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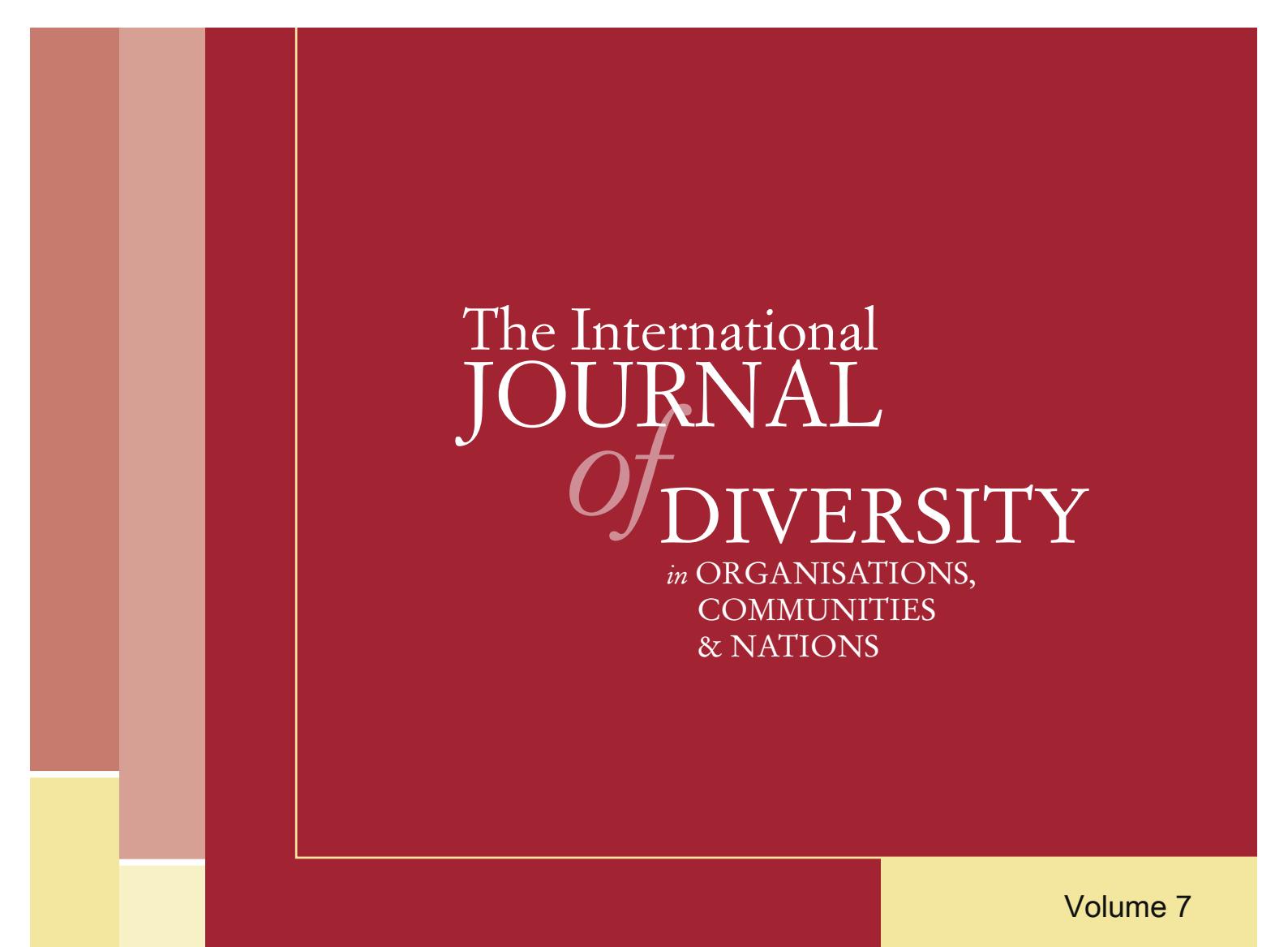
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The Attitudes, Age and Gender in Second Language
Learning and Psychosocial Contexts

Andrade Figueiredo and Carlos Fernandes Silva

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The Attitudes, Age and Gender in Second Language Learning and Psychosocial Contexts

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Abstract: In the scope of the battery developed – BAMA (motivational, affective and learning aspects assessment), in PhD investigation, we are able, in clinical and fundamental (research) contexts, to assess the influence of several factors in the second-language/culture learning context and to detect differences between children and adolescents with migratory experience in the psychosocial and academic growth. It's our intention present results in what respect to the different learning styles manifested by each nationalities group and also differences between ages and gender. The children and female present means more favourable in several psychological variables, as predictors in the languages learning, what we can relate to findings of other investigations. Age, gender and also the nationality are, effectively, factors in the languages acquisition/learning achievement and in the attitudes developed. The individuals are from several countries, with different mother languages and different experiences. There are results that could help to understand behaviours and achievement that different students, according to neuropsychological and linguistic predispositions, present in second language acquisition/learning and in the biopsychosocial development.

Keywords: Second-Language Acquisition, Nationality, Attitudes, Age, Gender

Introduction

OVER THE LAST two decades, increasingly more studies have been made on the field of language acquisition, and the various relationships identified in the acquisition process as follows: motivational, affective, cognitive, and biological factors, which directly affect academic success and in the development of a balanced mentally healthy person. The science faces the diversity in which our nations find themselves, and tries to explain, driven by its own heuristic spirit and or the pedagogical and political emergency, through different research avenues, how the language learner develops in his effort to learn and acquire the language as a social global being. The rates and routes of migration have contributed, in addition to the economic and political issue, to the understanding of how the capabilities / competencies of the subjects and how the psychological restraints can jeopardize these.

In this study, after a short theoretical revision, we will show part of a battery of tests assessing psychological aspects in a specific context of second language (L2) learning, as well as some inferences resulting from applying these tests to a total sample of 584 students (first phase in Barcelona and the second in Portugal) with migratory experience and with an age range of 7 to 21 years old. The data collected and discussed will concern perception differences between the child and the adolescent, and also the genders, regarding various dimensions of motivation,

the attitude and the differences of declared anxiety of the subject in the context of second language learning both inside and outside the classroom. Our object is to show how two distinct samples (Catalan and Portuguese) show different profiles on the level of these psychological factors especially in respect to age. The hypotheses background research is based, here, in the relation between different factors and probability of development disorders at the motivational and psychological level, compromising cognitive strategies and skills. The profile could not be always based in the fact that the younger students as the more motivated and well-succeed subjects in the second language learning contexts, because also the age variable could not be the main factor, but other factors. Our basis is that the nationalities, the mother tongues and the target language are, amongst other, limiting factors, but in different dimensions and not always lied, in the psychosocial and academic predisposition of the subjects, in different dimensions.

Identity in the Cultural and Linguistic Diversity: Psychological and Cognitive Preconditions

The social competence determines the success of the subject in his communication and cognitive competence in general. The aspect of mother tongue (MT/L1) and the language competency of the subjects in itself, is not the most important factor, but most probably, it is the cultural background that de-



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termines the predisposition and cognitive readiness for learning languages, as well as their attitude and representation of the actual linguistic competencies and their identity. The subject with migratory experience is affected on various personal levels (Lier, 2004; Lantolf, 2000) related with the learning of languages (the five selves). The communication competence is directly related to self-esteem and self-confidence and motivation of the learner and as a social being. These dimensions develop at different time rates, when the learner is in a different context, this cause a confrontation on a ecological and interpersonal level (p.118, Lier 2004) and it is the self termed conceptual that is most affected in the context of learning of L2, since this implies expectations, investment, motivation, notion of power control and self discursive (p.118, Lier 2004). We have here what Lier calls “theory of me”, where identity, roles, beliefs of ‘the me’ are found (Clyne, n.d.). This generates an attitude and position that influences the perception of competence and the perception of the other. The attitudes, in preference to the motives, have a greater influence in the learning process of the L2, note that these attitudes are shared by the family and this begins at home, well before the individual starts training, and we know that a 4/5 year old child already shows an attitude and decision that leads towards a target. Various studies, done in the same scientific field, come to assert the fact of personality (favourable the extrovert/introvert) motivation (not only of integrative but also instrumental), socio-cultural attitude (assimilation/generalization, influence of family background) and cognition (strategies and learning styles) being the self-analysis driving the learner of languages, according to Gillette (in Faerch & Kasper (1987), in the process of acquisition/learning, especially as the subject gets older (McLaughlin, 1985). It is interesting to see how Gillette (op.cit.) concludes in his studies that the strategies of the learner of a second language (L2) are mere symptoms of certain predispositions – motivational, personal, socio-cultural and cognitive – which have to be learnt quickly (the strategies) to get success in the linguistic and social tasks. Gardner et al. (2003) did a meta-analysis in order to research the relationship between the five variables of the socio educational method proposed by Gardner (2005): integration, attitudes towards the learning situation, motivation, integrative orientation, and instrumental orientation, starting by consulting a vast database which has been built through the contributions of other studies in the learning area of the Second Language and the related psychological factors. The results prove that the correlations between the academic success (Language) and motivation show such a significant congruence not found in the same relationship between the success

in learning and other variables. Not even the age or the language concerned influences these results. On the other hand authors such as Rod (1989) believe that a study based in the analysis of the intervening factors in the learning of L2, requires looking at learning and the learner as a whole. Dörney (2003) understands the manipulated human action in simultaneous, physical and psychological contexts, determining and affecting cognition, behaviour and success. The child learns the language by feeling and linguistic sense, but inevitably the meta-language of the child is violated by the imposition of rules without the exercise of reflection. Each student has an ISL (individual system of language) and a ILF (individual linguistic factor – different code levels, at the time of communication). Both languages (if this is the case) do not enter a vacuum, but into the student, through his process of filtering where the individual characteristics of the subject act – ‘in dissent’ (Cazacu, 1979). It is not enough to learn to read, write, speak and listen, there is also the acquisition of behavioural patterns different from those which we are used to (Sanz, 2005). William & Burden (in Baker, 1997) states that “Learning of a foreign language involves far more than simply learning skills, or a system of rules, or a grammar, it involves an alteration of self-image, the adoption of new social and cultural behaviors and ways of being and therefore has a significant impact on the social nature of learner” (p.53).

Regarding the issue of motivation, according to Schiefele (1963^a in Baker 1997), in motivation we find, in an intrinsic manner, the attitude and the motive, but attitude is something more constant: “not liable to much change” (p.60), whereas the motive is something more immediate, reactive to a stimulus. According to the framework of Gardner (1972, 1985, 2005), motive and attitudes are on the same level: learning the language is the combination of the learning effort and the positive attitudes towards the language being learnt. The lower the motivation, the more negatives these attitudes are, the greater the anxiety, in a compromising sense in the course of learning and of the psychosocial construction. In the relationship between learning, personal development and motivation and anxiety we find the theory of the affective filter of Krashen (1989) applied to the specific issue of learning a Second Language. The emotional diversity with which the migrant adolescent finds himself, and faces another diversity of expectations which the others (family, friends, school) develop around themselves, the language options they have to do. This is the framework which is made worse by the situation of change in which the subject finds himself (MacIntyre et al., 2003). Adolescence emerges as critical period in the process of Second Language acquisition, not only on a level

of maturity (neurocognitive), but also by the existence of affective filters that compromise input data to be processed (Figueiredo & Silva, 2006). The more the personality is consolidated, the more difficult it is to learn L2. Filtering begins the process of 'monitorization' (Krashen 1989) which occurs when conscience dominates the learning process and the affective maturation, which is still being developed in the child. As a matter of fact the issue of competence and performance in the L2 could be explained by the articulation of cognitive, social and psychological factors, which could be exercising a greater influence and be more explanatory than the biological influence, in the experience of learning related with the age factor (Moyer, 2004). Besides the cognitive differences between the age groups, explained in the light of neurobiology and neuropsychology (Lenneberg, 1967; Gullberg & Indefrey, 2006, Patkowsky, 1999; Pallier, 2002; Nagai, 1997; Levy, 2007; Bialystok, 1999; Doughty, 2005; Johnson 1991), from the emotional aspect, it is much more unusual for an adult to engage in the learning of L2 than a younger individual (Clyne n.d.). There is a biological clock for the cognitive aspect but also for the emotional which becomes much more active from adolescence on, and therefore, can compromise the latency supporting learning (in the sense of acquisition and not learning, Krashen, 1989) natural of childhood. Identity, learning and migratory experience are related, as "...second language learning in all of its aspects requires the individual, take on a new identity, to a certain extent" (Guiora, 1972, p.145, quoted by Clyne, p.2, n.d.). Regarding the issue of identity, that emerges in the middle of di-

versity, found in the community, the school and in the nations of the world. There is an aspect to consider: the importance of linguistic and ethnic group minorities. In a classroom it is possible to interact dynamically diverse cultural and linguistic experiences (Cummins 1986, quoted by Clyne n.d.), where minority is favoured and balanced with the dominant identity which stops being so to become a 'diverse identity'. The pedagogy of the schools should take into account this level that reaches firstly the psychology of the individual with the migratory experience and hinders him in the new learning and the promotion as a person.

Method

Participants

The Tests Battery was applied to two different groups of participants: Catalans and Portuguese students with migratory experience. In the study done in Spain (Barcelona), there were 279 students, 128 children (9-12) and 151 adolescents (13-17) from several schools. 99 students were from European countries, 47 from America, 47 were born in Asian countries and 8 from Africa.

In the case of the Portuguese sample, there were 305 individuals, 126 children (7-12) and 178 (13-21) adolescents, from several schools of Aveiro, Portugal. 146 were from European countries, 95 were born in America, 9 were from Asia and 51 from Africa. The following tables show demographic information.

Portuguese Sample- Nationality Groups (by Continents)

Nationality (continents)		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Europe	146	47,9	48,5	48,5
	America	95	31,1	31,6	80,1
	Asia	9	3,0	3,0	83,1
	Africa	51	16,7	16,9	100,0
	Total	301	98,7	100,0	
Missing	System	4	1,3		
Total		305	100,0		

Portuguese Sample- Home Languages Groups (Language Speakers)

Language speakers		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Romance Lan-guages	29	9,5	9,5	9,5
	Creoles languages	5	1,6	1,6	11,2
	Slavic Languages	32	10,5	10,5	21,7
	Multilingual	99	32,5	32,6	54,3
	Chinese/ Arabic languages	6	2,0	2,0	56,3
	Portuguese Lan-guage	133	43,6	43,8	100,0
Missing	System	1	,3		
Total		305	100,0		

Portuguese Sample- Age Groups

Years old		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7-12	126	41,3	41,4	41,4
	13-21	178	58,4	58,6	100,0
	Total	304	99,7	100,0	
Missing	System	1	,3		
Total		305	100,0		

Catalan Sample- Nationality Groups (by Continents)

Nationality (continents)		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Per-cent
Valid	Europe	122	43,7	44,2	44,2
	América	63	22,6	22,8	67,0
	Ásia	77	27,6	27,9	94,9
	África	14	5,0	5,1	100,0
	Total	276	98,9	100,0	
Missing	System	3	1,1		
Total		279	100,0		

Portuguese Sample- Home Languages Groups (Language Speakers)

Language speakers		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Romance and Germanic languages	116	41,6	41,9	41,9
	Indo-iranian languages	57	20,4	20,6	62,5
	Chinese/arabic languages	11	3,9	4,0	66,4
	Multilingual	93	33,3	33,6	100,0
	Total	277	99,3	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,7		
Total		279	100,0		

Catalan Sample- Age Groups

Years old		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7-12	128	45,9	45,9	45,9
	13-21	151	54,1	54,1	100,0
	Total	279	100,0	100,0	

Materials

A self-assessment instrument was developed for this study, assessing Motivational, Affective and Learning Aspects (BAMA), consisting of the sub-scales “Proficiency”, “Motivation and Attitudes”, “Learning Styles”, “Anxiety”, “Stress” and “Depression”. The scale contains 23 items, which the individuals answer choosing one of 7 intervals on a dimension that varies between two opposing poles. The “Motivation and Attitudes” sub-scale is an adaptation from the MINI-AMTB of Masgoret, Gardner & Bernaus (Masgoret M., Garner, R.C., Bernaus, M. (2001). “Examining the roles of attitudes and motivation outside of the formal classroom: A test of the mini-AMTB for children” in Q.Dornyei, Z., Schmidt, R. (publishers)), whose translation into Portuguese was done independent translators (the translation had two confirmation phases), one by the researcher and the other by one of the authors of the test, in order to meet the theoretical and conceptual requirements. In the Catalan study the sub-scale “Motivation and attitudes” this scale with 12 items showed a good internal consistency with alpha cronbach=.717. The items show correlations with the final score of between .267 and .664. In the factorial analysis, with rotation varimax for values equal or superior to 1, 3 factors were found: “Motivation and attitude towards the Language” (items 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 11 and 12), “Anxiety” (items 8 and 10) and “Learning situation and Teacher” (items 5 and 6). The alpha would increase if factor “Anxiety” (items) are deleted. However, we did not delete them, because this increase would be

minimal and because this is an important factor for this research. The higher the totals of the factors, the more favourable will be the motivation and attitude towards Language, the greater the anxiety and the more favourable will be the attitude towards L2 (second language) learning and the teacher. The sub-scale “Motivation and attitudes” (in the case of the Portuguese study) contains 10 items and shows good internal consistency with alpha cronbach=.73. Items show correlations with a total value between .357 and .788, positive and very significant ($p<.001$). In the factorial analysis, with rotation varimax, we found 3 factors: “Motivation in Second Language learning” (items 1, 4, 5, 9 and 10), “Attitudes towards the teacher, class and community” (2, 6 and 8) “Interest in Foreign Languages and Instrumental Orientation” (items 3 and 7). The alpha increased significantly with the elimination of two items that had been added to the scale: “attitudes towards own nationality” and “attitudes towards the teaching of MT (mother tongue in school”, will not be considered. We found that this factorial analysis differs from the one observed in the same scale, in the Catalan version, applied to immigrant students in Barcelona, in the first phase of the study. In that phase three were completed, however the items were distributed in a different way, since only factor 1 of both studies were similar, which already shows differences between the two samples. The bigger the values of the totals of the factors, the more favourable will be “Motivation in PL2 learning”, the bigger the “Attitudes towards the teacher, class and community” and

the more positive will be the factor “Interest in Foreign Languages and Instrumental Orientation”.

Besides this scale we used a set of items, to record personal data (gender, present school, nationality of the participant, age, year of schooling, birth place, date of birth, date of arrival in Cataluña, nationalities of parents, and home languages).

Procedures

The tests were presented in a questionnaire format, to the 584 participants in their schools, between October 2006 and February 2007. Each individual application took 30 minutes.

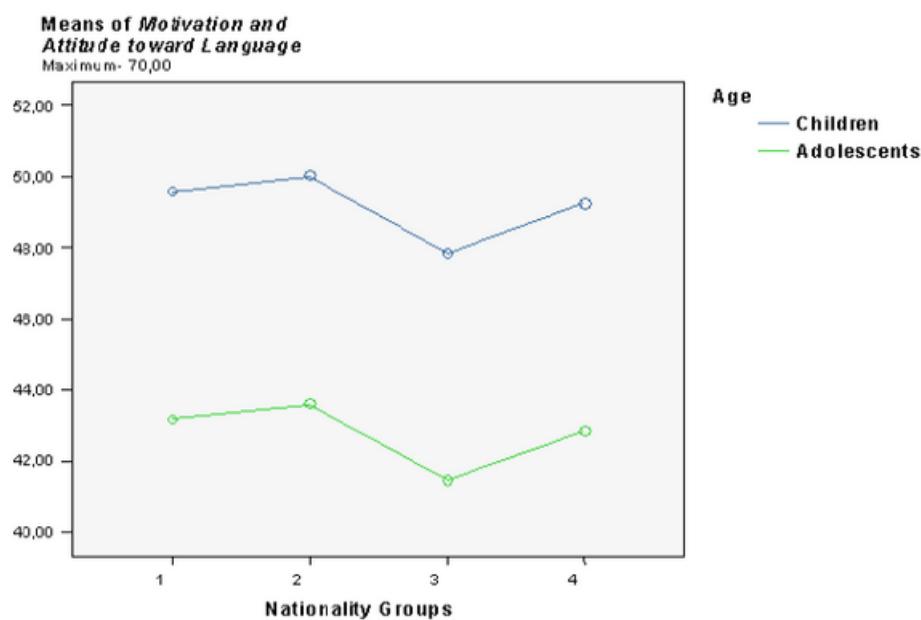
Data Analysis

We achieve the average, standard deviation, frequencies, percentages, Pearson correlations, independent samples t-tests, factorial analysis with Varimax rotation method and Kaiser normalization, as well as multifactorial multivariate analysis of variance (multi-way ANOVA). To achieve this we used the programme SPSS 14.0 and 15.0.

Results

The results confirm the general research hypothesis, because the Catalan and Portuguese profiles are distinct due to different factors and the age variable (the critical period and age effects) is not always the critical argument. In other way, the motivation factor could not such a predictor of well achievement in language acquisition because younger ones, in Portuguese sample, show lower levels of motivation, even high proficiency, not expected.

Regarding the differences in Motivation and attitude towards the language, (in the Catalan study), between the categories of “Nationality” and, in other analysis, between the categories of “Home languages” we did not find any statistically significant differences between the respective categories. In the categories of different “Age groups”, group I (9-12 years old) leads with 49,2 followed by group II (13-21 years old- 42,8). The correlation is significant at the $p < .000$ level, between the two categories. Some results are shown in the Graph1.



Nationality Groups Legend: 1-Europe 2- America 3-Asia 4-Africa Graph 1.
Motivation and Attitude toward Language (Factor I in the Catalan Study), Nationality Groups and Age

The results achieved in the relation between the “Age Group”, and Motivation and Attitudes towards L2 Learning” (Factor I in the Portuguese version, similar to Factor I of the Catalan version “Motivation and Attitude towards Language”) is different for the Portuguese immigrants. The children show a better average (30,4) as opposed to the group of adolescents (29,3) but without statistical significance. In the specific context of the Portuguese immigrant students, “Attitudes towards the Teacher, Class and

Community” (Factor II), only the category “Languages Spoken at Home” appears as a factor influencing the results. The Romance Languages Speakers and the Portuguese Language Speakers are the groups with better results (19,9) in this variable factor, followed by the other groups: Speakers of Slavic Languages (19,5), Speakers of Arabic/Chinese Languages (19,3), Multilingual (18,01) and Creoles Languages Speakers (14,1). Look at the table n.º1.

Dependent Variable	(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.(a)
			Lower Bound		
AMTB Factor 1	7-12	13-21	1,099	1,029	,288
	13-21	7-12	-1,099	1,029	,288
AMTB Factor 2	7-12	13-21	,288	,556	,605
	13-21	7-12	,288	,556	,605
AMTB Factor 3	7-12	13-21	,081	,461	,861
	13-21	7-12	,081	,461	,861

Table 1: *Motivation and Attitude toward Language* (Factors 1, 2, 3 in the Portuguese Study) and Age Groups

In the comparative analysis between genders regarding Motivation and attitude towards Language (Factor I Catalan version), the female part shows a better average (49,2) while the males show (45,5). The difference is very significant ($p < .002$) between the categories "gender". The variable age varies in the inversion reason in a very significant manner with the following variables dependent on Motivation and attitude towards the language ($r = -0,383$; $p < .01$) and the learning situation and the teacher (Factor II $r = -0,170$; $p < .05$). The variable depending on motivation and attitudes show a positive correlation and very significant with Anxiety ($r = -0,320$; $p < .01$), Factor III of the sub-scale. Regarding Motivation, in the case of Factor I of the Portuguese version, the female sector that has the higher average (31,1%) and with a significant difference between the two genders ($p < .011$). For factor II and III, the female sector also shows more favourable averages (Factor II: 18,9; Factor III: 12,0), but without significant differences. The variable age varies in the inversion reason and in a significant manner with AMTB 1 (-.137, $p < .05$). Maintains the inversion reason but without significant relation with AMTB2 (-.095). The Proficiency shows a positive correlation and very significant with AMTB1 ($p < .01$, .240), with AMTB2 ($p < .01$, .340) and with AMTB3 ($p < .01$, .251). Regarding variables AMTB1, 2 and 3, there is a very positive relationship ($p < .01$) between AMTB1 and AMTB2 (.340) and between AMTB1 and AMTB3 (.251); between AMTB2 and AMTB3 the relationship is positive and significant ($p < .05$, .171).

Discussion

In the study on immigrant Catalan students, with respect to Motivation and Attitudes and more specifically "Motivation and attitudes towards language" (Factor I), we found that the nationality of the subject

and the languages he speaks do not influence significantly their motivation and attitudes. On the other hand age is a dominant factor with group I (<12 years) with the highest average followed by group II (>12 years), with a very significant difference between the two groups. We reached the conclusion that the older the children get, they show lower indices of motivation and positive attitudes. Therefore it is the children that show higher motivation and more positive attitudes in the various situations related with the learning of the dominant language. We show that on the one hand, more optimism in the case of younger individuals (<12 years), which could be related with not being aware of the negativity of the social situation and learning than in the case of the older ones, becomes more peculiar and interferes in the academic success. The child always shows a higher score in respect of "Integration guidance". Attitudes towards the native speakers of Catalan (as a group) and the "interest in foreign languages", which agrees with a study by Lambert e Klineberg (1967, in Gardner & Lambert, 1972), where it was proved that age is a differentiating factor. It is in Childhood that we find a greater receptivity and positive approach to the introduction of cultural differences. Children accept differences with greater ease and are never uninterested. In a study (in Almeida, 1996) regarding style of field (in)dependence as seen in children and adolescents, we found that children are more field dependant because they are more aware of the social environment and more dependent on the action of the teacher (more social orientation), thus also more confident in external references. We can also conclude that, as the subjects get older, even just one year, there is a significant difference, decreasing, regarding the attitudes of the dominant group, the Catalans.

We also found that the most integrating guidance (Noels, 2003) of the child promotes the aptitude, in the child, for language acquisition, and therefore it

is generally understood that in that group there are higher levels of proficiency. The flexibility of the child is still cognitive and social (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). However, according to Gillete (in Faerch & Kasper, 1987), the learners of L2, considering their study with older subjects (not children) are favoured by "Instrumental Guidance" because the social intention is predominant as the motive for learning and perfecting the L2. We can, taking this conclusion into account, understand that age is the biggest factor in respect of evolution and guidance in the integration content of the instrument, as there are other priorities, and it is the social ones that dominate. Thus "Instruments Orientation" is not less positive as suggested by Gardner & Lambert (1972), they are mere reasons that act more a less positively in the phases of development of the human being. The social orientation referred earlier (in Almeida, 1991), identified in the children is not involved in the instrumental profile but with the dependence that the child shows and needs in relationship to his environment as "primary social learner" becoming as he gets older "activator of social values".

In the comparison between variables we saw that the bigger the proficiency, the more favourable is the motivation and attitudes. This justifies the fact that the children show positive indices of motivation and attitude, as it is also the group of the younger ones that have the greatest proficiency. In the study with the sample of the Portuguese immigrants, the profile is distinct, especially in respect of age. The nationality and the mother tongue of the subjects are influencing factors, not the age factor, as found in the study of the Catalan sample. Regarding the motivation for learning a second language (Factor I of the scale of motivation and attitudes), it is the group of individuals born in the Asian continent that show the best motivation indices. The reason is the great difference between the mother tongue they speak and the difficulty of integration could motivate the sense of learning that they believe is essential to achieve it. Although the differences are significant, in the Catalan study, we found that, the opposite occurs in the case of Asian nationality (and African) who show set types of orientation. However their motivational components are the lowest, compared to the Europeans and the Americans (latin). The American group shows a very low motivation for learning of L2, which contrasts with the results achieved in proficiency. We could now suggest that the individuals, who felt that they have already achieved proficiency, do not show motivation in that learning because it is already completed. Therefore the profile explained here is the following: the Americans (specially those from Latin America) show high levels of proficiency, and low levels of motivation in the learning of a second language, and

the Asians, show a lower level of proficiency, but a higher level motivation.

On the other hand the speakers of Indo-European romance languages that show a greater motivation, which is not the case with the study made in Barcelona, considering that these would be better adapted and the motivation here would not be so essential to learning. These students were also European, in the study with the Catalan immigrant students revealed that the higher levels of proficiency. This proves that the low level of proficiency is also correlated with high motivation, propelled by the need to learn. The personal dimension (Lier, 2004) is affected more when the subject is in a new language context, where attitudes are developed, which will serve as motivational conductor to reach success in competencies and performance. We are here speaking of a sequence necessary to learning: expectation, motivation, research, power, control and discourse. If one of these aspects fail, the sequence will not be met, however this does not mean that success will not be achieved, because it may not be the personal objective of the individual. In this way, those who feel they have achieved competency, do not generate expectations, nor motivation, therefore do not invest in the same way that would be supposed if the motivational component was there. The Asians are in phase of need which prompting this, in other words, is resumed to a cycle of needs, in pyramid structure. On the other hand, the plurilingual individuals may not understand the learning the language in the same moulds of necessity as the other individuals, therefore there is not the same investment, they are integrated as a proper capability and does not require the start of a new activity, is learnt task, above all on the level of control and final phase discussion.

The most curious aspect, is there being no significant differences registered between children and adolescents, that is, the age here does not influence the motivation, being more common to find a greater motivation in the younger ones. It would be expected that the children would show a more positive motivation (Lambert & Klineberg, 1967, Gardner & Lambert 1972, Masgoret et al. 1985, Gardner 2000, Gardner, 2005). In fact, in this sample, this does not happen which is related to a different psychological predisposition of the child, or probably the one most affected by the social and cultural constraints (Krashen, 1989). Various authors concluded, from empirical data, it is expected that children are more optimistic and tolerant regarding differences and new learning, due to their capability of learning. This is favoured in the specific context of languages, by the neurobiological predisposition of the child. The favourable indices of motivation would be naturally associated with an equally more positive proficiency. Here the children show more proficiency, but are not

very distant from the adolescents in respect of motivational profiles (low).

On the level of gender, both in the study with students from Catalonia, and Portuguese students (immigrants), the feminine gender scores better in this scale. As for the male gender it correlates with the best perception of proficiency (assessed on scale of self-evaluation) that the same gender reveals and proves in various bilingual competencies (Pearl & Lambert, mentioned in Gardner & Lambert, 1972). The female gender is more "available" for bicultural adaptation and acceptance. (Baker et al., 2003), this situation occurs when they are users of more than one language, are able to use both to the same proficiency (study in Louisiana, Gardner & Lambert, 1972). In a more specific analysis, it was found that the female gender shows higher and more significant values, when compared with the male gender, in respect of item "Integration organisation", meeting the requirements of the general studies (mentioned in Duquette & Laurier, 2000). This proves that the feminine gender shows more affectionate and socially dependent in the learning of another language. We found that especially with the Catalan sample with a younger and preferably female audience, the socio educational model of Gardner (2005) shows good results, as the author believes that this model works when there is positive correlation with favourable indices in "Integrative Orientation" "Motivation" and attitudes, minimizing the intervention considered less encouraging of the other two constructs that are part of the model: "Instrumental Orientation" and "Anxiety".

Conclusion

In a general conclusion, regarding the previous data, we can confirm the position of Ausubel (1968) who

states, based on empirical data, that the learner of L1 predicts his own success in linguistic and social competency. The lower their aptitude towards the acquisition / learning of L2, the less social they reveal themselves. Therefore various studies have found that in the case of children a greater sociability is associated also with their ability. Ausubel, contrary to other authors such as Gardner (1972, 2005), Bishop (2001), Baker (1997), Krashen (1989), Lantolf (2000), McLaughlin (1985), Duquette & Laurier (2000), Snow (1998), Centeno (2005), considers motivation unnecessary, because cognition is the first need manifested by the human being and this leads to the other. It is this author that discusses the issue of the adolescents being more satellizer, because they are more de-motivated and "oppressed" by the affective component which is not manifested in children (non satellizer) in the same way. The fact of there being more linearity, from a general point of view, in the positive average obtained through various scales, for the group of children, is justified by the fact that the children are in development phase acquiring in parallel linguistic and social knowledge (Bishop, 2000) and there is no overlapping of one over the other. However immigrant Portuguese children do not fit this profile, but are closer to the psychosocial framework of the adolescent. There are attitudes, motivation, affective states, that the migrant child shows differently, much faster development which could hinder or promote their linguistic learning taking into account that normally, the acquisition of languages, not learning, is more positive for the child than for the adolescent or the adult. If an early learner of languages shows certain cognitive capacities (Gullberg & Indefrey, 2006) before a monolingual child would, than the psychological development is part of this process.

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