

Motivation of Italian L2 Learners in Non-Institutional Settings in Croatia

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ABSTRACT

The main sources of motivation are obligation, necessity and pleasure. The role of motivation in L2 acquisition in Croatia has been studied mostly through the concepts of affective factors, and attitudes in learning English, and within the institutional context (Mihaljević-Djigunović 1998 and 2002, Scotti Jurić and Ambrosi-Rosandić 2010).

This paper focuses on attitudes of students learning the Italian in foreign language schools, since it is the language that they choose to learn in their free time, enrolling a course that is not a part of the formal education process. It measures some of the factors that motivate course participants in Croatia to learn Italian. For that purpose we developed a questionnaire with five-point Likert scale. The research questions were related to three different topics: sources of motivation, attitudes on the methods of teaching Italian and attitudes on various types of activities accomplished during the course. The participants to the survey were grouped according to their age: children (pre-school, primary school children), teenagers/adolescents (secondary school children), adults (students, employed, unemployed, retired and others). The sample included a total of 120 students (40 for each group) from the Centre for Foreign Languages in Split (Croatia) who were enrolled in the Italian language courses during the summer semester of 2012.

The study will try to answer the following questions: What are the predominant types of motivation?, How is the type of motivation related to age?, Is there a relationship between attitudes, learning dynamics and activities of studying Italian when contrasted to motivation?

The aim of this paper is to provide data on motivation and learning strategies among different age groups of Italian L2 learners in non-institutional settings, as well as to understand the motivation that they already have in order to rethink and improve the teaching of Italian L2 according to their needs.