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ALAPSZAKOS
SZAKDOLGOZAT

Málnási Csizmadia Anna

Anglisztika alapszak

Angol szakirány

2014

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Aláírás

EÖTVÖS LORÁND TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM

Bölcsészettudományi kar

ALAPSZAKOS SZAKDOLGOZAT

Miért az angol?

Az angol nyelv szerepe sajátos nevelési igényű nyelvtanulók körében

Why English?

English as a Foreign Language for Students with Special Needs

Témavezető:

Enyedi Ágnes

Tudományos segédmunkatárs

Készítette:

Málnási Csizmadia Anna

anglisztika alapszak

angol szakirány

2014

Abstract

This study aims to discover why a specifically chosen group of speech and language impaired students would voluntarily participate in English language workshops even though they are exempted from their foreign language studies. To collect data, I asked three school classes of speech and language impaired students at ELTE Bárczi Gusztáv Primary School and Special Education Institution to fill out a questionnaire and an interview was conducted with their English teacher. I investigated various factors of their motivation towards foreign language learning including: their interests in English speaking cultures, the level of parental pressure they face, their self-esteem, the characteristics of their motivated learning behaviour and the learning context in which they study. Within the theme of culture I analysed the student's attitudes towards the English language and its speakers, integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, attitude towards the L2 speakers, cultural curiosity and ethnolinguistic vitality.

The results for this particular case study revealed that the learning context and the teacher's personality are the primary motivating factors for these students. Besides the learning context, instrumental motivation, namely the English language as a facilitator of their future, appeared to be an important motivation. Lastly, cultural curiosity turned out to be a significant motivational source for this special group of students.

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1.Introduction

“Improving national proficiency in English now forms a key part of the educational strategy in most countries” (Graddol, 2006, p. 70). This is the case in Hungary as well where English is the most commonly taught foreign language in schools (Nordblad, 2011). However, there is a group of special needs students with speech and language impairment who face extreme difficulties not only in foreign language learning but in their mother tongue as well. In the current educational legislation they are mostly exempted from their foreign language studies due to their hardships in language acquisition (Kormos, 2007). Nevertheless, this gives a great disadvantage to students who, without English language skills, will, face serious disadvantages on the job market (Sarkadi, 2006).

The field of foreign language learning for individuals who find learning to read and write in their first language problematic is an under-researched area (Ganschow & Sparks 2000). However I was interested in special needs students’ relationship towards language learning as I am in my last year at ELTE Bárczi Gusztáv Faculty of Special Education and in the framework of the University I was placed for my teaching practicum in a special school where there were classes solely for students with speech and language impairment. When I found out that in this specific school the students learn English, I instantly wanted to find out more about this phenomenon.

Therefore, in my thesis I observed three classes of speech and language impaired students who participated voluntarily in English language workshops. My aim was to reveal the characteristics of this group as I was interested in their motivation to learn English. I also found this topic important as if their source of motivation is revealed then strategies to improve them can be later formed to help them overcome their difficulties and to be able to develop them efficiently.

The motivation of this group is particularly interesting, since the English language is considered to be a difficult language due to its deep orthography and the numerous grapheme-to-phoneme correspondences, which need to be recognized during the reading process (Selikowitz, 1993 in Sarkadi, 2010). Therefore it is even more intriguing what students with speech and language impairment find motivating in a language full of challenges and difficulties.

I wanted to explore why these children participated voluntarily at English language workshops, without exception and despite their difficulties. A number of possibilities emerged. Are students pressured by parents to learn English? Or do students see English as a helpful instrument, a facilitating tool for their lives and careers? Or is it the language itself and its culture that drives students to learn the language? All these questions are relevant and should be explored regarding this population.

Previous studies have investigated populations with learning disabilities and their foreign language learning motivations (Csizér, 2010). However these were mostly carried out in integrated classroom contexts, meaning that special needs students are studying along with mainstream students in regular classrooms. These studies prove that, in integrated classrooms, the population is less motivated towards foreign language learning. They have negative self-esteem and poor self-image, they often encounter judgemental teacher attitudes, and they face continuous failures during language classes. In contrast, the population of my research showed motivation by regularly taking part in the English workshops. There is another significant difference between the participants of my research and those of other case studies. The population of my research is a segregated one, where all the students forming the class live with speech and language impairment. However, this affects all the above mentioned aspects. Therefore I presume that, due to segregation, speech and language impaired students have a higher, balanced self-esteem, they encounter fewer failures and their teacher is more

informed about both the student's situation and the specific teaching strategies. I also assume that they face significantly less parental pressure due to the exemption from foreign language learning. I believe that in these circumstances the influence of the English culture on the students' language learning motivation will stand out more clearly. Therefore, to be able to examine their motivation towards English speaking cultures, I must also investigate parental pressure, self-esteem and group cohesion.

To find out the answers to these questions I decided to conduct an empirical study at ELTE Bárczi Gusztáv Gyakorló Általános Iskola és Gyógypedagógiai Módszertani Intézmény (ELTE Bárczi Gusztáv Primary school and Special Education Institution), where I examined segregated classes especially for students with speech and language impairment from 6th to 8th grade. I designed a questionnaire for the students concerning their motivation and conducted an interview with their teacher.

The research questions were formulated regarding the main fields of their motivation to learn English. The questions concern (1) the most important motivating factors for these students to study English, (2) the most important features of English culture that draws them to study the language and (3) the level of proficiency they wish to achieve.

The questionnaire was constructed in order to be able to answer my research questions. I relied heavily on the works of Dörnyei (2010) and the main topics of his motivational scales. I was interested in this group's motivation towards English speaking cultures, the level of parental pressure they face, their self-esteem, the characteristics of their motivated learning behaviour and the learning context in which they study. Within the theme of culture I analysed the student's attitudes towards the language and its speakers. Hence, five subtopics were created (Dörnyei, 2010) to be able to understand the aspects of the English speaking cultures that attracted these students' attention: integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, attitude towards the L2 speakers, cultural curiosity and ethnolinguistic vitality.

I included questions on children's motivation in the teachers' interview hoping to confirm my findings from the questionnaire. I was interested in her point of view regarding the students' developmental potential and what percentage of the students would be able to pass a language exam.

The structure of the thesis is as follows. I will first briefly define what speech and language impairment is, why it is difficult for students with speech and language impairment to learn English, and the current situation for these students in the Hungarian educational system. Then I will explore arguments regarding the importance for students with speech and language impairment to learn English. Relying mostly on Dörnyei's works, I will also clarify the influence of English culture on language learning motivation. Following that I will present the empirical part of the research by describing the participants, the setting, the methods of data collection, the instruments, procedures and the methods of data analysis. Then I will demonstrate the results and the discussion concerning the research questions and draw final conclusions of my research.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Defining speech and language impairment

The terminology of language disorders is extremely wide-ranging and confusing, however in this research I am going to use the term *speech and language impairment* consistently as most of the literature I used applies the terminology.

The phenomenon first appeared in the literature of the nineteenth century and it was mostly medical professionals who worked in the field (Leonard, 1979). It was not until the 1930s that the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association created the first Code of Ethics (Lubinski, 2010).

According to **the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*, a United States federal law concerning early intervention and special education, speech or language impairment** can be described as a “communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairment, or voice impairment that adversely affects a child’s educational performance” (Heller, 1982, p. 7). It is both a communicational problem as well as a disorder of the related oral motor functions. There is a wide range of symptoms of the delays and disorders ranging from simple sound substitutions to the incapability of expressive or receptive language use or the oral-motor mechanism for functional speech. In most cases the cause of the disorder is unknown (Copenhaver, 2004).

Speech and language impairment is a severe disorder, which is traumatic at any time of life, but for children it is especially damaging as it affects multiple aspects of their lives negatively: their ability to learn, their self-esteem and their relationships with others (Ripley et al., 2001). According to Boyle, approximately 6% of children have speech and language difficulties. Most of these children eventually improve significantly but “those whose difficulties persist in primary school may face long-term problems concerning literacy, socialisation, behaviour and school attainment lasting into adolescence and beyond” (Law et al., 2003, p. 1).

Speech disorders are characterised by difficulties in producing speech sounds or problems with voice quality (Kent, 1996). It affects the rhythm and the flow of speech, which is often interrupted by stuttering. Speech disorders can include articulation or phonological disorders, which affects the formation of sounds, causing fluency disorders resulting in atypical rate, rhythm, and repetitions in sounds, syllables and words.

Voice disorders concern the abnormal production of vocal quality eventuating difficulties with pitch and volume. Often, several symptoms coexist aggravating

communication problems and raising difficulties for listeners to understand people with speech disorders (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 1982).

Language disorders involve the difficulty in placing words in context verbally and nonverbally. It is often characterised by limited vocabulary, the incorrect use of words and meanings, the incapability to express ideas and follow directions and the inability to find the appropriate grammatical patterns. Single or several of these characteristics may appear in children who are affected by language learning disabilities or who have developmental language delays. These children may have difficulty understanding meanings, despite seeing or hearing the words, and they also struggle to express themselves so that others can understand them (NICHCY, 1996).

Often cognitive characteristics are concerned across an entire range of cognitive abilities, thoroughly affecting learning and causing a high risk of reading difficulties for students with speech and language delays (Carroll, 2004). In addition to cognitive concerns, students also face social and emotional challenges. Students with speech and language disorders may have low self-esteem, may experience social isolation and develop behaviour problems (Beitchman, 2010). Early childhood education is the most critical time for speech and language development therefore it is important to highlight the importance of timely and early intervention as all communication disorders are likely to segregate individuals from their social and educational environments.

2.2 Speech and language impaired students and the Hungarian educational system

Hungary's educational policy "identifies integration as a political, social and pedagogical aim;" therefore common practice favours the integration of students with special educational needs (Mészáros, 2009, para. 1). According to the 2005 Educational Act in Hungary, children with language and speech impairments may attend mainstream primary

schools where they participate in regular classroom contexts with special aids in need of their social, cognitive and emotional progress. To ensure the improvement of students with speech and language impairment the educational system must provide them with the opportunity to learn in an integrated classroom context along with mainstream students.

However, in severe cases, mostly for the sake of intensive rehabilitation, there could be a need for a segregated institution of special education, to advance their development. This period of time depends greatly on the effectiveness of the therapy, the circumstances of the family, and the cooperation between the institution and the parents. The aim of these institutions is to help students return to integrated classrooms and resume their studies as soon as possible. The pedagogical curriculum for students with speech and language impairments is the same as the one for the mainstream students. However, in the school curriculum, the introductory period can be lengthened by spending the first two years of primary school with the first year's curriculum (2/2005. (III.1.)). According to the educational act LXXIX, of 1993., the expert opinion of the Education Rehabilitation Committee's or the Educational Counselling Service can permit the director of the school to exempt its students from particular lessons. Therefore, students with speech and language impairment are mostly exempted from their foreign language studies. However, exemption does not give way to equal opportunity but rather raises the differences between the mainstream and the special needs students (Kormos, 2007).

2.3 Why is English difficult?

Even though English is the world's *lingua franca*, it is a difficult language in the sense of learning how to read. In other languages, children acquire to read in a basic level in less than a year; however it takes twice as much time for English children. In an extensive research project, Seymour of Dundee University compared reading skills of children in fifteen European countries. He found that children learning Germanic languages like German or

English do not progress as fast as those speaking Romance languages like French or Spanish (Randerson, 2001).

The reason why children see English language complex and difficult is due to the fact that the English literacy system contains approximately 75% regular patterns and 25% irregular patterns. This might be owing to the dynamic nature of the language and the period of time that has passed since it was first codified, greatly contributing to the irregularities of the language (Hanson, 2010).

The English language holds further challenges for language learners due to its deep orthography. “The English alphabet has 26 letters representing 44 phonemes; however, according to Selikowitz (1993), there are 577 grapheme-to-phoneme correspondences in English, which need to be recognized during the reading process” (as cited in Sarkadi, 2010, p. 2).

With these facts in mind, it is even more interesting how students with speech and language impairment can acquire the language, what they find motivating in a language denoting hardships and difficulties. As not only do they have problems with writing and reading and speaking, but they face problems with phonological and auditory temporal processing, syntax and phonological working memory (Clark, 2010).

2.4 Arguments for teaching English to students with speech and language impairment

Foreign language learning provides an opportunity to be able to communicate across cultures on equal terms, to use the gift of communication, to advocate common understanding and to share plans for the future (Crombie, 1999).

A study in 2012 by the UK Subject Centre for Languages has identified more than 700 reasons to study languages. The outcome of the study shows that strongest reasons for studying foreign languages stem from mostly personal values concerning language

acquisition. They were “associated with enjoyment; personal benefits such as employability, communication and mobility; an appreciation of culture and enhanced relationships” (Gallagher-Brett, 2012, p. 2).

In another research project carried out in 2007, *Regarding World Language Education*, it was found that foreign language study enhances academic progress in other subjects, narrows achievement gaps and benefits basic skills development. Foreign language study also encourages abstract and creative thinking, enriches and enhances cognitive development, gives a sense of achievement, helps students score higher on standardized tests, promotes cultural awareness and competency, improves chances of college acceptance, enhances career opportunities, benefits understanding and security in community and society (National Education Association, 2007).

Therefore students who have the skills to learn a language should not be exempted from their foreign language studies, as due to exemption they are also withheld from the opportunity to acquire such competences as listed above. However this is the case in Hungary where the reaction towards students with learning difficulties enhances serious disadvantages on the job market as it is immensely difficult to find an ideal job for someone who does not speak any foreign languages at all (Sarkadi, 2007).

Hence, when teaching students with speech and language impairment, it must be ensured that instead of facing students with unendurable hardships, which could lead to further failures, demotivation and behaviour problems (Crombie, 1999) teachers should promote the significance of foreign language learning in a modern classroom where students feel accepted and involved in a learning experience worth participating in. The aim would be for these students to avoid the opportunity of exemption from language lessons and to actively take part in the language learning process, accomplishing a substantive, working inclusion in education.

2.5 The influence of culture on language learning motivation

Language teachers have always known that the efficiency of language learning greatly depends on the invested energies and the motivated behaviour of the students towards the subject. In a research conducted by Dörnyei between 1992 and 2004 concerning motivation and foreign language acquisition it was revealed that both culture and attitude towards the foreign language community forms an important factor of motivation (Csizér, 2007) confirming Brown's theory that foreign language acquisition "always entails learning a foreign culture to some degree" interrelating language and culture (as cited in Dörnyei, 2001, p. 14). The reason behind this is due to the concept that learning languages is different from learning any other subject; as language is part of a person's social identity, it involves far more than simply "learning skills, or a system of rules, or a grammar; it involves an alteration in self image, the adoption of new social and cultural behaviours and ways of being, and therefore has significant impact on the social nature of the learner" (Williams, 1994, p. 77 in Dörnyei, 2001). Therefore learning a foreign language is both "socially and culturally bound which makes it a deeply social event" that involves the incorporation of elements from the foreign language culture (Dörnyei, 2003, p. 4).

There is a significant diversity among the theories and approaches concerning the study of motivation in foreign language acquisition. The most influential motivation theory is linked to Gardner, who believes that foreign language learning is a social psychological phenomenon as during the process of language learning, one acquires "symbolic elements of a different ethnolinguistic community and makes it part of his own language reservoir" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 47). Gardner distinguishes two main types of motivation towards language learning: *instrumental* and *integrative* motivation. *Integrative motivation* indicates a positive attitude towards the foreign language community and a desire to interact with and assimilate with members of that community. Integratively motivated language learners wish to learn

another language to be familiar with the speakers of that language and the culture associated with it, therefore integrative motivation is a key component in developing some level of proficiency in the language. *Instrumental motivation*, on the other hand, is generally characterised by the desire to achieve something practical or material from foreign language study (Hudson, 2000 in Norris-Holt, 2001). However the purpose of language acquisition with instrumental motivation is more utilitarian, such as getting a better job or a higher salary or meeting the requirements for school or university graduation.

Whereas both *integrative* and *instrumental* motivations are substantial to be able to acquire a language, integrative motivation has been found to maintain lasting success when learning a foreign language (Norris-Holt, 2001). According to a research led by Dörnyei and Clément in 2000, students tend to study languages for instrumental reasons; however those who approach their studies with integrative motivation are usually more motivated and more successful during the language learning process (Dörnyei, 2001). In addition, Dörnyei (1990) recognized that integrative motivation is strong among adult language learners who wish to achieve advanced language proficiency (Csizér, 2007).

Therefore it is important to bring students closer to culture to deepen their integrative motivation and ease their language learning process.

The previous sections have summarized the phenomenon of speech and language impairment, the students place in the Hungarian educational system, the hardships of the English language, the benefits of language learning and the influence of culture on language learning motivation. In the following sections I wish to present the empirical research in detail.

3. Research methods

This study focuses on the language learning motivation of three groups of classes of speech and language impaired students. The research questions concern (1) the most

important motivating factors for these students to study English, (2) the most important features of the English culture that draws them to study the language and (3) the level of proficiency they wish to achieve.

3.1 Participants and setting

I conducted empirical research at ELTE Bárczi Gusztáv Gyakorló Általános Iskola és Gyógypedagógiai Módszertani Intézmény (ELTE Bárczi Gusztáv Primary school and Special Education Institution). As I was placed there during my studies for teaching practicum for a year, due to my studies at ELTE Bárczi Gusztáv Faculty of Special Education therefore I knew many of the children at the institution. I analysed segregated classes specifically for students with speech and language impairment from 6th to 8th grade. There were 29 students altogether in the three classes with 9 students in the 6th grade and with 10 students both in the 7th and 8th grade. Although the students were exempted from their foreign language studies, one of the teachers at the school decided to give extra English workshops on a voluntary basis. This is the only option for these students to learn a foreign language at school as no other languages are offered within the framework of the institution. The students can participate in the English workshops from 6th grade. Until now, the workshops were held after school, however from September, 2014, it is built into their schedules.

The teacher who conducts the English workshops has been a member of the school's staff since 2003. She earned her degree at ELTE Faculty of Special Education in the Department of Intellectual and Learning Disabilities. She is the physical education teacher at the school and she has been running the English workshops since 2008.

3.2 Methods of data collection

A questionnaire in Hungarian was designed to collect data from the participants. I wanted to investigate a number of aspects of each student's foreign language learning motivation and I wished to look at all three classes. Therefore I decided to design a Likert-type scale as it makes the responses quantifiable and easy to analyse. I also conducted an interview with their teacher to find out her point of view concerning her students' language learning motivations and I was hoping to confirm my findings from the questionnaire.

3.2.1 Instruments

The questionnaire (see Appendix 2), included forty closed-ended questions and two open-ended questions. The questions, written by me, were structured concerning topics relying on the works of Dörnyei (2010). The main topics concluded: culture, learning context and self-esteem. Within the theme of culture, I analysed the students' attitudes towards the English language and its speakers. Five subtopics were created by Dörnyei and used by me: integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, attitude towards the L2 speakers, cultural curiosity and ethnolinguistic vitality. In addition two more topics were investigated: parental pressure and motivated learning behaviour as I presume that due to the students' segregated education there were different expectations placed upon them from their surroundings, which affects their learning behaviours. The questionnaire was designed to account for the reading level of these students with speech and language impairment, therefore I used dyslexia friendly, bigger fonts; it was double spaced; and every second line was highlighted in order to make it easy to follow. The interview questions for the teacher (see Appendix 3) concerned the atmosphere of the three classes, the students' main interests in the English culture and their sources of motivation.

3.2.2 Procedures

A pilot questionnaire was filled in by an 11 year old dyslexic student who was not exempted from his language learning studies. Subsequent to the piloting, questions with negation were changed in order to make it understandable for students with speech and language impairment. For example: *I am not interested in any other languages apart from English* was changed to *I am more interested in the English language than any other language*.

The questionnaires were filled in by the students at school during a lesson held by the form masters. I informed the classes what the purpose of this questionnaire is and why it is important to me. I was present while the children filled in the questionnaires therefore when students had questions I was able to clarify it to them. Thus it is hoped that the questions were answered without any misunderstanding. For each class the questionnaire took approximately 20 to 25 minutes. The teacher interview lasted about 20 minutes and was conducted after school lessons in her office.

3.3 Methods of data analysis

The open-ended survey questions were analyzed in a qualitative manner, through which I examined whether there were any common answers, obvious similarities or outstanding differences in the responses. I tried to get a comprehensive picture of the factors that remarkably influenced the language learning motivation of these students.

The questionnaire's closed-ended answers were tabulated into an Excel chart where I calculated the global averages of the main categories and each question's average (see Appendix 1.1, 1.2). With the help of the Excel calculations, I was able to identify the main motivating factors. In addition, by means of the Pearson correlation, I analysed the relationships between the different motivating factors (see Appendix 1.3).

The interview with the teacher was audio taped and was later transcribed and finally translated into English (see Appendix 3). Then I tried to compare her answers with the answers provided by the students.

4. Results

4.1 Presentation of the results

4.1.1 The most important motivating factors for these students to study English

Globally, the *learning context* earned the highest score with a 3.80-point number, ranking it as the most important motivating factor in this particular medium. The questions concerned the atmosphere of the workshops, the quality of group cohesion and the teaching style of the teacher. The highest point (4.61) in the entire questionnaire was given to the question: *The teacher helps us a lot in order to understand everything.* To this question from the 29 students 21 gave the highest point. In the open-ended questions, many students answered that they would like to study English because they “*learn interesting words*” or because “*English workshops are good.*” Students rated the atmosphere of the workshops above 4 points as well.

The second most important motivating factor appeared to be the cultural aspect of language learning, which globally reached 3.72 points. This section contained twenty questions and was divided into five further subtopics: integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, attitude towards the L2 speakers, cultural curiosity and ethnolinguistic vitality. The subtopics of the cultural aspect are discussed in the next chapter.

Questions concerning *self-esteem* gained the lowest average. Within the topic, students gave the lowest point (2.32) to the question: *I feel that when I put energy in my English I am successful at the workshops.* This question received the lowest point not only in its section but in the entire questionnaire as well. Their teacher confirmed the children’s responses,

emphasizing the fact that the students already face serious problems when studying their mother tongue, therefore learning a foreign language generates additional hardship, of which they are aware. Concerning language learning, students feel that writing (2.39) is the most challenging aspect, besides reading (2.44) and speaking (2.51). However, understanding the spoken language is evaluated with a higher average (2.64). Observing the results of the questionnaire, it can be convincingly argued that the students feel a global satisfaction concerning language learning (3.3). However such satisfaction is a low point with respect to the whole questionnaire.

The *parental pressure* did not prove to be an influential factor as it only reached globally 3.40 points. The questions *my parents think that it is very important to speak English* (3.94) and *my parents encourage me to study more* (3.79) received the highest points. However the question; *English is important to me because my parents are not happy about my bad achievements* (2.52) received strikingly fewer points. Nevertheless the students' teacher believes that parents have a say in the children's decision to participate in the English workshops. According to her, "*parents play an important role in the student's decision making. They hear it at home that it is important to learn a language and that today speaking English is inevitable. This must affect the children's point of view!*"

The questions regarding motivated learning behaviour (3.47) achieved relatively low points. This could be explained by the significant differences between the given answers. Regarding students satisfaction with their work during the workshops, they gave 3.9 points while the question *I study English a lot at home* received much less (3.09). This tendency was confirmed by their teacher who said, "*They are motivated during the workshops but they do not put extra energies in learning the language. They are not too enthusiastic about homework.*"

In the whole of the questionnaire self-esteem received the lowest points. All the questions regarding the topic were less than 3 points except the question: *I am satisfied with the level of my English* (3.3), which is a subjective evaluation potentially due to the teacher's skills.

The interview with the teacher confirmed the children's responses in all the fields apart from the emphasis on parental expectations and influence.

4.1.2 The most important features of the English culture that draws students to study the language

The cultural factors belong to the highly important motivating factors both globally and concerning each subtopic, as only learning context received more points globally. In this special medium, instrumental motivation (3.85) reached the highest points. Two questions gained more than 4 points in the topic: *nowadays one cannot succeed without English* (4.15); and *English is important to me because if I speak the language I will have a better job* (4.23). The latter question received maximum points from 16 out of the 29 students and it received the second best point score in the whole questionnaire. Instrumental reasons appeared most frequently throughout the qualitative study as well. Regarding the question why they would like to learn English, students responded that they will have a better job and they will be able to live abroad if they speak the language. They noted that "*English is the world language therefore it will be easier to find a job if I speak English*" or "*I would like to become a confectionary abroad*" or "*for a good job I need to speak English*". Their teacher confirmed the results of questionnaire in the interview. According to her, "*the idea to go and work abroad is becoming very popular and of course this has an impact on children.*"

The second most important motivating factor within the topic of culture concerns cultural curiosity (3.8) in which subtopic all the answers were over 3.5. The most popular

interests regarding cultural curiosity were: *English language is important to me because I would like to understand the lyrics of the songs* (3.94) or *I would like to understand the films in their original language* (3.89). Furthermore listening to interviews with famous people and reading books in the original language also received high points. Concerning the open-ended questions, many children listed films, books, Mr. Bean, football, English tea, skyscrapers, theatre and history as interesting aspects of English speaking cultures. According to the English teacher, *“songs, films and the media play an important role in their language learning motivation.”*

The category of ethnolinguistic vitality, which observes how important, rich and influential students see a country, reached 3.76 points globally. Within this subtopic *America and England are both rich and developed countries* received the highest score with 3.85 points while the importance of the English language and the impact of English speaking cultures throughout the world were also important according to the students. In the qualitative part of the questionnaire many students stated that *“English is the world language therefore it is easier to find an ideal job if one speaks the language.”*

Integrative motivation received 3.73 points globally and there were no significant discrepancies between the given responses' averages.

Globally, the lowest average pointscore within the theme of culture was given to the questions concerning attitudes toward the L2 speakers (3.49). The questions with the highest points were: that they would like to meet English people (3.45); and that they think that *American people are modern and open-minded* (3.87).

When evaluating the results I analysed the correlations between the questions and I found that the cultural subtopics related broadly and in a versatile way to other cultural subtopics. However, there were no correlations regarding the questions in one subtopic. It was interesting to see how familial expectations affected the student's relationship towards

cultural curiosity. Between parental pressure and the attitude towards the L2 speakers, only one close correlation could be established: *English is important to me because it is the most important language* coincided with *my parents believe that it is very important to speak English*. Another important correlation was found among learning context with integrative motivation and cultural curiosity. The latter relationship is relevant as it indicates how a lesson's atmosphere affects cultural curiosity.

4.1.3 The level of proficiency they wish to achieve

From the 29 students, 4 students expressed the desire to pass an elementary level language exam, 8 students would like to pass an intermediate level and 17 students aimed to pass an advanced level language exam. However, their teacher does not see a good chance for most of them to be able to pass a language exam. Nevertheless, the conclusion can be drawn that the students in this specific environment are highly motivated as most of them wish to pass an advanced level language exam, despite their difficulties. The correlation analysis proves that the language exam only correlates with parental pressure and does not have any cultural driving forces.

4.1.4 Important results concerning the questionnaire

I analysed how consistent and versatile the questions are within each topic as well as how diverse aspects of questions were asked within each topic. There were very few topics in which the questions correlated with one another, indicating that the questionnaire was consistent and that in each topic a wide variety of questions were asked. The significance values of the Pearson correlation values were mostly under 0.05 which means that the sample size, the number of the questioned were sufficient to analyse the questionnaire data.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 Why learn English?

The results of the questionnaire show that in this special medium it is primarily the quality of the learning context that makes students participate in the language lessons week by week. The teacher's personality and patience attracts children and motivates their language learning. Besides the teacher's traits, the exciting tasks and exercises she brings to the lessons motivate the students. Presumably the teacher's competence and qualification to teach students with special needs and her enthusiasm to take on workshops greatly contributes to the success of the English lessons. The segregated constitution of the class also supports the quality of the learning context as there are no significant individual differences due to segregation. The students dare to participate in the lessons freely. In a study by Nikolov (1999), it was found that children's primary source of motivation relates significantly with the learning context (in Csizér, 2007). Dörnyei (2005) confirmed Nikolov's findings emphasizing the importance of adequate classroom experiences and the teacher's personal attention concerning language learning motivation (in Kormos et al., 2009).

In addition to learning context, relation towards the English language and its speakers greatly motivates students. The presence of instrumental motivation was detected most prominently. Students see the English language primarily as an instrument which could bring them future benefits. Without the English language, students do not believe they can make their way in the world and that better job opportunities will open up to them if they learn the language. This is particularly interesting, since for this age group, integrative motivation tends to be more dominant in motivated environments. The advantages concerning careers belong to the far future therefore it is commonly not part of the motivational inventory at this age (Csizér, 2007). However, in this special medium, the presence of integrative motivation was less outstanding than that of instrumental motivation, even though previous studies show that

integrativity is a key component of the language learning motivation of students between the ages of 13-14. Nonetheless, other Hungarian studies have not found integrative factors in student motivational profiles or, if they did, it had no significant effect on the student's motivated learning behaviour. Nikolov (1999) in a longitudinal study found traces of instrumental motivation but not of integrative motivation. In a research concerning secondary school language learners, it was found that the effect of integrative motivation if present at all only affects the student's energy devoted to language learning indirectly (in Csizér, 2007).

Cultural curiosity, particularly the elements of pop culture appears to be a leading motivating factor. However history, architecture and gastronomy also play an important role in their motivation. Pop culture is a genre teenagers can relate to, they have an opinion about, and they feel its relevance in their lives independent of the difficulties they have to face at the language lessons. Therefore it could be a useful tool to motivate the students at the language lessons. If they could learn more about the English speaking cultures, their motivation could intensify and the most significant motivating factor would no longer be the future benefits, but the language and the culture itself and hereby their motivation would become integrative and intrinsic.

It can be observed that the familial expectations did not affect the cultural interests peculiarly. However, the learning context did have a strong relation with both integrative motivation and cultural curiosity. The latter relationship can be an important indicator of how the atmosphere of the lessons can raise cultural interest.

It is found that even though they study with an enthusiastic, understanding and qualified teacher in an environment where there are no significant individual differences, the students still have very low self-esteem. They feel that their work does not result in success. They have difficulties in the field of writing, reading and speaking. However, the students

noted that they are better at understanding the spoken language therefore this could be a field where they could reach a sense of achievement.

Most of the students do not feel any parental pressure concerning the language learning process. The findings demonstrate that most parents find it important, for their children to learn English and they encourage them to do so. According to Gardner (1985), parents largely influence their children's attitudes towards language learning. Furthermore, Dörnyei (2005) found that this parental influence is internalized and is represented in the student's ideal self-image (in Moris et al., 2013). While students feel encouraged by their parents and they internalize their parent's motivation, they do not feel any pressure from their parent's part. Presumably, the negative parental pressure does not have such an important role as the positive encouragement has. Parents are satisfied with the extra efforts their children put into language learning but they do not raise great expectations towards them. Interestingly, the results show that the language exam strongly coheres with the familial expectations. Students separate the language exam from language learning itself, indicating that the language exam is not a driving force in the language learning process.

4.2.2 Answers to the research questions

The results of the research reveal that, within this specific environment, students primarily participate in the workshops due to the teacher's personality and the atmosphere of the lessons. The presence of the instrumental motivation also plays an important role in their consistent attendance at the English workshops. Regarding the English speaking cultures, it is the films, songs, media and books that are an important motivating source. Familial expectations are not significant according to the students. Though parents are happy about their children learning English, they do not raise high expectations regarding their children's English studies. The student responses revealed that they have a very low self-esteem even

though they have a qualified teacher and they study in a sheltered, segregated environment. However, despite their low self-esteem, more than half of the students aim to pass an advanced level language exam.

From my previous suppositions that segregated students will be confident, will have a balanced self-esteem and face fewer failures were not supported by the results of the research. However, the research confirms my other assumptions regarding familial pressure and cultural interest. There is a lower level of parental pressure and the interest towards the English speaking cultures was detectable.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this small scale study was to investigate why a special group of speech and language impaired students who are exempted from their foreign language studies would still choose to participate in English language workshops week by week voluntarily. The questionnaire filled out by the students and the interview conducted with their teacher revealed that they mostly participate in the workshops due to the teacher's personality and the enjoyable tasks and exercises she brings to the classes. Another important motivating factor for these students is the English language as a facilitator of their future which could lead them to better job prospects in the distant future. Lastly, cultural curiosity revealed to be a significant motivating source for this special group of students.

Based on this study, broad generalizations cannot be made. My research has a number of shortcomings such as: the small sample size; the specific environment and the unique population. However, further research could investigate many other aspects of this or other environments where students with speech and language impairment learn second languages.

It would be interesting to conduct interviews with the parents of the students to learn how much importance they place on the English language, why they encourage their children

to learn the language, and whether they see any chance that their children can acquire a foreign language. Research could also investigate why 13-15 year old student's language learning motivation is largely instrumental motivation. Younger students could be questioned to see at what age instrumental motivation becomes an important motivating factor in second language learning. Lastly, it would be interesting to investigate this particular teacher's teaching techniques and methodology as it turned out to be the primary source of motivation for these students.

6. Reflective notes

In my thesis I was able to connect the two fields of my interest and studies. Therefore, it was a motivating and inspiring project through which I got closer to the idea, that every person has the right to learn. This experience was especially important to me as the concept is not always present in the field of special education.

It was uplifting to see students learn English despite their difficulties and challenges and it was exemplary both to see this exceptional group and the teacher who is determined to make language learning enjoyable and accessible to students with special needs. As a future special education and English teacher, the primary and most important finding for me is the fact that no one is able to decide who is capable and who is motivated to learn, as prejudices can easily mistake us. Everyone should be given the opportunity to choose their field of interests.

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Appendices

1.1 Table 1. Mean values of the answers of the questionnaire

q1	q2	q3	q4	q5	q6	q7	q8	q9	q10	q11	q12	q13
3,42	3,64	3,88	3,98	4,15	3,69	3,31	4,23	3,22	3,87	3,45	3,41	3,89

q14	q15	q16	q17	q18	q19	q20	q21	q22	q23	q24	q25	q26
3,94	3,58	3,77	3,84	3,53	3,81	3,85	4,08	3,62	4,61	3,52	3,14	3,94

q27	q28	q29	q30	q31	q32	q33	q34	q35	q36	q37	q38	q39
3,48	3,21	3,79	2,52	3,43	3,90	3,09	3,30	2,32	2,51	2,44	2,39	2,64

1.2 Table 2. Motivation factors of language learning

Cultural aspects of language learning	3,72
Integrative	3,73
Instrumental	3,85
Attitude	3,49
Cultural curiosity	3,80
Ethnolinguistic vitality	3,76
Learning context	3,80
Parental pressure	3,40
Motivated learning behaviour	3,47
Self esteem	2,60

1.3 Table 3. Significant correlations between the motivational factors

	<i>Integrative motivation</i>	<i>Instrumental motivation</i>	<i>attitude towards the L2 speakers</i>	<i>cultural curiosity</i>	<i>ethnolinguistic vitality</i>	<i>Learning context</i>	<i>parental pressure</i>	<i>Motivated learning behaviour</i>	<i>Self Esteem</i>	<i>language exam</i>
<i>Integrative motivation</i>	X	2-7	2-9		3-19	2-25		2-31		
<i>Instrumental motivation</i>	2-7	X	7-10 6-11 7-11					6-33	7-35	
<i>attitude towards the L2 speakers</i>	2-9	7-10 6-11 7-11	X	11-15				12-33		
<i>cultural curiosity</i>			11-15	X		16-22			15-35	
<i>ethnolinguistic vitality</i>	3-19				X		17-26	17-31		
<i>Learning context</i>	2-25			16-22		X		21-32 24-32		
<i>Parental pressure</i>					17-26		X	26-31 28-31		26-40
<i>Motiv. learn. behav.</i>	2-31	6-33	12-33		17-31	21-32 24-32	26-31 28-31	X		
<i>Self esteem</i>		7-35		15-35					X	

<i>language Exam</i>							26-40			X
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2. Questionnaire (translated)

Read the following statements and choose the one that characterizes you the most!

1: strongly disagree

2: disagree

3: undecided

4: agree

5: strongly agree



1

2

3

4

5

1. I am more interested in the English language than any other language.	1 2 3 4 5
2. The English language is a beautiful language.	1 2 3 4 5
3. I would be happy to go to England any time.	1 2 3 4 5
4. I am really interested in England and the English people.	1 2 3 4 5
5. Nowadays one cannot succeed without English.	1 2 3 4 5
6. I am interested in English because I would like to live abroad at least for a little time.	1 2 3 4 5
7. I would like to learn English because I would like to pass a language exam.	1 2 3 4 5

8. English is important to me because if I speak English I will have a better job.	1 2 3 4 5
9. English people are kind and have a good sense of humour.	1 2 3 4 5
10. American people are modern and open-minded.	1 2 3 4 5
11. I would like to get to know English people.	1 2 3 4 5
12. I would like to live in an English speaking country for a while.	1 2 3 4 5
13. English is important to me because I would like to understand the film in their original language.	1 2 3 4 5
14. English is important to me because I would like to understand the lyrics of songs.	1 2 3 4 5
15. English is important to me because I would like to understand English books and magazines.	1 2 3 4 5
16. English is important to me because I would like to understand interviews with my favourite celebrities.	1 2 3 4 5
17. English is important to me because it is the most important language.	1 2 3 4 5
18. Almost everyone speaks English.	1 2 3 4 5
19. The influence of England on the world is significant.	1 2 3 4 5
20. America and England are very developed and rich countries.	1 2 3 4 5
21. The English workshops are fun.	1 2 3 4 5
22. The English group at the lessons is a very good group.	1 2 3 4 5
23. The teacher helps us a lot to in order to understand everything.	1 2 3 4 5

24. The English teacher brings very good tasks and exercises to the lessons.	1 2 3 4 5
25. I like to speak in English during the lessons.	1 2 3 4 5
26. My parents think that it is very important to speak English.	1 2 3 4 5
27. Most people in my family speak English.	1 2 3 4 5
28. English is important to me because I feel it is expected of me.	1 2 3 4 5
29. My parents encourage me to study more English.	1 2 3 4 5
30. English is important to me because my parents are not happy about my poor achievements.	1 2 3 4 5
31. When the English teacher gives us extra tasks besides homework I am happy to do them.	1 2 3 4 5
32. I am satisfied with my achievements during the English workshops.	1 2 3 4 5
33. I study a lot of English at home.	1 2 3 4 5
34. I am satisfied with the level of my English.	1 2 3 4 5
35. I feel that when I put energy in my English I am successful at the workshops.	1 2 3 4 5
36. I feel that I am good at speaking in English.	1 2 3 4 5
37. I feel that I am good at reading in English.	1 2 3 4 5
38. I feel that I am good at writing in English.	1 2 3 4 5
39. I feel that I am good at understanding the spoken English language.	1 2 3 4 5

What level of English would you like to achieve? Underline the answer!

elementary

intermediate

advanced

Why would you like to learn English?

.....
.....
.....

What are you most interested in regarding the English culture?

.....
.....
.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

3. Teacher interview

1. What do you think is the main motivating factor for the students to learn English?

I think that the parents play an important role in their children's decision making. Many of the students plan to live abroad. The idea to go and work abroad is becoming very popular and of course this has an impact on children. Another reason could be the songs, films and the media. In some classes there were students who came to me after lessons to ask me about song's lyrics.

2. In your opinion how many of the students will continue their English studies?

I think that probably half of my students will continue their English studies. But this depends greatly on which secondary school they will attend to, the teacher at the new school and the class.

3. What are the main difficulties you have to face when preparing for the workshops?

They face severe difficulties at the English workshops therefore it is not easy to design enjoyable and exciting workshops. I try to make up interesting and useful tasks and games for the children.

4. How would you define the atmosphere of the workshops?

The workshops have a very good atmosphere. The classes I teach this year have a very strong group-cohesion therefore it is good to teach them.

5. In your opinion are the classes motivated towards learning English?

They are motivated during the lessons but they do not put extra energies in learning the language. They are not too enthusiastic about homework.

6. How influential are the parents concerning the students attitude towards English?

Parents play an important role in the student's decision making. They hear it at home that it is important to learn a language and that today speaking English is inevitable. This must affect the children's point of view!

7. In what extent do the surroundings of the children speak English?

Many of the students have elder siblings who learn English but I am not sure whether the parents speak English.

8. In what extent do the students meet with the English speaking cultures during the English workshops and if they do, does it motivate them?

Unfortunately we do not really have enough time for much. It is mostly the vocabulary and the grammar that I try to teach them during the one workshop per week we have. Sometimes culture comes up throughout the lessons but it is not highlighted during the workshops.

9. Are they interested in the English speaking cultures? If yes, what aspect of the culture motivates them?

I think it is mostly the songs, films and the media which play an important role in their language learning motivation. Due to the internet they meet with the English language constantly. Most of the children have favourite singers and they want to understand the lyrics.

10. In what extent do the students face a sense of achievement or failure during their acquaintance with the English language?

Unfortunately they do not often face success during their language learning process. They have difficulties in almost all of the fields that are needed in language learning. I try to make the workshops as playful as possible but still they feel their difficulties.

11. What are the aspects of the English language learning in which they feel successful?

This is not an easy question. I know that they do not like to speak in English. Writing and reading is terribly difficult for them not only in English but in Hungarian as well. Probably it is listening in which they feel the most successful.

12. In your opinion how many of the students will be able to pass a language exam?

Well not many of them, maybe one or two students in each class.