



Motivational attribution of students as a basic method in communicative and cognitive approach for the purposes of learning a second foreign language

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Senior Lecturer **E.A. Belyakova**¹
PhD, Associate Professor **V.G. Medvedev**¹
¹The Russian University of Sport «GTSOLIFK», Moscow

Corresponding author: catbelka84@mail.ru

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Abstract

Purpose of Research. This research aims at creating the motivational attribution method for students who learn their second foreign language (French) and already have some experience of learning English as their first one.

Method and Organization of Research. To create the motivational attribution method we put to analysis relevant literature, run an educational experiment and also applied expert evaluation and mathematical statistics methods (measure of central tendency, like mean value, standard error of the mean as well as the paired comparison method by Wilcoxon, and Spearman's rank correlation coefficient.)

The research was participated by 30 students who study their second foreign language (French) in a sports college and who already have some experience of learning English as their first foreign language. Expert surveys basing on ten motivational attribution factors were done both in the beginning and at the end of the studying period.

Results and Conclusions. This research aims at creating a method for motivational attribution of students who learn their second foreign language (French) and already have some experience of learning English as their first one. For this purpose, we put to analysis relevant literature, run an educational experiment and also applied expert evaluation and mathematical statistics methods. The results achieved include definitions of motivational attribution factors as well as model characteristics thereof. The article also describes the method and calculation procedure. The reliability of motivational attribution method has been proved through test-retest.

Keywords: *motivational attribution, self-absorption, irritability, carelessness, emotional disequilibrium, sense of guilt, persistence, nervousness, fear of difficulties, communication barrier, high moral, second foreign language.*

Introduction. Fluency in foreign languages is a key skill for successful international relations in economics, politics, culture and other areas. This means that new approaches to teaching foreign languages are required for both secondary and higher schools [3].

Today, a professional in any area would hardly succeed without knowing at least two foreign languages. This makes it very essential for linguists, curriculum developers, and language teachers to review the theoretical framework of teaching foreign languages and cultures and consequently, to adjust the system of their teaching practices [4]. As a rule, a second foreign language is taught under the specific curriculum that takes into account every difficulty that a student might encounter while studying yet another foreign language [1, 2, 8].

The communicative and cognitive approach implies that students are guided by their intellect and the processes that underlie understanding and applying this phenomenon in the course of communication. Besides, this approach implies that all sorts of language competencies (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are closely inter-related for the purposes of teaching [1].

Motivation is a key driver that activates all the psychological processes, like thinking, perceiving, understanding and absorbing information in a foreign language [5]. Considering this, to improve the learning efficiency we created the motivational attribution method based on the method of motivational attribution of aggressive behavior by V.S. Sobkin [6] and the model of aggressive personal culture by S.Sh. Tsakaev [7].



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Results and Discussion. Motivational Attribution Method Description. The motivational attribution method is a kind of expert survey participated by group mates. As observers, these experts evaluate the motivational attribution factors of their group mates who take part in the learning process. Thus, acting as expert each student assesses each of his/her group mates using the proposed motivational attribution factors. The number of experts equals to the number of students in the group less the assessed one (self-assessment is not done.) Each motivational attribution factor is assessed using binary scale, i.e. while assessing each group mate, the expert is to identify whether the particular factor is present or not. Thus, the value of aggressiveness factor is equal to the number of experts who identified presence of this factor while assessing a particular person. In case assessments are done by different number of experts, relative number of ‘votes’ is considered, i.e. the share of ‘votes for’ in the total number of experts (denominated in percent.)

Students who act as experts are required to fill in a questionnaire identifying the presence/absence of the 10 motivational attribution factors in one of the stressful situations, e.g. the homework in the second foreign language (French) is not done. Listed below are the definitions of the 10 motivational attribution factors.

Self-absorption is being incapable of considering someone else’s point of view; it simply does not occur to a self-absorbed person that anyone else may be right.

Irritability is excessive agitation and susceptibility to negative emotions.

Carelessness is a tendency to act hastily without proper consideration or thinking about the consequences.

Emotional disequilibrium is a lack of self-possession and self-control when emotions prevail.

Sense of guilt is an unhappy feeling caused by failure to comply with the standards or to do a duty to oneself (it may be caused by the one’s belief that he/she is a bad person).

Persistence is a very important quality of powerful and strong-minded people, an ability to pursue one’s objectives.

Nervousness is a subjectively unpleasant emotional state, the feeling of anxiety and uncertainty.

Fear of difficulties is anxiety or fear to encounter insurmountable obstacles.

Communication barrier is a kind of ‘invisible wall’, a mental obstacle that makes it hard for people to understand each other.

High moral is being very sensitive to the moral aspects of one’s actions, self-criticism.

Metrolological Verification of the Method. Repeated measurements did not reveal any statistically significant changes in values of the motivational attribution factors ($p > 0.05$). The method chosen to identify the motivational attribution factors is deemed to be reliable as the indicators considered do not show any statistically significant changes, besides, high statisti-

Table 1 – Coefficients of reliability in test-retest ($p \leq 0.05$) for Motivational Attribution Method

| Motivational attribution factor | Test-retest, r |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Self-absorption</i> | 0.79 |
| <i>Irritability</i> | 0.87 |
| <i>Carelessness</i> | 0.88 |
| <i>Emotional disequilibrium</i> | 0.80 |
| <i>Sense of guilt</i> | 0.66 |
| <i>Persistence</i> | 0.74 |
| <i>Nervousness</i> | 0.72 |
| <i>Fear of difficulties</i> | 0.87 |
| <i>Communication barrier</i> | 0.75 |
| <i>High moral</i> | 0.82 |



Таблица 2 – The model characteristics of motivational attribution for students who study their second foreign language in a sports college

| Motivational attribution factor | M±SE (%) |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Self-absorption | 13.1±2.9 |
| Irritability | 23.2±3.1 |
| Carelessness | 33.1±3.3 |
| Emotional disequilibrium | 19.1±2.8 |
| Sense of guilt | 39.8±2.5 |
| Persistence | 42.1±2.4 |
| Nervousness | 42.7±2.8 |
| Fear of difficulties | 23.1±2.8 |
| Communication barrier | 17.5±2.9 |
| High moral | 26.5±3.2 |

cally significant correlation coefficients were obtained through test-retest ($p \leq 0.05$) (table 1).

Model Characteristics of Motivational Attribution. Model Characteristics of Motivational Attribution. For every factor considered, we took the average value of two measurements of each motivational attribution factor for all the study participants ($n=30$) as the model characteristics of motivational attribution for students who study their second foreign language in a sports college (table 2).

The teaching process takes into account the values of factors to boost the efficiency of learning the second foreign language (French) through using the constructive potential of the motivational attribution factors.

Conclusions. 1. The method presented includes relative values (denominated in percent) for ten factors of motivational attribution of students who study their second foreign language (French) in a sports college. This method allows comparing the obtained data regardless of the number of experts who take part in evaluating the said factors as the result is presented as ratio between the score and the number of experts. This makes it possible to use the data received through this method in other related areas.

2. Applying the method of motivational attribution in the course of teaching a second foreign language facilitates the using of communication and activity approach taking into account the individual behavior patterns of students that are manifested in different levels of respective factors of their motivational attribution.

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