

The possible relationship between gender and motivation

- An attitudinal study on gender and motivation as factors in
learning English as a second language.

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1. Introduction

According to some studies (Gardner, 1985; Dörnyei, 2009) motivation in second language learning is seen as one of the key factors that influence the success of learning a second language. Dörnyei (2009) writes that even an individual with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals without sufficient motivation. On the other hand motivation can make up for deficiencies both in one's learning conditions and language aptitude.

The role of motivation in learning a second language has been investigated by a lot of researchers but the impact of gender is quite new in the field. Ellis (1994) conducted a study with 6000 students in English primary school who learned French as a second language. The result of this study showed that girls had higher scores than boys in all tests where they measured achievement in French. There was another difference too between the sexes when measuring their attitudes towards French. The girls' attitude was more positive than the boys' (Ellis, 1994).

As future teachers it is important and interesting to know that there might be differences in gender when it comes to attitude and motivation in learning a second language and that information could be helpful in the future to be able to motivate the students. The role of attitude and motivation in learning a second language has been investigated by various researchers in different countries and the present study would like to do the same in Sweden, including the gender differences.

1.1 Aim and scope

The aim of this study is to analyze learners' motivational attitudes towards the English language in a Swedish upper secondary school and the possible relationship between gender and motivation.

1.2 Material

In order to conduct the present study, a questionnaire was used with three classes from an upper secondary school in Southern Sweden. The questionnaire consists of 16 statements where the students are asked to agree or disagree with certain claims (See Appendix). The investigation aims at finding out about learners' attitudes and is an attitudinal study because the students' attitude towards the English language is focused on.

1.2.1 The informants

The informants in this study consist of three classes from one school. The school is an upper secondary school in Southern Sweden. All three classes are part of a national- and higher education preparatory programme called the humanities programme. The three classes in the study will be called A, B and C. Class A has 26 students all together, Class B has 27 students and Class C has 30 students all together.

Though the informants are somewhat uneven in number and furthermore come from one and the same school, in the most cases students in Swedish schools are often fairly similar and for this reason it is assumed that these informants are representative of students of English in Swedish upper secondary school.

1.2.2 The questionnaire

In the present study, a questionnaire is used since questionnaires in a study let the participants express their attitudes, feelings and beliefs towards a topic of interest (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The questionnaires aim at finding out what the students think about the English language and whether there are gender differences when it comes to motivation in learning English as a second language. The questionnaire used in this study consists of 16 statements where the students can choose either to agree or disagree. The reason for choosing only two options (agree or disagree) is that a third option like "neutral" could lead the students into choosing that because then they would not have to take a stand. To have four options in the questionnaire like "strongly agree", "agree", "disagree" or "strongly disagree" is also excluded because it would be hard to interpret what the students mean by strongly. In the beginning of the questionnaire the participants have to put a cross if they are male or female (See Appendix) to be able to examine if there is a possible relationship between gender and motivation.

When it comes to rating scales, there are three different types of attitudinal rating scales (Brace, 2008). These are; Likert scale, semantic differential scale and staple scale. The scale used in this study is the Likert scale (also known as the agree-disagree scale). The technique presents respondents with several attitude dimensions for which they are asked to agree or disagree. The aim of using this scale is then to sum the results for each respondent to provide an overall attitudinal score for each individual. The intention of using Likert's scale is because of the fact that the statements would represent different aspects of the same attitude: "The data will tend to be used in factor analysis, in order to identify groups of attitudinal statements that have similar response patterns and that could therefore represent

underlying attitudinal dimensions." Brace, 2008:73). The Likert scale will be useful in this study when it comes to identifying statements, response patterns and attitudinal dimensions.

1.3 Method

In this section, the method of the present investigation is discussed.

The method used in this study is that of giving a questionnaire to informants. Because of the aim to analyze the learners' motivational attitudes towards the English language, using a questionnaire is a good method. Since the study is about motivation, that is an emotion or feeling that could be affected in the case of an interview where the students could have answered in a way that they think is the "right" answer, instead of how they really feel about the subject.

When visiting the different classes to conduct the study, short information about the researcher and the study is given before handing out the questionnaires. The information is given in the students' L1 language, namely in Swedish to avoid misunderstandings. The layout of the questionnaire is introduced and the students are told to put a cross after each statement if they agree or disagree. The students are also told that it is important for them to put a cross for male or female in the beginning of the questionnaire and to not write down their names, as the questionnaire is anonymous. The researcher is present in the room the whole time to be able to count the total students as well as to see how many is missing.

There are a number of factors that could affect the participants' answers in the questionnaire. One of the factors could be the teachers' role and presence in the room. If the teacher is motivating, dedicated and interested in the field, then the students are going to feel motivated as well. If the teacher, on the other hand, is not interested in the students and in the field, the students will feel unmotivated. Even the teacher's and the investigator's presence in the room could affect the students' answers in the questionnaire. They could then answer what they think that the teacher or the present investigator wants them to answer and not what they really feel about the statements. That is why the investigator is not going to tell the students anything about the questionnaire and not answer any questions that could affect their answers.

2. Theoretical background

In this section previous research on motivation and gender will be addressed.

2.1 Terminology

The following five sections define terms that are essential throughout the whole study.

2.1.1 First language (L1)

First language, also called L1, is the language the child learns first and which we call mother tongue or native language. A child can learn more than one language from birth and can then have more than one 'first' language. (Lightbown and Spada, 2006:199)

2.1.2 Second language (L2)

Second language, also called L2, is any language other than the first language (mother tongue) learned. It could therefore refer to a child's third or fourth language as well. (Lightbown & Spada, 2006:204)

2.1.3 Foreign language

Foreign language refers to the learning of a language, in a classroom setting, where the target language is not used widely in the community. The contrast is second language learning where the language being learned is used in the community. (Lightbown & Spada, 2006:199)

2.1.3 Target language

Target language is the language that is being learned. It could be both the first, second or third language learned. (Lightbown & Spada, 2006:205)

2.1.4 Language acquisition versus language learning

The term is often used interchangeably with language learning but to Krashen acquisition is a contrast to learning because it represents the unconscious learning. This type of unconscious learning takes place when we focus more on the meaning of a language rather than the form of the language. (Lightbown & Spada, 2006:201) The term *language learning* refers to the individual's developing knowledge of the language being learned. According to Krashen learning is a conscious process that takes place when the learner's objective is to learn about the language, instead of understanding messages conveyed through the language. (Lightbown & Spada, 2006:202)

2.2 Upper secondary school in Sweden

The upper secondary school in Sweden is for students between 16 and 20 years of age. When reaching the age of 20, you can attend upper secondary adult education or special education

for adults with learning disabilities (sär vux). The upper secondary school is a voluntary school that is free of charge and which you can attend after finishing compulsory school.

According to Skolverket (2011a) the upper secondary school consists of introductory programmes, national programmes and programmes which differs from the structure in the national programs. We have a total of 18 national programmes at upper secondary school where each program last three years. Every program consists of foundation subjects, specific program subjects, orientations, specializations in a program and a project.

There are two different types of programmes at upper secondary school; vocational programmes and programmes preparatory for higher education. Students with a pass in Swedish or Swedish as a second language, English and mathematics plus 5 other subjects are qualified for a vocational program. Students with a pass in Swedish or Swedish as a second language, English and mathematics plus 9 other subjects are qualified for a higher education preparatory program.

Students that are not qualified for a national program can go to an introductory program. The introductory programmes do not give an upper secondary diploma, but the program should lead to a national program or work. The upper secondary school has six grades from A to F with five pass grades and one non-pass grade. Grades are given based on the goals and knowledge from the syllabuses (Skolverket, 2011a). All learners at upper secondary school have a first language (L1) which in this case is Swedish or another language. Their second language (L2) is English because it is not their mother tongue.

According to Skolverket (2006) there has been gender segregation at upper secondary school over the past 3 decades. The upper secondary school in Sweden has become less gender-segregated since the beginning of the 1970s. The programme-oriented upper secondary school was introduced in the 1990s and meant a decline in the segregation. One of the reasons for the segregation of the sexes is that more programmes are becoming gender-neutral like for example Hotel and Restaurant, Arts, Food, Business and Administration. The vocationally-oriented programmes are still gender segregated because of the role that society gives each gender. For example, there are not many female students in the Electricity and Energy programme since our society tells us that an electrician is a man.

2.3 The English Language

The English language surrounds us every day in different areas like culture, politics, education and economy. English knowledge increases the individual's opportunities to

participate in a globalized study- and work life. Furthermore, English knowledge can give the students new perspectives on the world and increase possibilities to understand different kinds of living.

According to Crystal (2003) the English language has become a global language, used internationally in the science and technology, business market, international relationships and diplomacy. The English language has become an international language for one reason: the power of its people - especially the military and political power.

The English education at upper secondary school will aim to develop students' language and world knowledge so that they can, and dare to use English in different situations and for different purposes. Students should also be given the opportunity in school to, through the use of language in functional and meaningful contexts, develop a comprehensive communicative ability. This ability includes reception, which means that they need to understand spoken language and texts, be able to interact with each other both in speech and writing, as well as to adapt their language to different situations, purposes and recipients. (Skolverket, 2011b)

2.4 Definitions of motivation

The meaning of the term motivation, according to Dörnyei (2011) "concerns the direction and magnitude of human behaviour, that is:

- the choice of a particular action,
- the persistence with it,
- the effort expended on it.

In other words, motivation is responsible for

- *why* people decide to do something,
- *how long* they are willing to sustain the activity,
- *how hard* they are going to pursue it." (Dörnyei, 2011:4)

Motivation is a term used both in educational and research contexts but the exact meaning of this concept is not agreed upon. Many researchers are agreeing upon the fact that motivation is "responsible for determining human behavior by energising it and giving it direction"

(Dörnyei, 2009:117) but the great variety in literature in how this happens surprises many researchers. Since motivation theories seek to explain why humans behave as they do, it would be naive to assume a simple answer of the term because the different psychological perspectives on human behavior are associated with different motivation theories.

According to Brown (1994) motivation is thought of as an inner drive, emotion, desire or impulse that moves a human being to a particular action. Motivation refers to "the choices people make as to what experiences or goals they will approach or avoid, and the degree of effort they will exert in that respect" (Brown, 1994:152). This type of motivation is connected to people's choices, to their goals in life and to the effort spent on that choice.

The following quotations are relevant to this study since they address different aspects of the term motivation. This shows that the exact meaning of the term is not agreed upon:

The definition of motivation in the business dictionary is:

"Internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in people to be continually interested and committed to a job, role or subject, or to make an effort to attain a goal.

Motivation results from the interaction of both conscious and unconscious factors such as the (1) intensity of desire or need, (2) incentive or reward value of the goal, and (3) expectations of the individual and of his or her peers. These factors are the reasons one has for behaving a certain way". (businessdictionary.com)

Motivation is defined as "the process that initiates, guides and maintains goal-oriented behaviors. Motivation is what causes us to act, whether it is getting a glass of water to reduce thirst or reading a book to gain knowledge." (Cherry, 2013-11-11)

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, Motivation is:

- "the act or process of giving someone a reason for doing something : the act or process of motivating someone
- the condition of being eager to act or work : the condition of being motivated
- a force or influence that causes someone to do something"

<http://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/motivation>

2.4.1 Motivation in mainstream psychological research

Dörnyei (2009) argues that there have been two different traditions of explaining human behavior. *The motivational psychologists* tended to look at the motors of human behavior in the individual with focus on the internal factors like arousal, cognitive self-appraisal and drive. *The social psychologists*, in contrast tended to see action as the effect of the social context and the relational patterns measured by the individual's social attitudes.

According to social psychologists attitude can have a direct influence on behavior since "someone's attitude towards a target influences the overall pattern of the person's responses to the target" (Dörnyei, 2009:119). There are two well-known theories on how this process takes place; the *theory of reasoned action* and its extension the *theory of planned behaviour*. According to the first theory the determinant of action is a human's intention to perform the specific behaviour which is a function of two factors; the attitude towards the behaviour and the subjective norm of the behaviour where the latter refers to a person's perception of the social pressure to perform the behaviour. The theory of planned behaviour continues on the first theory but adds a modifying component to it, namely the perceived behavioural control which means that there could be ease or difficulty to perform the behaviour.

In motivational psychology there is an expectancy-value framework and according to the theory, motivation to perform a task is a product of two key concepts; the individual's *expectancy of success* and the *value* that the individual attaches to the success: "The greater the perceived likelihood of goal-attainment and the greater the incentive value of the goal, the higher the degree of the individual's positive motivation." (Dörnyei, 2009:119). If one factor is missing, it is unlikely that effort will be invested in the task. In the expectancy-value theories there is a belief that humans are active learners with an inborn curiosity and the urge to get to know the environment.

2.4.1.1 Expectancy of success

In this theory, three processes to determine expectancy of success are included. They are:

- Attribution theory where one's past experiences are processed.
- Self-efficacy theory where one's own abilities and competence are judged.
- Self-worth theory where one attempt to maintain one's self-esteem.

(Dörnyei, 2011)

According to the attribution theory, people try to understand their past failures and successes and think that this causal attributions can affect our behavior differently and have consequences in our future strivings. Attribution theory is one of the few cognitive models within motivation that include emotions in terms of emotional consequences of causal attributions (Dörnyei, 2011). An example of an emotion or feeling is when someone fails something and that triggers a feeling of shame or humiliation.

According to Dörnyei (2011) self-efficacy-theory refers to one's own judgment of one's capability to a specific task where one's sense of efficacy will determine the choice of activity, with level of aspiration, amount of effort exerted and persistence displayed. A person with low self-efficacy can feel that a difficult task is a personal threat because it dwells on their own personal deficiencies and they focus more on that than they concentrate on how to perform the task successfully. As a consequence, they lose faith in their capabilities and want to give up. A strong sense of self-efficacy, in contrast, enhances people's achievement behaviour by helping them to approach difficult situations with confidence to maintain a task instead of focusing on what you cannot do. Self-efficacy beliefs are indirectly related to the actual competence and ability because they are a product of a process of self-persuasion based on a cognitive process of different sources such as people's opinions, evaluation, feedback, reinforcement or encouragement, past experiences, training and observing.

In self-worth theory, people are highly motivated to maintain a sense of personal worth and value, especially when it comes to competition, failure and negative feedback. This theory generates patterns of motivational beliefs and face-saving behaviours in school, especially when a poor performance threatens the student's self-esteem. In such situations when a student is close to failure it does not have to be because of low ability but to lack of effort.

2.4.1.2 Task value

Eccles (2007) developed a model of task values, defining them in four different components;

- Attainment value - the personal importance of mastering a skill and doing well on a task.
- Intrinsic value- interest or appreciation of the skill/subject and enjoyment coming when you perform the activity.

- Extrinsic utility value - awareness of how a task relates to the future and current goals and what role learning plays in improving one's life quality and making one a better person.
- Cost - is the negative value component where factors such as expended effort and time, anxiety, fear or failure are included.

The overall achievement of a task is made up of these four components, interplaying with each other to determine the strength and intensity of the behaviour. Recently, several researchers have begun to emphasise the importance of the utility value of a task because it is important that the students perceive a clear relationship between current tasks and the attainment of personal long-term goals (Dörnyei, 2011). This brings us to the next area which is goal theories.

2.4.1.3 Goal theories

The concept goal has nowadays replaced the earlier concepts "drives" and "needs" as the factor providing direction of motivated action. In the theory of goals, there are three key areas discussed;

- goal-setting
- goal-orientation
- goal content and multiplicity

The first area, goal-setting, tries to explain differences in performance, in terms of differences in the individual's goal attributes. According to Dörnyei & Ushioda (2011) there are three important areas where goals can differ. These are: specificity, goal commitment and difficulty. The goal-setting theory is similar to the expectancy-value theories because in both theories commitment is seen enhanced when the individual feel that the goal is possible to achieve (expectancy) and important (task value). According to this theory the more difficult a goal is to achieve, the greater is the achievement which leads us to the next point saying that goals that are both difficult and specified lead to the highest performance. High commitment to goals is attained when the individual thinks that the goal is important and when the individual think that the goal attainable.

In contrast to the first area, goal-orientation theory was developed to explain children's performance and learning in school settings. The theory highlights two achievements in contrast to each other which students can adopt towards their work in school.

The first achievement is the "Mastery orientation" which means that the student focuses on the learning content and the pursuit of mastery goals (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). The other achievement is the "Performance orientation" that involves the pursuit of performance goals and with the students focusing on their ability to get good grades or outdoing other students.

The third and last area, goal content and multiplicity is different from the two theories mentioned above. This theory does not focus on the individual's performance or achievement. Instead, it focuses on exploring students' cognitive representations of what they want to achieve, the content of their goals, in a classroom situation. For example, the students could be making friends, pleasing the teacher, avoid punishment or maintain solidarity with peers. This theory focuses on how students' academic accomplishments are influenced by social goals and how social competence can interact positively for the development of academic competence. Goals are according to Wentzel (2000) "socially derived constructs that cannot be studied in isolation of the rules and conventions of culture and context" (Wentzel, 2000:106)

2.4.2 Motivation as a process

Dörnyei (2009) writes that there has been a shift in the field of motivation the last two decades because the motivational psychologists tend to incorporate cognitive concepts and variables in the theories: "Explanations of behavior have moved away from stimuli and reinforcement contingencies and instead emphasise learners' constructive interpretations of events and the role that their beliefs, cognitions, affects and values play in achievement situations" (Dörnyei, 2009:118). Inner forces such as will, instinct, desire and psychical energy is no longer seen as a reflection of motivation and neither is it behavioral terms like reinforcement and stimuli that tells us what motivation is. Instead the focus lies on the individual's thoughts, emotions and beliefs that are transformed into action. In this view motivation involves a mental process that lead into the initiation of action. Motivation is a process where goal-directed activity is investigated. This view of process-oriented motivation is convincing in some parts but it is does not tally with the everyday use of the term where motivation is seen as an emotional state or as a goal but not as a process.

2.4.3 Motivation to learn a second language

After surveyed the most influential mainstream psychological aspects of motivation, it is now time to turn to research that focuses on motivation to learn second language/s.

2.4.3.1 Gardner's social psychological approach

"Motivation in the present context refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes toward learning the language"

(Gardner, 1985). As mentioned above, motivation in second language learning came from social psychology and Gardner. That we can understand because a language cannot be separated from the learners' attitudes towards the community. Gardner's theory is that "students' attitudes towards the specific language group are bound to influence how successful they will be in incorporating aspects of that language" (Gardner, 1985:6).

According to Gardner (1985) we live in a multicultural world where the majority speaks, at least, a second language which underlines the essence of the social dimension in motivation to learn a second language. L2 motivation is defined by Gardner as "the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (Gardner, 1985:10). There are three important concepts when being motivated to learn a second language. These are: motivational intensity, an attitude towards the act of learning a language and a desire to learn the language.

According to Gardner's theory, motivation is seen as a mental engine that subsumes will, effort and how the students enjoy the task. Gardner thinks that a truly motivated student has all three components and that a mixture of all three is necessary to establish the meaning of motivation in a second language.

2.4.3.2 Clements's concept of linguistic self-confidence

There have been no expectancy-value model in L2 motivational research, but many components of the theory have been included in L2 constructs. Self-confidence in general means that an individual has the ability to generate results, perform a task and accomplish goals. It appears similar to self-efficacy but self-confidence is used in a more general sense since self-efficacy is task-specific. Linguistic self-confidence was introduced 1977 in the L2 literature and is described as "self-perceptions of communicative competence and concomitant low levels of anxiety in using the second language" (Dörnyei, 2009). Originally, the concept was used to describe a process in multi-ethnic settings that affect's an individual's motivation to learn and use the other speech communities language. Clement found out that in contexts where different language communities live together, the contact between the

individuals will be a motivational factor for intercultural interaction. Clement also found out that the theory of self-confidence can be applied in foreign language learning situations where there is little contact between the members of the L2 but more contact with the L2 culture, through media, as for example the case with the English language.

2.4.4 Different types of motivation when learning a second language

The four following sections are going to introduce and explain different types of motivation in second language learning.

2.4.4.1 Instrumental motivation

According to Brown (1994) instrumental motivation refers to motivation to learn a language for attaining instrumental goals, like furthering a career, translation and for reading technical material. Instrumental motivation refers to language learning as a type of motivation for pragmatic gains and practical purposes. The pragmatic gains could be such as getting a job, climbing up the social hierarchy or fulfilling a requirement to be able to graduate. These pragmatic gains subtract the idea of integrating with the society unlike integrative motivation.

Instrumentality has often been a highlighted variable in L2 motivational studies because of the perceived pragmatic benefits of L2 proficiency. For several language learners it is the usefulness of L2 proficiency that provides the greatest driving force in learning a new language. The instrumental approach on motivation appears relatively straightforward in terms of its content domain but in practical terms it is not as clear-cut as it seems. (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005:21)

2.4.4.2 Integrative motivation

Brown (1994) writes that the integrative motivation is when the learner wishes to integrate themselves within the culture of the second language group and to become a part of that society. If an individual likes to speak English, like English culture and wants to be identified as a member of the targeted language, this refers to an integrative motivation.

According to Dörnyei & Csizér (2005) integrativeness is a key component in Gardner's influential conceptualization of L2 motivation, where a positive outlook on the second language and its culture makes the learner score higher since he/she wants to become similar to the L1 speaker of English.

2.4.4.3 Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation is when there is no apparent reward except the activity itself. Students seem to engage in their activities for their own sake and not because they are getting a reward from outside. The intrinsic motivation aims at bringing internally rewarding consequences, like feelings of self-determination and competence. The motivation comes from the pleasure that the student feel from the task itself or from the satisfaction of completing a task. A student that is intrinsically motivated will work on a task because it is a challenge and because the student feels pleasure in finding a solution. An intrinsically motivated student does not work with a task because there is some reward involved such as a grade or a prize. Even intrinsic motivated students seek rewards, but these rewards are not enough to keep a student motivated. An intrinsically motivated student might want a good grade on a task but if the assignment is not interesting enough for the student, getting a good grade is not enough to maintain the student's motivation and effort put into the assignment.

2.4.4.4 Extrinsic motivation

In contrast to the intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation expects a reward from outside and beyond the self. Extrinsic rewards could be money, grades, prizes and positive feedback. Even behaviors to avoid punishment are extrinsically motivated. The rewards a student can get provide pleasure and satisfaction that a task would not provide. A student that is extrinsically motivated will still work on an assignment even if he/she has little interest in it because of the satisfaction than comes from the reward. Even if a student dislikes any subject in school, an extrinsically motivated student could still work hard on the assignment because the reward could be a good grade on the assignment. With that said, it does not mean that an extrinsically motivated student will not get any pleasure or satisfaction on completing a task. It just means that the pleasure they get from an external reward will keep motivating them even when they are not interested in the task.

2.5 The effects of motivation

According to Ormrod (2008) motivation has several effects on students' learning and behavior.

- "Motivation directs behavior toward particular goals" (Ormrod, 2008). Social cognitive theorists think that it is important for the individuals to set goals for themselves and direct

their behavior accordingly. Motivation helps determine the specific goals that the students have which help them decide whether they should finish their homework assignment or play computer games with their friends.

- "Motivation leads to increased effort and energy"(Ormrod, 2008).. Motivation helps determine the amount of effort and energy that learners spend in activities related to their goals and needs. It determines if the students are going to perform the task enthusiastically or apathetically
- "Motivation increases initiation of and persistence in activities" (Ormrod, 2008). If a learner really want to do a task, then it is more likely that he/she begins with it. It is also more likely that he/she continues working on it until they have completed it, even if there could be interruptions in the process. We could then say that motivation increases the students' time on the specific task which is an important factor that affects their learning and achievement.
- "Motivation affects cognitive processes" (Ormrod, 2008). Motivation has an impact on what learners pay attention to and how they process that. Students that are motivated often try to make an effort to really understand classroom material because they want to learn it meaningfully and reflect over how they could use the information/task in their own lives.
- "Motivation determines which consequences are reinforcing and punishing" (Ormrod, 2008). Learners that are motivated want to achieve success in the classroom. They will feel confident when they get an A and feel upset when they get a lower grade. Learners rally want to be accepted and respected and they will see the importance of being a member in the so-called popular group and they will be distressed if their classmates tease them.
- "Motivation often enhances performance" (Ormrod, 2008). The now known effects of motivation —goal-directed behavior, energy and effort, initiation and determination, cognitive processing, and the consequences impact—leads to an improved performance. Students who are motivated to learn in the classroom tend to achieve high grades. Students who, on the other hand, have little or no interest in school are at high risk for dropping out because they do not see the importance and value of staying.

As seen above, teachers can do a lot of things to motivate the students to behave and learn in different ways that will encourage their long-term goals, success and productivity.

There are also factors that could affect the learners' motivation. These 4 factors are according to Harmer (1991):

- Physical condition, the atmosphere in the class. If the classroom have bad lightning, is overcrowded or have a small board, the students can lose their motivation or have lowered motivation.
- Method of teaching, which means how the students are taught, affects their motivation. If they feel bored with the method used by the teacher, their motivation could be decreased.
- The teachers have an important role and are seen as a powerful variable of motivation and demotivation.
- Success, refers to the level of challenge intended by the teachers. The difficulty of the activity can lead the students to be motivated or demotivated. A very difficult task could make the students unmotivated but students could be equally unmotivated by a task that is too easy.

2.6 Previous research on motivation and gender.

Xiong (2010) found in her study that the girls were more interested in English and their motivations in learning English were stronger than the boys'. Many of the girls answered in her study that they liked English or were interested in the language while most of the boys were not interested in English, which shows that the schoolgirls' internal motivation is stronger than the schoolboys' when studying a second language.

Several studies made in Canada showed that males are less motivated to learn French than females. A study made by Netten (1999) showed that of 155 students dropping French, approximately two thirds were male. A study by Dörnyei & Csizér (2005) with 14-year olds Hungarian students left more recent evidence that male students are less motivated to learn a second language than female students. The results of the study showed that males

dominated the least motivated clusters. The findings show that girls display superior language attitudes to boys across the world. Their findings supports previous research reported from a wide variety of literature where girls are more successful in language learning. Dörnyei & Csizér found that in many countries, learning a second language is seen by the boys as a "girly" subject.

According to Kissau (2006) some studies examining gender differences and motivation has found that gender differences in school motivation are related to age or grade, and that the differences can vary depending on what motivational component that is examined. Depending on which subject that is examined, they found that young boys like and are good at mathematics and sport while young girls have greater ability beliefs than boys for music and writing. (Kissau 2006; Eccles, 2007)

A study made in Sweden showed that Sweden is a country with big gender differences when it comes to reading comprehension (Skolverket, 2006). The same study found that boys perform better than girls in mathematics and science while girls, on the other hand, are better at reading and understanding what they are reading. Girls have also shown a more positive attitude towards reading and perform better because of that.

Another study also showed that there are gender differences on student school competence. The results of this study showed that 9th- and 10th-grade French-Canadian female students felt more proficiency at school than male students. Further, an international study in Italy revealed that females from the age of 12 to 18 had higher levels of self-efficacy than the males. When examining gender differences in task value, recent research reveals that there are differences in reading but not in math. (Fan, 2010)

In earlier studies, it was found that male students had higher educational expectations than female students (Dweck & Gilliard, 1975) but many of the more recent studies show the contrary. Lupert, Cannon, & Telfer (2004) focused on a population of 7th and 10th grade students from Canada and found that more female students expects to graduate from high school and continue on to college than male students did. In all the research there is a shift on the differences in gender. This shift could be a reflection of the cultural changes over the last decades as females have higher social status today. That is why the present study wants to examine gender differences in relation to motivation to provide more recent and up-to-date evidence.

3. Analysis

In this section, the results of the study is analyzed.

3.1 The Informants

In class A, two of the 26 students were sick, leaving 24 students to answer the questionnaire. In B, two of the 27 students were absent, leaving 25 students to answer the questionnaire and in Class C three of the 30 students were sick, leaving 27 students to answer the questionnaire. All together in the study, 76 students were present, whereof 30 boys and 46 girls. The imbalance of boys and girls in the study could be of relevance to the results. There were no native speakers in the classes; therefore English is their second language.

3.2 The questionnaire

Because of the questionnaire's layout, where the students only could choose to agree or to disagree, there were in some cases students who created their own boxes in the middle. The present investigator was aware of the possibility that this could happen but chose consciously only to have two options (See section 1.2.2 the questionnaire). There were also cases where the students left a box empty or put a cross in both boxes. In those cases, their answers will not be included in the tables but will be discussed by the investigator to understand why it happened.

In the questionnaire, the statements appear in a special order because some of them fit together. Statement 1-4 express the students' abilities, reading, listening and writing. Statements 5-9 express the students' attitudes towards the English language. Statements 10-11 are about English as an international and important language. Statements 12-15 is about different types of motivation where each statement represents a type of motivation (12 - integrative motivation, 13 - instrumental motivation, 14 - intrinsic motivation, 15 - extrinsic motivation). The last statement, 16, is about motivation to see if the students feel that motivation is important when learning English.

3.3 Discussion of results

Table 1: I like hearing spoken English

| Agree | | | Disagree | |
|--------|------|--------|----------|--------|
| Class: | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| | | | | |

| | | | | |
|-------|----------|----------|--------|--------|
| A | 10 | 13 | 0 | 1 |
| B | 8 | 14 | 1 | 2 |
| C | 11 | 16 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 29 (97%) | 43 (93%) | 1 (3%) | 3 (7%) |

97% of the male students and 93% of the female students in the study likes to hear spoken English. Only 4 students in the study do not like to hear spoken English. In the curriculum for the upper secondary school (Skolverket, 2011b) the students should through the use of language in functional and meaningful context, develop a comprehensive communicative ability. This ability includes reception, which means that they need to understand spoken language and texts, be able to interact with each other both in speech and writing, as well as to adapt their language to different situations, purposes and recipients (Skolverket, 2011b). It is through spoken English that they can communicate with each other and learn that there are different dialects and accents in the English language.

Table 2: I like reading in English

| Agree | | | Disagree | |
|--------|------|--------|----------|--------|
| Class: | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 6 | 10 | 4 | 4 |
| B | 6 | 10 | 3 | 6 |
| C | 6 | 10 | 5 | 6 |

| | | | | |
|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Total | 18 (60%) | 30 (65%) | 12 (40%) | 16 (35%) |
|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|

When it comes to reading in English, the percentage is not as high as in the statement above. The numbers are relatively even between the sexes. 60% of the male students and 65% of the female students like to read in English. Previous research in the same area found bigger gender differences when reading was the one component examined. When Fan (2010) was examining gender differences in task value, she found out that there were differences in reading but not in math. Girls liked to read while the boys liked math better. Another study where gender differences were found was done in Sweden. This study showed that Sweden is a country with big gender differences when it comes to reading comprehension (Skolverket, 2006). Also this study found that boys perform better than girls in mathematics and science while girls, on the other hand, are better at reading and understanding what they are reading. Even though there are a little difference in the present study between the female (65%) and the male students (60%), it is not enough to draw any conclusions that there are gender differences in reading English. Both male and female students in this study like to read in English. If another subject were examined, maybe the numbers would have been different.

Table 3: I like to watch English tv

| Agree | | | Disagree | |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|--------|
| Class: | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 9 | 14 | 1 | 0 |
| B | 9 | 15 | 0 | 1 |
| C | 11 | 16 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 29 (97%) | 45 (98%) | 1 (3%) | 1 (2%) |

Both sexes also agree upon the fact that they like to watch English tv. 97% of the male students and 98% of the female students like to watch tv in English. Only 2 students in the whole study disagreed. This far, it is interesting to see that the male and female answers do not differentiate a lot. Catherine R Langan (1997) found in her study that "the main differences in television usage were related to gender" (Langan, 1997: no page nr). She found that men had control over what was watched on television while women had little control. Women that stayed at home and did not work watched television the most because they had access to it all day long but when the fathers or their men came home, they were the ones deciding what to look at. Today, in our country, we do not have very much stay-at-home women because most of the women in our society work which is one of the reasons that our community is partly equal between men and women. The present study shows that both male and female students have access to watch tv in English and they like to do it. There has been a cultural shift over the years and today, female students have higher social status than before.

Table 4: I like to write in English

| Class: | Agree | | Disagree | |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 2 | 9 | 8 | 5 |
| B | 2 | 9 | 7 | 7 |
| C | 9 | 7 | 2 | 9 |
| Total | 13 (43%) | 25 (54%) | 17 (57%) | 21 (46%) |

It is not until now that we can find some differences in statement 4, about writing in English. More than half of the female students (54%) like to write in English while less than half of the male students (43%) like it. This tally with Kissau´s and Eccles´ (2006) result which says that young boys like and are good at mathematics and sport while young girls have greater ability

beliefs than boys for music and writing. When talking to students, writing is the one thing that they could find boring or hard and since several studies show that girls are more motivated and more successful in language learning (Dörnyei & Csizér 2005), they can do it anyway because of the reward or the value attached to the task.

According to Skolverket (2007) almost 5 % of young adults in Sweden have problems with reading and/or writing. This could be a cruel circle from an early stage that made the student avoid writing or reading or choosing easy texts that is no challenge for them. Reading is a combination of comprehension, decoding and motivation. It is hard to establish a factor that could be the problem but some factors are taken in consideration. These are: problems on the school level (teacher, environment, classroom etc.), problems on the linguistic level (dialect, relation between text and speech), problems on the family level (reading habits, access to books, internet etc.), or problems on the individual level (concentration, hearing, reading/listening/writing disorders). It is important to consider all these levels when helping someone with problems reading or writing. Why more than half of the boys in the study do not like to write could be because of one or more factors mentioned above. Since the questionnaire did not take their family situations and identity in consideration, only a guess could be made about the boys' lack of interest to writing.

Table 5: I would like to speak English really well

| Class: | Agree | | Disagree | |
|--------|-----------|-----------|----------|--------|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 10 | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| B | 9 | 16 | 0 | 0 |
| C | 11 | 16 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 30 (100%) | 45 (100%) | 0 | 0 |

When it comes to speaking English really well, both male and female students agree. Everyone (100% of the female students and 100% of the male students) in the study would like to speak English fluently. One female in class A created a box in the middle of agree and disagree and her answer is not included in the table. This phenomena could mean that she does not want to take a stand and wants to be neutral but it could also mean she does not know if she in the future would like to speak English really well. Yet, another reason for creating a box in the middle could be because she does not understand the meaning of the statement. Since there were no follow-up questions, this is something that can only be speculated about. As clearly seen, there are no gender differences in the case of speaking English fluently.

Many students feel that they manage the English language when they speak it fluently. Since all the students in the study want to speak English very well, their motivation when it comes to spoken English is good. As mentioned earlier Ormrod (2008) thinks that motivation can direct behavior toward particular goals. If the students' wants to speak English really well, then that is their goal which they will work for. The motivation will help them decide whether they should do their homework or meet friends. A motivated student that wants to learn English fluently will probably choose to do the homework first because it is a part of their goal. Students who are motivated to learn in the classroom tend to achieve high grades. When they get high grades, they become more self-confident which in turn improves their performance which in this case is to talk English really well.

Gardner (1985) said that a language cannot be separated from the learners' attitudes towards the community. How successful a student is in learning a language has to do with the learners' attitude towards the specific language. The students in the present study have a positive attitude towards the spoken English language which will help them be successful in their language learning. Gardner (1985) also underlines the importance of the social dimension in motivation to learn a language. Since all the students in the study, both male and female, want to speak English fluently it could be because of the social dimension. They maybe want to speak to other English-speaking students. Today, there is a whole world online on the internet where we can speak to other English-speaking people through a microphone on the computer. Both boys and girls "meet", play and talk to other people with English as a first or second language through the internet which could be a factor that makes them motivated in learning to speak English fluently.

Table 6: To be sophisticated, one must know English

| Agree | | | Disagree | |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Class: | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 6 | 4 | 4 | 10 |
| B | 8 | 13 | 1 | 3 |
| C | 7 | 12 | 4 | 4 |
| Total | 21 (70%) | 29 (63%) | 9 (30%) | 17 (37%) |

When it comes to being sophisticated, 70% of the male students think that you must know English to be sophisticated while 63% of the female students think the same. Sophistication is a complex term and could have different meaning for different people. When a second language learner wants to be part of the L2 culture and wishes to integrate themselves into the society it could be because they feel that the society is sophisticated. If they think that the culture or the society is sophisticated, then maybe they think that it is because of the language and that managing that language could make them sophisticated as well. If the students want to learn a language for attaining instrumental goals like getting a career, they could think that the career makes them sophisticated. If the goal is to learn the English language for getting a job or career, then maybe they think that learning to speak English is going to make them sophisticated.

Motivation can affect the cognitive processes implies Ormrod (2008). He says that motivation has an impact on what learners pay attention to and how they process that. Students that are motivated often try to make an effort to really understand classroom material because they want to learn it meaningfully and reflect over how they could use the information/task in their own lives. If they pay attention to the sophisticated, for example royal, English-speaking people, they will make an effort to really learn how they talk because they could then use that language in their own lives to be sophisticated. Both male and female

students in the present study want to be sophisticated and they think that knowing English would help them with that.

Table 7: It is a waste of time to learn English

| Agree | | | Disagree | |
|--------|------|--------|-----------|----------|
| Class: | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 0 | 0 | 10 | 14 |
| B | 0 | 0 | 9 | 16 |
| C | 0 | 2 | 11 | 14 |
| Total | 0 | 2 (4%) | 30 (100%) | 44 (96%) |

100% of the male students and 96% of the female students think that it is not a waste of time to learn English. They disagreed on the statement above which said that English is a waste of time to learn. Only 2 female students in the whole study think that it is a waste of time to learn the English language. It is good that the students think that it is important with learning English. When they feel that something is important, Ormrod (2008) says that motivation increases initiation of and persistence in activities. If a learner really think that something is important, then it is more likely that he/she begins with it. It is also more likely that he/she continues working on it until they have completed it, even if there could be interruptions in the process. When the students think that learning English is important and not a waste of time, that could increase the students’ time on the specific task which is an important factor that affects their learning and achievement. For a deeper analysis about that English is important to know, see table 10.

Table 8: It is fun to learn English

| Agree | | | Disagree | |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Class: | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 7 | 10 | 3 | 3 |
| B | 6 | 12 | 3 | 4 |
| C | 7 | 10 | 4 | 6 |
| Total | 20 (67%) | 32 (71%) | 10 (33%) | 13 (29%) |

67% of the male students think that English is fun to learn while 71% of the female students think the same. A female student in class A created an own box in the middle of agree and disagree which she called sometimes. The reason for that is probably that she thinks about different lessons and whether they are fun or not and realizes that she thinks it is fun sometimes. Her answer is not included in the table.

To think that something is fun is important for your motivation. When you think that something is fun to learn, it increases your effort and energy in the task (Ormrod, 2008). When you think that something is fun, it is easier to set up long-term goals and needs. Since you find it fun, you work harder and longer to perform the task and you do it enthusiastically. If a learner really want to do a task because he/she thinks that it is fun, then it is more likely that he/she begins with it. If the learner find the English language fun to learn, it is more likely that he/she continues working on it until they have completed it, even if there could be interruptions in the process. We could then say that if the student finds the English language fun, it increases the students' time on the specific task which is an important factor that affects their learning and achievement.

More female students than male students thinks that English is fun to learn but the numbers are pretty even to say that there are gender differences. Since previous research found that girls were more interested in English and their motivations in learning English were stronger than the boys' (Xiong, 2010) that could be the reason for more female students

in the present study thinking that English is fun to learn. If their motivation is high, they will automatically think that it is fun to learn English.

Table 9: English is difficult to learn

| Agree | | | Disagree | |
|--------|---------|----------|----------|----------|
| Class: | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 1 | 3 | 9 | 10 |
| B | 2 | 6 | 7 | 10 |
| C | 1 | 8 | 10 | 8 |
| Total | 4 (13%) | 17 (38%) | 26 (87%) | 28 (62%) |

87% of the male students and 62% of the female students think that English is not difficult to learn. One of the female students in class A created a box in the middle which probably means that she thinks that English is difficult to learn sometimes or that she wants to be neutral and not answer at all. Her answer is not included in the table above.

Ormrod (2008) means that motivation determines which consequences are reinforcing and punishing. Learners that are motivated want to achieve success in the classroom. They will feel confident when they get an A and feel upset when they get a lower grade. If the learners feel that English is difficult to learn, that could make them nervous and anxious which in turn could lead to lower grades. A lower grade could in turn make their classmates tease them which is hard because every student wants to be accepted and part of the so-called popular group.

In this statement there are some gender differences, more male students (87%) than female students (62%) think that English is not difficult to learn while 38% of the female students think that it is hard to learn English. The reason for that could be the fact that male students do not want to reveal that they think it is hard because they do not want to look

ridiculous. Dörnyei & Csizér (2005) found that in many countries, learning a second language is seen by the boys as a 'girly' subject and the male students do not want to find a 'girly' subject difficult to learn. Even though male students do not find it hard to learn English, they do not achieve as good grades as the female students which are strange. The reason for that could be that male students are less motivated to learn a second language than female students which previous research shows (Dörnyei, 2005, Xiong, 2010).

Table 10: It is important to know English

| Class: | Agree | | Disagree | |
|--------|-----------|-----------|----------|--------|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 10 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| B | 9 | 16 | 0 | 0 |
| C | 11 | 16 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 30 (100%) | 46 (100%) | 0 | 0 |

All the male (100%) and female (100%) students agrees upon the fact that English is important to know. Why they think that language is important to know could only be speculated about since there was no follow-up question. Statements 11-15 (See Appendix) discusses why the English language is important to know and whether it is important for getting a reward or not. The students in the present study think that the English language is important for furthering careers, attaining goals, travelling aboard and getting rewards. High motivation and high commitment to goals is attained when the individual think that the goal is important and when the individual think that the goal attainable. Since the students think that the English language is important, that would increase their motivation and help them attain their goal to learn English as a second language. For a more in depth analysis about why the

English language is important, see the discussions under the tables 12-15.

Table 11: English is an international language and it is good for travelling aboard

| Agree | | | Disagree | |
|--------|-----------|-----------|----------|--------|
| Class: | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 10 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| B | 9 | 16 | 0 | 0 |
| C | 11 | 16 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 30 (100%) | 46 (100%) | 0 | 0 |

100% of the male students and 100% of the female students think that the English language is an international language and good for travelling aboard. That could be one of the reasons for thinking that the English language is important which all the students agreed upon in the previous statement.

Table 12: The English language is important to know to make myself part of the culture and to be a part of the English society. (Integrative motivation)

| Agree | | | Disagree | |
|--------|------|--------|----------|--------|
| Class: | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 10 | 8 | 0 | 5 |

| | | | | |
|-------|----------|----------|---------|----------|
| B | 7 | 13 | 2 | 2 |
| C | 7 | 13 | 3 | 3 |
| Total | 24 (83%) | 34 (77%) | 5 (17%) | 10 (23%) |

This statement discusses the integrative motivation where the students think that the English language is important to make themselves part of the culture and to be a part of the English society. 83% of the male students and 77% of the female students agrees with the statement above. One of the female students in class A, put a cross in the middle, creating an own box. This could be because she did not understand the statement or because she thinks that it is important to be integrated within the culture sometimes or because she wanted to answer neutral. In class B, a female student made a question mark after the question and did not put a cross in any of the boxes while a male student in class C put a cross in both the box for agree and disagree. The female that put a question mark after the question did probably not understand the statement or did not agree with the formulation of the statement. The male that put a cross in both boxes could have done that consciously because he did not want to take a stand or it could be a mistake. In any of the cases, only a speculation could be done since there were no follow-up questions. Both male and female students in the present study want to be integrated into the second language community to be able to meet and communicate with the members of the L2 community.

Gardner (1985) means that "motivation /.../ refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes toward learning the language" (Gardner, 1985:6). He says that a language cannot be separated from the learners' attitudes towards the community. Gardner's theory is that "students' attitudes towards the specific language group are bound to influence how successful they will be in incorporating aspects of that language" (Gardner, 1985:6). If the learner has a favorable attitude towards the English culture and society and wants to be part of that society, then that will make them more successful in the aspect of learning that society's language.

17% of the male students and 23% of the female students disagreed with the statement above. This could be the case since some second language learners do not have enough contact with the L2 community to be able to form attitudes about them. Dörnyei (1990) says that an L2 learner that has little or no contact with the target language often wants to learn the language for more practical reasons instead of the desire to be part of the community or society. That could be the reason for why 17% of the male students and 23% of the female students disagreed on the statement above, because they do not know enough about the second language community for wanting to be part of their society.

Table 13: The English language is important to know for goals like getting a good career. (Instrumental motivation)

| Agree | | | Disagree | |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|--------|
| Class: | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 5 | 13 | 5 | 1 |
| B | 9 | 15 | 0 | 1 |
| C | 8 | 15 | 3 | 1 |
| Total | 22 (73%) | 43 (93%) | 8 (27%) | 3 (7%) |

When it comes to knowing the English language for goals like getting a good career we talk about the instrumental motivation. 73% of the male students and 93% of the female students agreed on the statement about instrumental motivation. In the present study, the majority of the female and male students think that English is important to know for attaining goals like furthering a career. However, a very high percentage of the female students agreed while the male students' percentage was lower than the females.

The findings of the present study about instrumental motivation are the same as Xiong (2010) found in her study. Even she found that girls have higher instrumental

motivation than boys, which is an advantage of the girls who study English. According to Xiong (2010) the schoolgirls who study a second language are interested in it because they want to gain more knowledge and improve their abilities which in turn can help attaining goals like furthering a career, climbing up the social hierarchy or fulfilling a requirement to be able to graduate.

Table 14: I like to learn English for the activity itself and not for any reward. (Intrinsic motivation)

| Agree | | | Disagree | |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Class: | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 7 | 9 | 2 | 5 |
| B | 7 | 11 | 2 | 5 |
| C | 6 | 11 | 5 | 4 |
| Total | 20 (69%) | 31 (69%) | 9 (31%) | 14 (31%) |

69% of the male students and 69% of the female students agreed upon the fact that they like to learn English for the activity itself and not for any reward. In class A, a male student did not answer this statement but left a box empty which also a female student did in class C. Their answers are not included in the table above.

In contrast to this study, previous studies and research show that girls’ intrinsic motivation is stronger than boys’ in the foreign language studying since the girls aim at gaining knowledge in English (Xiong, 2010, Fan, 2010). The process of learning English makes them contented and therefore they could not be disturbed by external factors. The results of this study show that both male and female students like to learn English for the activity itself and not for any reward. Most of the male (69%) and female (69%) students in the study focus on the learning content and the pursuit of mastery goals instead of doing it to

get a reward. This achievement is called "Mastery orientation" (Dörnyei & Ushisoda, 2011) and is part of the goal-orientation theory which focuses on the goal instead of on the reward.

Table 15: It is important to know English to get a reward from other people. (Extrinsic motivation)

| Agree | | | Disagree | |
|--------|---------|----------|----------|----------|
| Class: | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 5 | 6 | 4 | 8 |
| B | 3 | 8 | 6 | 8 |
| C | 1 | 10 | 10 | 5 |
| Total | 9 (31%) | 24 (53%) | 20 (69%) | 21 (47%) |

Even though as many male as female students answered in the previous statement that they like to learn the English language for the activity itself and not for any reward, it has been shown the contrary in this statement where more female (53%) than male (31%) students think that English is important to know to get a reward from other people. Two of the students, one male student in class A and one female student in class C left the boxes empty and did not answer the statement with agree or disagree. The reason for that could be that they did not understand the statement or that they did not want to take a stand and therefore left the boxes empty.

The result about this statement is contradictory with previous research that says that girls' intrinsic and internal motivation is stronger than schoolboys' when learning a second language (Xiong, 2010). More than half of the female students in this study (53%) think that English is important to know to get a reward from the outside which does not tally with Xions (2010) result that female students have a strong intrinsic motivation. Since 69%

of the male student disagreed on the statement about extrinsic motivation, we could say that the result of this statement in this study does not tally with the result that Xiong (2010) or Fan (2010) found since the male students in this study does not think that English is important to know to get a reward from outside.

Part of the goal-orientation theory is the "Performance orientation" (Dörnyei & Ushisoda, 2011) which involves the pursuit of performance goals and where the student focuses on getting a good grade or outdoing other students. This type of achievement makes the students focus on the grade or reward which makes them extrinsically motivated and according to the result of this study, more female than male students think that the reward from other people is important. The reward could be a good grade or positive feedback.

Table 16: It is important to be motivated when learning English

| Agree | | | Disagree | |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|--------|
| Class: | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| A | 7 | 14 | 3 | 0 |
| B | 8 | 14 | 1 | 2 |
| C | 7 | 16 | 4 | 0 |
| Total | 22 (73%) | 44 (96%) | 8 (27%) | 2 (4%) |

Almost all female students, 96%, in the study think that it is important to be motivated when learning English while 73% of the male students think the same. The result of this statement is consistent since many other researchers found that girls have stronger motivation than boys when learning a second language (Skolverket, 2006; Netten, 1999; Xiong, 2010; Fan, 2010). The numbers and percentage is not that uneven but there are more girls than boys to find motivation important. Why they think that motivation is important can only be speculated

about since there were no follow-up questions to the statement. One potential role could be the fact that different types of motivation can motivate different genders since the study found that more female students than male students were instrumentally motivated. Female students think that gaining more knowledge and improving their abilities in English could help attaining goals like furthering a career, climbing up the social hierarchy or fulfilling a requirement to be able to graduate. They see motivation in English as a way of getting where and what they want.

3.4 Pedagogical consequences

Since English is a global and international language, it is important that the students feel motivated and wants to learn English (Crystal, 2003). English is part of every programme at upper secondary school in Sweden which means that every student has to learn the language. If the students are motivated, have long-term goals and think that the English language is fun and important to learn, that increases their opportunities to learn the English language. Since the English language surrounds us every day in different areas like culture, politics, education and economy, knowing the language will increase the students' opportunities to participate in a globalized world.

According to Harmer (1991) there are 4 factors that could affect the learners' motivation. These are:

- Physical condition, the atmosphere in the class. If the classroom have bad lightning, is overcrowded or have a small board, the students can lose their motivation or have lowered motivation.
- Method of teaching, which means how the students are taught, affects their motivation. If they feel bored with the method used by the teacher, their motivation could be decreased.
- The teachers have an important role and are seen as a powerful variable of motivation and demotivation.
- Success, refers to the level of challenge intended by the teachers. The difficulty of the activity can lead the students to be motivated or demotivated. A very difficult task could make the students unmotivated but students could be equally unmotivated by a task that is too easy.

These four factors combined are important to know as an intended teacher since they could affect the students' motivation in learning a second language. It is also essential to realize that there might be differences between the sexes in a class but it is not important to see which gender that has the highest motivation, but to be able to motivate both male and female students in the classroom.

As mentioned in section 1.2.1, The informants of this study are seen to be representative of students of English in the Swedish upper secondary school since most of the classes are an uneven number of boys and girls. Further research in this subject could be done with a larger and more diverse group of informants.

4. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to analyze the learners' motivational attitudes towards the English language and the possible relationship between gender and motivation. The study shows that when it comes to reading and hearing spoken English, there are not big differences between the sexes. Both male and female students like to hear spoken English, read in English and watch English tv. It is not until statement 4 about writing in English that we can see some differences. More than half of the female students (54%) like to write in English while less than half of the male students (43%) like it. This tally with Kissau's and Eccles' (2006) result which says that young girls have greater ability beliefs than boys for writing and music while young boys like and are good at mathematics and sport.

To summarize the findings, the present study did not find big gender differences when it comes to the overall term of motivation, but when different motivational components were examined, some gender differences were found. When it comes to the motivational component of writing in English, more female than male students like to write in English. More female students than male students also think that English is difficult to learn even though they usually perform better than boys and get higher grades. Both male and female students in the study think that English is important to know but there are some differences between the sexes when it comes to why it is important. Female students have higher instrumental motivation which means that they think that the English language is important to know to attain goals like furthering a career or graduate. More female students than male students in the study also think that it is important to know English to get a reward from outside. That reward could be a good grade or positive feedback from the teacher or another student. Finally, when the students were asked about the importance of being motivated when learning English, more female students thought that motivation was important when learning

a second language. But the overall result of the study shows that there are not big differences between the sexes when it comes to motivation. As a future teacher, it is not important to see which gender that has the highest motivation, but to be able to motivate both male and female students in the classroom.

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Informants: Three classes at an upper secondary school in Southern Sweden.

Questionnaire: A questionnaire consisting of 16 statements with two alternatives to answer (See Appendix).

Secondary Material:

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Questionnaire
What I think about English

Put a cross for female or male.

Female []

Male []

Choose if you agree or disagree.

1. I like hearing spoken English.

Agree []

Disagree []

2. I like reading in English.

Agree []

Disagree []

3. I like to watch English tv.

Agree []

Disagree []

4. I like to write in English.

Agree []

Disagree []

5. I would like to speak English really well.

Agree []

Disagree []

6. To be sophisticated, one must know English.

Agree []

Disagree []

Turn the page -->

7. It is a waste of time to learn English.

Agree []

Disagree []

8. It is fun to learn English.

Agree []

Disagree []

9. English is difficult to learn.

Agree []

Disagree []

10. It is important to know English.

Agree []

Disagree []

11. English is an international language and it is good for travelling aboard.

Agree []

Disagree []

12. The English language is important to know to make myself part of the culture and to be a part of English society.

Agree []

Disagree []

13. The English language is important to know for goals like getting a good career.

Agree []

Disagree []

14. I like to learn English for the activity itself and not for any reward.

Agree []

Disagree []

15. It is important to know English to get a reward from other people.

Agree []

Disagree []

16. It is important to be motivated when learning English.

Agree []

Disagree []

Thank you for participating!