Influence of future school belonging on L2 motivation

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Belonging is considered to be necessary so that one can live comfortably in a society (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Belonging to schools and classes has been related to the issue of motivation to study (i.e. Pittman & Richmond, 2008). The importance of such a feeling is easy to understand, because it is important that students feel positive about their studies, feel they have good friends, good teachers, and good staff that care about them. It seems, however, belongingness in school has been under researched. This paper is the first attempt to examine what Japanese high school students may think about the university they were accepted by and to what extent the feelings are related to their motivation to study English. For that purpose, two open-ended questions were asked to more than 100 university students in Japan. One is Language Learning History, in which students describe their past language learning. This method has been used quite extensively to elicit their perceptions on language learning (Murphey & Carpenter, 2008). The other one is an open-ended question, “How did you decide to get into your present university, and what did you think about English learning between that decision and your entry?” By coding the two types of data, some key themes emerged, including “English-orientation”, “English-medium” and “international”.

References


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