

SELF-IDENTIFICATION AS A MOTIVATION IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Preliminary communication

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Abstract

The aim of the research was to analyze the impact of the negative forms in Bulgarian language on statements describing the personality and the extent of preference for these forms by different groups of students. Methods of research: 1. For this purpose a questionnaire was developed with 3 tasks containing positive and negative statements with the semantic fields "results-reality" and "process-potential", 2. Calculation in percents by two independent factors: "type of student" and "sex". Participants in the research: 231 students, 145 of them – sports students male and female, and 86 students from other universities male and female, all aged between 19 - 21. Results: the obtained results showed an interaction between some peculiarities of the Bulgarian negative forms with the independent factors, pointed above, in the process of the self-identification.

Keywords: *Bulgarian language, semantics, sports students, self concept, personality*

INTRODUCTION

The personal impression that everyone has about himself or herself is a motive for their behavior. People's reactions depend directly on how they view themselves and on what they think about themselves. We consider that language with its signal power can provoke motivation and strive for a higher level of knowledge through a growing self-esteem and stimulation of the process of self-identification.

The self-identification is connected with the self-esteem, with the will and strive for development and further on with the achievement motivation. The achievement motivation is necessary precondition for a successful foreign language acquisition especially by sports students for whom competing is a main part of their life.

In the modern world foreign language skills are a main part of the professional realization of the person. Fluency in foreign languages and its application in different everyday situations and professional lines is implanted in the descriptors of foreign language skills according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Language Learning (CEFRLL). The modern social and economic conditions set more and more requirements, not only for the young people, but also for the foreign language teachers.

"Foreign language teaching isn't limited on the traditional classrooms anymore. The mixed learning (digital and traditional) becomes one of the most powerful instruments supporting the teachers, who strive for variety and perfection of the traditional way of teaching in the common educational institutions" (Slavova (Славова), 2014).

Foreign language teaching at the National Sports Academy is compulsory but it is accompanied by different negative factors such as insufficient language classes, low level of language knowledge when starting studying at the academy as well as different language skills in the groups. All this leads to a loss of interest and desire for foreign language learning. That's why the motivation is a main part of the teachers' work.

The strongest motivation is the one connected with the I-identity. "The accomplishment of a psycho-social identity is connected with the building of a realistic I - conception, which includes a physical, cognitive, emotional and social mastering of the environment and an acknowledgment in the society. I - identity is in the base of personal efficiency and in the evaluation of personal competence" (Iancheva (Янчева), 2004).

After a certain age, everyone aims at identifying oneself in different terms, tries ascribing oneself qualities and skills, wants to be somebody important, someone who matters, wants to present himself or herself through an idea, through belonging to a group or activity, wants to be recognized through a typical sign and thus to win the respect of other people.

The personal impression that you have about yourself as an individual also plays the role of a motive for your behavior.

This concerns people, who do sports and especially the athletes, who compete actively.

"Doing sports requires overcoming yourself every day, in order to accomplish the maximum achievement" (Iancheva (Янчева), 2004).

The language with its signal power can be the stimulus for self-identification. It arises associations, which influence the impression that someone has about himself or herself, in a different way and to a different extent. Depending on the lexical and grammatical style of the expressions people chose statements, which are closest to their impression about themselves.

The aim of the research was to analyze the impact of the negative forms in Bulgarian language on statements describing personality and the extent of preference for these forms by different groups of students.

METHODS

1. For this purpose a questionnaire was developed with 3 tasks containing positive and negative statements with the

semantic fields “result-reality” and “process-potential” (Fig. 1.).

2. Ranking the preference by descending series of the statement “The group of those, who are never incapable”, such as 5 - “very high preference”; 4 - “high preference”;

3 - “middle high preference”; 2 - “low preference”; 1 - “very low preference”

3. Calculation in per cents by two independent factors: “sex” and “type of student”. (Tab. 1.)

Fig. 1

SELF ESTEEM SCALE

Age.....Special subject (Sport).....Course.....Faculty

I. Mark each group from 1 to 5, where (5) describes the most desired group you want to belong to, (4) - the less desired,..... (3)..... (2) and (1)- the least desired group. You may use each number only once.

- The group of those who are always successful.
- The group of those who always take a risk.
- The group of those who are always capable.
- The group of those who are always brave.
- The group of those who always win.

II. Mark each group from 1 to 5, where (5) describes the most desired group you want to belong to, (4) - the less desired, (3)..... (2) and (1) - the least desired group. You may use each number only once.

- The group of those who never fail.
- The group of those who never feel satisfied being secure.
- The group of those who are never incapable.
- The group of those who are never afraid.
- The group of those who never lose.

III. Mark with the sign (V) THE one EXPRESSION of EACH pair, which you would use to describe the groups already ranked by you.

- The group of those who are always successful.
- The group of those who never fail.

- The group of those who never feel satisfied being secure.
- The group of those who always take a risk.

- The group of those, who are always brave.
- The group of those who are never afraid.

- The group of those who are never incapable.
- The group of those who are always capable.

- The group of those who always win.
- The group of those who never lose.

Table 1. Results of the research in %

Participants	5	4	3	2	1
Sports students - male (77)	6,5	23,3	20,7	29,8	19,5
Sports students - female (68)	14,2	12,5	15,3	22,8	35,2
Other students - male (51)	21,7	19,6	29,4	11,7	17,6
Other students - female (35)	16,6	22,2	19,3	30,5	11,4

Explanation: 5 – very high; 4 – high; 3 – middle; 2 – low; 1 – very low

Participants in the research: 231 students, 145 of them – sports students male and female, and 86 students from other universities - male and female, all aged between 19 and 21.

Procedure

Answering the questionnaire was anonymous. Each of the subjects of the research gave information about the sex, the special subject (for the sports students – the kind of

sport), the year and the faculty. A written instruction was given for each task. The Participants in the research had to rank the groups they would like to belong to according to their desire. The first task included 5 positive statements, the second task included the same statements in negative forms and the third one – the positive and the negative statements given in pairs.

The semantics in the statements, expressed by positive and negative forms, were built on people's psychological atti-

ude – to win, to succeed, to be capable, to be brave, to take a risk and their natural desire to belong to the group of those, who can, who are brave, to belong to the groups of the winners and the dare-devils. The positive and the negative statements were divided in two groups: statements that express the *process-potential* (I can, I take a risk, I am brave) and their negative variants (I am incapable, I don't feel satisfied being secure, I am not afraid) and statements that express the *result – reality* (I succeed, I won) and their negative variants (I don't fail, I don't lose).

On the basis of the results of this research (2014) we built the present survey by studying the extent of preference of the statement “The group of those, who are never incapable” by the different groups of students – male and female.

Our interest to investigate especially the statement “The group of those, who are never incapable” versus “The group of those, who are always capable” was provoked by the peculiarities of the Bulgarian language, which allows an accumulation of negative forms. (Grupata na tezi, koito nikoga ne sa nesposobni). In this sentence there is a negative predicate (copula), a pronominal adverb (never) and a lexical negation (incapable).

“The characteristics of the negative pronouns and the pronominal adverbs to spread the whole negation on all elements, which are referents, allows that these sentences are differentiated as a special type of negative sentences” (Stoyanova (Стоянова), 1983). According to the theory of the cumulative difficulty, the accumulation of negative forms in a sentence makes the perception of this sentence more difficult. According to Chomsky's generative theory, the so called “kernel sentence” is simple, it is formed by two parts, it is positive, and it is declarative and active” (Chomsky, 1965).

All these statements allowed us to form the following hypotheses:

1. It was expected that the sports students would show a low preference towards this statement, because of the negative accumulation and so confirm the results of our former survey towards “process” and “result” as they put this statement on the last place or on the place before the last according to their desire.

2. It was assumed, that the female sports students as well as the female students from the other group will show a low interest towards this statement because of their striving for results and positive forms.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The obtained results have shown the following:

1. Sports students – male

Only 5.6% from the male sports students show “*very high preference*” (5) and 29.8% show “*low preference*” (2).

2. Sports students – female

The results of the female students don't differ much from those of the male students. Only 14.2% show “*very high preference*” (5), 22.8%- “*low preference*” (2) and 35.2% show “*very low preference*” (1).

3. Other students – male

The statement “The group of those who are never incapable” is preferred as follows: 21.7% show “*very high preference*” (5) (vs. 6.5% - by male sports students). “*Middle preference*” (3) show 29.4%.

4. Other students – female

As shown, 16.6% of the female students put this statement into “*very high preference*” (5). This result is very

close to the result of the female sports students (14.2%). Very high per cent – 30.5% of the female students set this statement into “*low preference*” (2), which is very close to the result of the female sports students (35.2%).

CONCLUSION

1. The statement “The group of those, who are never incapable” shows “very low preference” (1) by the male sports students as well by the female sports students. This result confirms the hypothesis, namely: sports students have difficulties to define their personal identification when the sentences are negative, more over when there are more than one negative forms.

2. The accumulation of negative forms doesn't trouble the other male students to define their identity. They have no difficulties to express their belonging to the corresponding group if there are more than one negative forms.

3. The female sports students as well the female students of the other group put this sentence as a “low preference” and “very low preference”. This result confirms the hypothesis that women strive to “result - reality” and they prefer positive statements.

4. The results of the present survey confirm the conclusions of our former research (2014), namely:

- the statements which express “process –potential” are characteristic more for men than for women.

- the statements which express “result – reality” are characteristic both for female sports students and for female students from the other group. Women strive for exactness and confidence. This confirms the striving of women for more stability and support in life.

- the accumulation of negative forms, which is characteristic for Bulgarian sentences, causes difficulties in cases of self-identification, especially by sports students.

The present survey as well as our former one could be useful in creating a text book - model for foreign language learning by sports students, based on the motivational power of self-identification. How it will be created as achievement motivation, is a matter of the author's personal approach.

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