Profiling Finnish comprehensive school students’ motivation to learn foreign languages

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The aim of this presentation is to explore the L2 motivation of language learners at the upper level of comprehensive school in Finland. Moreover, the question is what kinds of motivational profiles can be found among the learners of different foreign languages?

L2 motivation has been studied extensively during the past decades (see Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), but only a couple of studies have focused on learners’ L2 motivational types or profiles (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Papi & Teimouri, 2014). Research on this kind of profiles has not been done earlier in the Finnish context.

In this study, English was chosen as the target compulsory language, and the optional languages were French, German, Russian, and Spanish. The data, gathered with an e-questionnaire from altogether 33 schools, consisted of 1206 answers from ninth-graders learning the mentioned foreign languages. The questionnaire included items on 13 different motivational scales.

The data have been analyzed statistically using SPSS and Mplus, latent profile analysis (LPA) as the main analysis method. The results show that five different motivational profiles can be found among the students: the most motivated (39%), the average motivated with low anxiety (29%), the average motivated (18%), the least motivated (8%), and students with high anxiety (6%).

But are the students in these profiles learners of the compulsory or the optional languages? Girls or boys? Students with what kind of future study plans? These questions, among others, will be answered in the presentation.

References


Keywords: foreign languages, latent profile analysis, motivation.