From a social psychological to a sociodynamic perspective in language learning motivation: a mixed-methods approach for Greek learners of Spanish.

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Recent studies in language learning motivation have offered a reconceptualization of this variable. From the socio-psychological perspective of motivation, new paradigms have been opened up to understand how motivation, in a dynamic and complex interconnection to other factors, can explain better language learning processes. Proposals for an alternative approach to study this variable as a part of a wider system have formed the basis of the current discussion on L2 motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Dörnyei et al., 2015). In that sense, the majority of research on this field has focused on EFL learners in multiple contexts. Little research, however, has been carried out in Spanish as a Foreign Language (SFL) in the Greek milieu in particular.

The purpose of the present study is to fill the gap in the field by addressing a mixed-methods study on motivation and attitudes of 284 Greek learners of SFL and their 14 teachers at the University Language School of Athens in 2010-11 and 2011-12. Triangulated research that included both quantitative and qualitative data was used in order to obtain learners’ and teachers’ questionnaires and class observations, where different SFL motivational orientations, the level of motivation and the correlation between these and other variables in students were examined.

The main findings indicated a high level of motivation in these learners, with the predominance of the intrinsic type, as well as highly positive attitudes towards both Spanish language and culture. Several correlations were found between the level of learners’ motivation and their self-concept. Some guidelines are also provided for further research into L2 motivation that is specific to Spanish in this context.


Keywords: Affective variables, Greece, Spanish as a Foreign Language, Modern Greek speaker, Mixed-methods study.