UK language learner motivation in the age of Global English: what motivation is left?

Other

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L1=English Language Learners:
  • Motivation?
  • Effect of Global English?
  • Distance & Campus learners?

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Collaborators:
Newcastle: Prof Florence Myles
Durham: Theresa Federici
Rationale:
Empirical research so far:

– emphasis on learning English as a foreign language
– very little on L2 motivation at Tertiary level
– no comparative studies of Campus/Distance students
Societal/educational background:

- Language learning decline in UK at Secondary & Tertiary level
- Spread of Global English: umbrella term for varieties of E. used as foreign, second & lingua franca
- Englishisation: influence of E. in non-E. speaking countries (studying in Europe..)
- Monolingual UK culture

What motivation is left for L1 English speakers?

• Englishisation & Global English:
  – Effect of English infiltration into L2?
  – L2 learner aspiration to speak & integrate into community:
    • Ubiquity of Global English culture in contrast to availability of other language cultures: how to develop L2 integrative orientation?
    • Englishisation as
      – hindrance (‘They just want to speak English with me’)?
      – threat to integrative motivation?
      – distorting & spoiling L2 culture?
Theoretical background: LL motivation research

• the psycho-cognitive model of L2 motivation: Dörnyei
  – emphasis on immediate learning context (school, teacher..)
  – motivation as process
  – Integrative orientation & self-image as L2 speaker: curent revalidation

Self Determination Theory:
• *competence* (the ability to attain internal and external outcomes, the ability to be efficacious about them)
• *relatedness* (the need to develop secure and satisfying social connections with others)
• *autonomy* (the need to self-initiate and self-regulate)

**more suited for:** adult learner, post-compulsory, independent study

Research design

- Comparative: OU, Durham & Newcastle University: Beginners only
- questionnaire with demographics, 12 motivation & 6 Global English questions
- informed by focus groups & pilot studies
- 2 collection points for OU students:
  - Start of course: Newcastle, Durham, OU
  - End of course: OU
The data
Reliability

• Chronbach Alpha of all 18 questions: .851

• Principal Components Analysis of all 18 questions: .5337
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OU X 1</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OU X 2</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prior target language contact

• Most students (61%) little contact with speakers of target language
• Lowest contact Durham (72 % report no contact, 56% among non-linguists)
• 70% no prior contact at Newcastle (65% among non-linguists).
• OU students highest prior contact (only 47% no contact)
• T-test: significant (sig.000) in all 4 questions: OU students more contact with target language speakers.
Self rated language competencies

• Prior to studying: students self-rated language competencies (fluency in all L2s they know)

• Durham students report most, OU students fewest, and to a much less fluent degree than Campus students (sign.000)

• Worthy of note:
  – OU: high prior L2 contact & low self rated language competencies
  – Campus: low prior L2 contact & high self rated language competencies
**Means** (Likert scale 1-5: 1=agree strongly, 5=disagree strongly)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation questions</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>2.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplishment</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>2.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual stimulation</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrative</td>
<td>1.90</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global English question</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ubiquity of English use in L2</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ubiquity of Global English</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global English as threat</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 speakers’ use of English</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison to European learners</td>
<td>1.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LL worth while despite Global English</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Integrative Orientation:

• Highly motivated
• mean at OU: 1.88, at Durham: 1.73.
• Non-linguists at Durham & Newcastle as well as Newcastle linguists: mean 2.0
• differences Campus-Distance not significant
Instrumental Orientation:

• Studying for a Qualification:
  – mean is 3.06 at OU and 2.80 at other Universities

• Significant difference (sig .001)

• OU students less motivated by qualifications
**Instrumental Orientation**

*Target language as important world language*

- mean 2.27 at OU and 2.04 at other Unis

- difference (sig .003) between OU and Campus students, OU students viewing the target language as less important in the world

- Results depend largely on type of languages (small vs large, poor vs rich L1 community)
Instrumental Orientation

Professional development seen as important:

• Mean 3.16 at OU, 2.35 at other Unis
• Sig. 000
• Sig.000 also if all 3 Instrumental questions taken together
• OU students > lower Instrumental Motivation
I can learn languages to a high standard
I am a good linguist

> Accomplishment Construct

- Overall students see themselves as good linguists.
- Mean 2.73 at OU, 2.45 at other Unis
- OU students: more patchy:
  - 23% neutral response (as opposed to 18% in cohort)
  - 10% disagree (as opposed to only 5% in cohort).
- OU students: lower perception of linguistic accomplishment (sig .000) in 2 of 3 questions
- only ‘Wanting to speak with fluency’ scored equal for OU/Campus
I like the intellectual stimulation of LL. LL to keep my brain active

> Intellectual Stimulation Construct:

• intellectual challenge: OU mean 1.86, other Unis: 1.72, = small difference .020
• LL X to keep brain active: OU mean 1.80 , other Unis 2.19. = Sig. difference .000
• BUT: Both questions together:
  • No sig. difference (mean at OU 1.88 vs 1.96 at other Unis
Valuing language learning as part of education

>Knowledge construct:

- 73% of all students view knowing a FL as part of good education
- No sig. difference between Unis
- mean 2.15 at OU, 2.03 at other Unis
- non-linguists agree more (80%) than linguists (70%) = sig.000
Global English &

Englishisation

questions
English in the target language

• Even native speakers of X find it hard to avoid using English words in many contexts, e.g. IT, business.
  • somewhat dependant on dependant on target language (sig. 019)

• English words are used all the time in X.
  • sig. 000: dependant on target language

• The smaller the language/close proximity to E speaking country. the higher the perceived infiltration

>Dependent on target language studied
English as a threat to X?

• No Uni differences but polarised response:
  - 45% agree (strongly)
  - 29% no opinion
  - 28% disagree (strongly)

• Sig.000: dependant on language studied. > Students of Welsh and Quechua > small, high contact with English highest agreement to this statement

• students of larger languages varied responses
Perception of Global English

- *Is English spoken everywhere?* polarised response:
  - 43% agree (strongly)
  - 39% disagree (strongly)
- No sig. differences Campus/OU
- Not dependent on language studied
Global English makes learning other languages unnecessary

- 86% disagree/disagree strongly
- No sig. differences Campus/OU
- not dependent on target language
British students as as capable of learning languages as Europeans

- 84% agree/agree strongly, 86% at the OU
- No sig. Uni difference
- not dependent on target language
Age

• Even native speakers of X find it hard to avoid using English words in many contexts, e.g. IT, business:
  - sig. 003: Older students are more likely to agree.

• British students are just as capable of learning languages as other Europeans:
  - younger students tended to agree more with this statement (sig.038)
Summary

- Instrumental Orientation & Accomplishment quite low
- Intellectual stimulation & integrative orientation high
- Awareness of Englishisation does not interfere with desire to learn L2
- Learning languages despite Global English: great consensus
- English as threat to L2? polarised responses:
  - similarly large groups: agree/neutral/disagree
  - somewhat dependant on target language studied
Differences OU-Campus

Campus: prior knowledge of languages: highest at Durham, then Newcastle
Campus students (esp. Durham) have less prior language contact
Campus students more motivated in nearly all respects (intellectual stimulation, knowledge L2 culture) and significantly in:
- ling. accomplishment
- Instrumental
Discussion/Future research

- Impact of Global English?
- Self Determination Theory & motivation?
- Comparison to European learners?
- …
• Motivation results & Self Determination Theory

• Global English results & Self Determination Theory
Motivation results &
Self Determination Theory

• **Competence**: Lower accomplishment scores in OU students are a concern:
  – a vicious circle?
  – due to lack of prior ling. experience?
  – Prior contact with L2 community: little/no linguistic effect?

• **Autonomy**: Intellectual stimulation/self development important > positive as
  – Independent from Global English movement
  – largely independent from learning environment
Motivation results & Self Determination Theory

- **Relatedness: Integrative Orientation**
  - little exposure to L2 culture (Quechua, Japanese…): How can it develop? Distorted perception of target culture?
  - re-define: Emphasis on L2 *Ideal Speaker* instead (Dörnyei) and/or LL community *not* target language L1 speakers (Lamb)
  - how to support LL integrative orientation?

- **Relatedness: Instrumental orientation**:  
  - clearly less important for Distance learner  
  - accept or try to increase?
Global English and SDT

- **Autonomy**: Does perception of Englishisation increase some L2 motivations (learning *despite*, *creating new learner identity*…)?

- **Relatedness**: consensus that LL is worth while despite Global English: Why? Is this belief Instrumental? Integrative? *or* linked to autonomy aspects such as personal/intellectual development?
Global English and SDT

- **Competence**: positive comparison to European LL- good but why? > research

  - contrast to actual UK linguistic achievement
    - Explore possible student rationales:
      ‘We are as capable but don’t achieve as much because…’
        - languages are taught wrongly: system failure
        - historic reasons, Europhobia
        - Global English & Englishisation impeding motivation
        - ...

Relevance for language teaching at HE?

- instrumental motivation lower than expected > raise awareness?
- Global English not impeding motivation in self selected linguists > increase this awareness in other students?
- positive comparison to European learners > foster attitude, defy popular beliefs)
- long term goals:
  - increase LL uptake/ fight decline
  - safeguard plurality of language offers & uptake in UK
Thanks for listening

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