

**THE IMPACT OF GENDER ON LANGUAGE LEARNING
MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDES**

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Abstract

This research highlights the importance of understanding how gender affects students' motivation and attitudes in learning English, especially in an era of globalization that increasingly demands foreign language skills. In this context, the research method used is a literature study, in which various sources and previous research are analyzed to understand related trends and patterns. The results show that there are significant differences between male and female students in terms of motivation and attitude towards learning English. In particular, female students show higher integrative motivation, which means they are more driven to learn English as part of their personal identity and to interact with communities that use the language. In addition, their positive attitude towards learning English was more prominent compared to male students. These findings point to the importance of designing teaching strategies that are sensitive to gender differences, with the aim of creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students, regardless of their gender. These strategies could include more personalized and adaptive approaches, which take into account the needs and motivations of individual students, so that the learning process becomes more effective and equitable.

Keywords: Gender, Learning Motivation, Learning Attitude, Language Learning, English Language

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is an important communication tool that allows humans to interact, exchange information and build social relationships. Mastering a foreign language, especially English as an international language, is increasingly crucial in this era of globalization. The ability to speak English opens up wider opportunities in various aspects of life, such as education, career, and intercultural relations. Learning a foreign language is not an easy process. It requires motivation and a positive attitude to make the learning process effective. Various factors can influence motivation and attitude to language learning, one of which is gender.

According to research by Rueda & Moll (2012), Learning motivation can be influenced by various social and cultural factors, including gender. This research suggests that women often show higher levels of motivation in language subjects, while men may show greater interest in subjects that are considered more technical or quantitative. In addition, studies by Dweck (2013) suggests that attitudes towards learning may be influenced by gendered self-views. Women tend to adopt a more open and process-oriented attitude towards learning, while men may be more focused on results and competition.

In the context of language learning, these differences can have implications for how each gender interacts with language materials and how they respond to various teaching methods. Research (Van Der Slik et al., 2015; Wightman, 2020) It also shows that gender

factors can influence learning preferences and strategies in language learning, with women often more likely to use metacognitive strategies that support effective language learning.

Research on gender and language learning has shown differences in motivational tendencies and attitudes between male and female learners. Kissau et al (2010) examines perceived gender differences in motivation to learn Spanish in the United States, while Iwaniec (2019) examines the influence of gender on motivation to learn English in Poland. However, the relationship between gender, motivation and language learning attitudes remains a complex debate. The results of existing research have not been consistent, sometimes even contradictory. Harthy (2017) showed that integrative motivation and attitude towards English were higher in female students, while other studies showed different results.

Therefore, further research into the impact of gender on language learning motivation and attitudes remains relevant. It is important to understand how gender plays a role in shaping language learning motivation and attitudes, and the implications for effective learning strategies. By understanding the impact of gender on language learning motivation and attitudes, this research aims to provide greater insight into how language teaching strategies can be tailored to meet the needs of different genders, as well as how to promote positive learning motivation and attitudes across the gender spectrum. The research is expected to make a significant contribution to the theory and practice of language education, as well as support the development of more inclusive and effective teaching strategies.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this research is the literature study method. This method involves collecting data from various secondary sources such as journals, articles, books, and previous research relevant to the topic under study. The literature study allows researchers to get a comprehensive overview of theories and research results related to the influence of gender on language learning motivation and attitudes. The analysis was conducted by reviewing, comparing and synthesizing the findings from these various sources to produce in-depth conclusions.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Gender Differences in Language Learning Motivation among Students

Language learning is a complex process that can be influenced by various factors, including gender. Research has shown that motivational differences between male and female students can show up in different ways, especially in their engagement with areas of study such as language learning, which can be influenced by their personal experiences and social context (Rogers et al., 1998). For example, it has been noted that these differences in motivation often become more pronounced as students progress in their education, which suggests that home and school environments significantly shape the motivational patterns observed in male and female students (Yeung et al., 2011). Therefore, understanding these motivational differences is crucial for educators who want

to tailor their teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of students, which will ultimately promote a more inclusive and effective learning environment (Simanjuntak et al., 2020).

Furthermore, specific motivations for language learning can differ significantly between genders, with males often showing greater interest in the utilitarian and competitive aspects of language acquisition, while females may be more inclined towards social and emotional connections in language learning (Imran et al., 2020). These motivational differences highlight the importance of recognizing each student's profile in the classroom, as addressing these differences can lead to increased engagement and better learning outcomes for all students (Barak et al., 2016; Wallace & Leong, 2020).

Furthermore, it is important to consider that extrinsic factors such as societal expectations and educational support systems also play an important role in shaping these motivational differences, affecting how students perceive the value of language learning in relation to their future aspirations (Ye, 2021). Research has shown that while boys may be motivated by interests related to personal achievement or competitive success in language learning, girls often express a stronger desire for community integration and emotional connection through their language learning, indicating a fundamental difference in how each gender approaches language acquisition (Harthy, 2017).

These motivational tendencies may also be influenced by broader social dynamics and academic expectations, where women, in particular, exhibit higher intrinsic motivation due to their tendency to seek approval and validation from authority figures, in contrast to men, who often need more tangible incentives to engage in language learning (Naz et al., 2020). In essence, understanding these gender-specific motivational dynamics not only enriches our understanding of language learning behavior, but also calls for pedagogical approaches that acknowledge and leverage these differences to create a more equitable educational landscape (Ranjan & Philominraj, 2020).

Moreover, awareness of these motivational differences may facilitate the development of targeted interventions that encourage both sexes to capitalize on their unique strengths in language learning, thus promoting a more balanced and effective educational experience (Harthy, 2017). Recognizing this gap allows educators to design curricula and support systems that match the different motivational factors between male and female students, ultimately leading to improved academic achievement and increased language proficiency across genders (Yeung et al., 2011). In order to achieve this goal, it is important to implement teaching methods that not only consider the various motivational drivers, but also foster a collaborative learning environment where both genders can thrive and share their unique perspectives in language acquisition (Soraya, 2020).

This inclusive approach can be enhanced through the incorporation of diverse instructional strategies that align with the motivational patterns of both genders, thus creating a classroom atmosphere that fosters the engagement and participation of all students (Rajendran et al., 2020). Furthermore, it is crucial to recognize that the integration of contemporary educational technologies and resources can significantly influence these motivational dynamics, as interactive and engaging tools can cater to the preferences of both male and female students, potentially bridging the motivational gap observed in traditional educational environments (Efremova & Huseynova, 2021).

Moreover, educational interventions that address these gender-specific motivations can be crucial in promoting language learning among both males and females, encouraging them to explore different aspects of language use and expression in ways that suit their individual interests and learning styles (Ranjan & Philominraj, 2020). To further understand the impact of these different motivational factors, it is imperative to explore how gender scripts embedded in educational tools can reinforce certain learning experiences, thus shaping students' attitudes towards language learning and technology utilization in the classroom (Imran et al., 2020).

In this context, examining how educational practices can perpetuate or mitigate these gender scripts is important, as these dynamics affect not only students' language acquisition, but also their future engagement with broader educational opportunities and career paths (Efremova & Huseynova, 2021). Furthermore, recognizing the interaction between gender scripts and motivation may lead to the development of more gender-sensitive pedagogical strategies that actively de-stereotype and promote equitable language learning experiences for all students, reinforcing the need for continued research in this area to ensure teaching practices remain responsive to the diverse needs of the learner population (Randolph Jr & Johnson, 2017). Ultimately, cultivating an understanding of diverse motivational orientations based on gender will enable educators to create strategies that not only engage male and female learners effectively, but also empower them to pursue language learning with a sense of belonging and relevance to their lives (Soraya, 2020).

This empowerment is particularly important in an era where effective communication in multiple languages is increasingly linked to personal and professional success, highlighting the need for education systems to adapt and proactively respond to these motivational differences. By tailoring instructional strategies that respect these motivational differences, educators can bridge the gender gap in language engagement, ensuring that boys and girls feel valued and inspired in their learning journeys (Soraya, 2020). Furthermore, a nuanced understanding of gender differences in language learning motivation allows for the creation of a curriculum that not only respects individual learning styles, but also actively engages students by incorporating culturally relevant materials and interactive experiences that resonate with both boys and girls, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and equitable educational environment (Samuels, 2018). As such, educators can foster a learning atmosphere that not only encourages academic success, but also fosters critical thinking and collaborative skills among all students, setting the stage for a deeper appreciation of language and its cultural implications.

3.2. Overcoming Gender Differences in Language Learning Motivation and Attitudes

Gender differences in language learning motivation and attitudes have long been a topic of interest to researchers and educators. Harthy (2017) findings showed that although both genders share a similar interest in learning English, they are influenced by different cultural factors that can either encourage or inhibit their motivation, indicating the need for specific approaches to address these differences. Furthermore, female students often exhibit higher levels of integrative motivation and more positive attitudes towards English language learning compared to male students, thus highlighting the

importance of recognizing these variations when designing educational programs aimed at improving language acquisition for all students (Harthy, 2017).

To bridge this gap, educators should consider employing strategies that not only recognize these gender-specific motivational factors, but also foster an inclusive environment that encourages the participation and engagement of all students, particularly by incorporating mixed methodologies in research to identify effective practices that can increase male students' language motivation (Sabiq et al., 2021). To achieve this, it is important to explore the social contexts that shape these gender motivations and implement pedagogical practices that promote equal opportunities for male and female students, as existing research reveals different understandings of how gender perceptions affect language learning outcomes across different cultural backgrounds (Imran et al., 2020).

In addition to tailored pedagogical practices, ongoing research should focus on understanding the specific barriers faced by different genders in language learning environments, thus informing targeted interventions that can increase motivation and engagement for all students, especially in contexts where socio-cultural factors play an important role in shaping language learning experiences (Harthy, 2017; Sabiq et al., 2021). These interventions could include mentoring programs, workshops that address the specific challenges faced by male learners, and the incorporation of diverse learning materials that suit both genders, fostering a more equitable learning atmosphere that encourages language proficiency and reduces gaps in motivation levels based on gender and cultural background.

In addition, encouraging collaboration among students through group activities that promote peer support and interaction can significantly increase motivation and create a sense of community, especially in environments where traditional gender roles may affect individual engagement in language learning activities (Harthy, 2017). By examining the interplay between gender, motivation and social context, educators can develop comprehensive strategies that cater to the diverse needs of students, ultimately leading to a more inclusive and effective language learning environment that recognizes and mitigates the underlying issues that affect both genders in their educational journey. To further enhance the effectiveness of these strategies, it is imperative for educational stakeholders to engage in professional development that raises awareness of gender-related motivational differences and encourages the implementation of best practices tailored to the needs of their students, thus fostering an environment conducive to successful language learning for all.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the literature review, it was found that gender has a significant influence on language learning motivation and attitude. Gender differences affect learning styles, confidence levels, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in language learning. In general, it was found that female students tend to have higher motivation in language learning compared to male students. In addition, attitudes towards the learning process also differ between genders, where females are often more responsive and active in language learning activities. These results show the importance of considering gender factors in designing effective and inclusive learning strategies.

The implication of this study shows that it is important to design curriculum and learning strategies that are responsive to gender differences to improve the effectiveness of language learning. Differences in motivation and learning attitudes between male and female students indicate the need for flexible approaches to learning, such as a variety of methods that suit each gender's learning style. In addition, additional motivational support can help less motivated students, while data-driven education policies that consider gender factors can create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all students.

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