



## 1. Introduction

A compelling body of evidence shows a strong association between psychological, affective and learning variables, related also with the age and gender factors, which are involved in the language learning development process. Children and adolescents with migratory experience (direct/indirect) can develop behaviours at risk in their academic learning and psychosocial adaptation, according to several stressors as anxiety, low motivation, negative attitudes, within a stressed internal locus of control. In this work will be presented results regarding a study developed with a sample of 584 students, with ages between 7 and 21 years old, with migratory experience, immigrants in Portugal and in Spain. Will be discussed correlation between motivation/attitudes, gender and age, in the second-language learning. The condition of a migrant child or adolescent could compromise their mental health and their literacy skills acquisition (Snow et al., 1998) as well as promote interference between predisposition and competence.

## 2. Method

### Participants

The Tests Battery was applied to 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). 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 and 178 adolescents. 146 were from European countries, 95 were born in America, 9 were from Asia and 51 from Africa.

### Materials and Procedures

A self-assessment instrument was developed for this study, assessing Motivational, Affective and Learning Aspects (BAMA), consisted of the sub-scales "Proficiency", "Motivation and Attitudes", "Learning Styles", "Anxiety", "Stress" and "Depression". The scale contains 23 items. The "Motivation and Attitudes" sub-scale is an adaptation from the MINI-AMTB of Masgoret, Gardner & Bernaus (2001). In the Catalan study the sub-scale "Motivation and attitudes" with 12 items showed a good internal consistency with alpha cronbach=.71. 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. The tests were presented in a questionnaire format, between October 2006 and February 2007. Each individual application took 30 minutes.

In the Catalan study:  
"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).

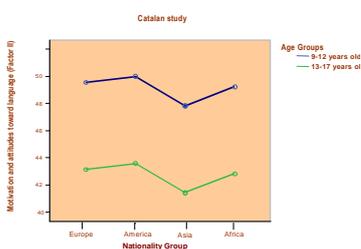
In the Portuguese study:  
"Motivation in Second Language Learning" (items 1, 4, 5, 9 and 10), "Attitudes towards the teacher, class and community" (2, 6 and 8) "Interest in Foreign Languages and Instrumental Orientation" (items 3 and 7)

The factorial analysis, with rotation varimax, show 3 factors for the sub-scale "Motivation and Attitudes", in the both studies (Spain and Portugal) but this analysis differs for the catalan and the portuguese versions.

### 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.

## 3. Results



Graph n.º1. Age effects in the Factor II of Motivation in Second Language (Spanish sample)

Motivation and Attitudes  
Toward Second Language  
(10 Items, without the Anxiety scales)

- \*Integrative Orientation
- \*Attitudes toward Catalan speaking people
- \*Interest in foreign languages
- \*Desire
- \*Attitudes toward learning catalan
- \*Attitudes toward learning situation, teacher
- \*Instrumental Orientation
- \*Motivational Intensity
- \*Parental encouragement

Dependent Variable	(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.(a)
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

Graph n.º2. Age effects in the 3 factors of Motivation in Second Language (Portuguese sample)

## 4. Discussion and theoretical considerations

We reached the conclusion with previous data regarding the Spanish sample, 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". In the comparison between variables we saw that the bigger the proficiency, the more favourable is the motivation and attitudes. 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. 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 (Lambert & Klineberg, 1967, Gardner & Lambert 1972, Masgoret et al. 1985, Gardner 2000, Gardner, 2005). On the level of gender, both in the study with students from Catalonia, and Portuguese student (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). Immigrant Portuguese children do not fit the expected 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.