of their intensity, orientation, and stability, allowing for the identification of culturally embedded

attitudes toward foreign language learning formed through family upbringing, institutional schooling, and media exposure.

Language learning motivation among Uzbek students is manifested through concepts such as "career success," "academic achievement," "communication with foreigners," and "access to global knowledge." In instrumental orientation, these concepts are associated with pragmatic outcomes and individual advancement, whereas in integrative orientation they are interpreted in terms of cultural appreciation and international friendship.

The motivational profile of Uzbek students reveals a strong instrumental bias, characterized by goal-oriented learning and practical outcomes, while integrative motivation exhibits more moderate expression, often linked to media consumption and travel aspirations. Teacher encouragement and classroom dynamics actively shape motivation, whereas family attitudes and peer norms provide supportive social frameworks.

Analysis shows that differences in motivation are mainly influenced by quality of instructionand positive feedback, while underlying psychological needs remain consistent. Understanding motivational factors illuminates learner behavior, reveals practical pathways for pedagogical intervention, and enhances the overall significance of psycholinguistic analysis in language education.

Research questions: How do psycholinguistic factors influence students motivation to learn foreign language?

To what extent sociocultural factors influence learners motivation to learn foreign language?

Method

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore motivational factors among Uzbek university students. Data were collected through a semi-structured interview questionnaire, which allowed participants to express their views in depth. The sample consisted of 10 undergraduate students enrolled at a national university. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure a range of language learning experiences. The interviews were conducted in person and recorded manually. The collected data were subsequently analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and categories related to motivational orientations.

Research findings

The findings reveal several key motivational themes among the participants. When asked about their primary motivations for learning a foreign language, the majority of students cited the desire to communicate with people from other countries, interest in different cultures, opportunities for international travel, and access to higher education abroad. Participants also reported deriving intrinsic satisfaction from the learning process itself, noting that observable improvements in their own performance served as a source of ongoing motivation. Notably, the students indicated that their motivation was not driven by examination requirements or institutional obligations, but rather by personal goals and the desire for self-improvement. Family support, particularly from mothers, was identified as a significant source of encouragement. Participants further emphasized that a positive peer environment and collaborative classroom atmosphere enhanced the enjoyment of language learning. Additionally, students reported gaining satisfaction from engaging with authentic media content, such as watching films and listening to music without subtitles, as well as from building meaningful cross-cultural friendships and exchanging information with speakers of other languages.

Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that Uzbek students' motivation to learn foreign languages is shaped by a complex interplay of instrumental and integrative factors, with instrumental orientation playing a predominant role. Career advancement, academic requirements, and access to global information emerge as primary drivers, reflecting the pragmatic outlook of contemporary Uzbek youth. Integrative motivation, though present, remains comparatively less developed, suggesting limited exposure to authentic intercultural experiences. At the same time, teacher behavior, classroom environment, and peer influence constitute critical situational factors that mediate the relationship between initial motivation and sustained language learning engagement. The analysis indicates that intrinsic motivation, characterized by genuine interest and enjoyment in the learning process, leads to more durable and autonomous language acquisition outcomes. Therefore, fostering supportive learning environments that satisfy learners' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness should be a central priority for language educators and curriculum designers. Furthermore, the motivational patterns observed among Uzbek students reflect broader sociocultural transformations occurring within the country, including the reorientation toward global economic integration and the increasing prestige of multilingual competence. The results of the research have practical significance for educational psychology, foreign language pedagogy, and sociolinguistics, contributing to the development of evidence-based teaching strategies and a deeper understanding of learner behavior in Central Asian contexts.

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