

EXTRAMURAL ACTIVITIES AND MOTIVATION
IN ADULT ENGLISH LEARNERS

Bachelor's thesis
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<p style="text-align: center;">Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Luokkahuoneen ulkopuolella tapahtuvasta informaalista oppimisesta on tullut yhä suositumpaa ja yleisempää myös kielten opiskelussa. Uuden kielen ja kulttuurin oppimisessa erilaiset vapaa-ajan aktiviteetit tarjoavat monipuoliset puitteet oppimiselle. Tv, elokuvat, musiikki, kirjat, pelit ja Internet tarjoavat valtavat resurssit, joita hyödyntääkseen opiskelijan täytyy olla oma-aloitteinen ja motivoitunut. Lisäksi väestön vanhetessa ikääntyneitä kielenopiskelijoita on yhä enemmän.</p> <p>Tämä tutkimus käsittelee näiden vapaa-ajalla tapahtuvien englanninkielisten oppimisaktiviteettien ja motivaation välistä suhdetta englannin aikuisopiskelijoilla. Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli selvittää, olivatko ne opiskelijat, jotka osallistuivat informaaleihin oppimisaktiviteetteihin vapaa-ajallaan myös motivoituneempia opiskelemaan englantia. Lisäksi mielenkiinnon kohteena oli tutkia kokivatko opiskelijat että nämä aktiviteetit auttoivat heitä englannin oppimisessa.</p> <p>Tutkimus toteutettiin kyselytutkimuksena itäsuomalaisessa kansalaisopistossa ja vastaajina oli 25 englannin aikuisopiskelijaa. Osallistujat vastasivat motivaatiota, informaalien oppimisaktiviteettien määrää ja laatua sekä näiden välisiä yhteyksiä koskeviin avoimiin ja suljettuihin kysymyksiin. Aineisto analysoitiin määrällisin ja laadullisin menetelmin.</p> <p>Tilastollisten tulosten mukaan motivaatio ja informaalit oppimisaktiviteetit korreloivat keskenään, vaikkakaan tutkimustuloksia ei voida yleistää ja luotettavuutta haittasi pieni otoskoko. Myös laadullinen analyysi vahvisti hypoteesin siitä, että informaalit oppimisaktiviteetit motivoivat ja auttavat opiskelijoita omaksumaan englantia.</p> <p>Tulokset antavat suuntaa siitä, miten vapaa-ajalla tapahtuvaa kielenoppimista voitaisiin hyödyntää opiskelijoiden motivoinnissa ja kuinka omaa kielellistä osaamista voi syventää hyödyntämällä informaaleja aktiviteetteja.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

In today's continuously changing world learning does not only concern the young anymore but also adults and the older population. Learning also increasingly happens outside the traditional classroom environment. Formal learning has long been regarded as more important than informal learning. Formal training, qualifications and degrees are generally valued among employers. However, it could be argued that formal learning represents only a small part of all the learning that occurs in schools, work and at home. Researchers estimate that up to 80 percent of everything that is learned during work hours occurs informally, casually and outside of formal education (Sallila 1998). Informal, or extramural, learning has its undeniable place in the society and in learning research, despite the fact that it has been often ignored by policymakers, employers and researchers (Coffield 2000:1).

Also known as out-of-class activities, extramural learning consists of actions that do not relate to formal assignments, such as homework, but rather occur in free time. In extramural language learning, these activities include watching movies and television shows, reading books and magazines, playing videogames, listening to music and discussing with people either face-to-face or virtually (Sundqvist 2009). Previous research on the topic has mainly explored either the extramural language learning activities of younger learners, or one specific activity and its relation to language learning. For example, Sundqvist (2009) studied the effects of extramural English activities on oral proficiency and vocabulary in Swedish ninth graders. According to the results of the study, the amount of time spent on extramural English activities correlated positively and significantly both with learners' level of oral proficiency and size of vocabulary (Sundqvist 2009).

There is little research on the relation of extramural activities to motivation, and even less when adult learners are concerned (Benson and Reinders 2011:7). One study exploring the connection between motivation and extramural language learning was carried out by Pearson (2004). Among other things, Pearson concluded that learner motivation was an important aspect in extramural language learning. In addition, he found that participants with high intrinsic motivation seemed more enthusiastic about their extramural learning than those with lower intrinsic motivation (Pearson 2004:5).

I am interested in finding out how often the adult learners do extramural activities in English, how motivated they are towards learning the language and whether they experience the activities helpful in learning English. As a learner of languages myself, I have noticed that successful learning is very

difficult without utilizing extramural activities alongside traditional formal education and that motivated students usually participate in these activities more and take more responsibility of their own learning.

The study was conducted by collecting questionnaire responses from 25 adult English learners. The data was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. According to the results, extramural activities can help students to learn English and that many were more motivated to learn the language after engaging in these activities.

This thesis is divided into three main sections. First, I introduce the background theory relevant to my research. I will define terms such as motivation and learner autonomy, and then briefly discuss the historical developments of language learning motivation research. The definition of extramural activities and the characteristics of older adults as learners conclude Chapter 2. In Chapter 3 I will present my research questions as well as the data collection and analysis methods. After that, I will present the results of the study with a more detailed description of the analysis process. Finally, in the conclusion, I will summarize the main findings of my research and discuss the possible implications and applications of the study.

2 BACKGROUND

In this chapter I will introduce relevant concepts, theories and recent research regarding the relation between motivation, extramural activities and adults as language learners. First, the definition of motivation is discussed, as well as key theories in motivational psychology. A historic overview of motivation in second language learning is also presented. The second part of the chapter defines the concept of extramural learning and different categories of extramural activities are introduced. Third, as adults are the subjects of this study, their qualities as language learners compared to younger learners are briefly explored.

2.1 Motivation: strength, purpose and sustainability

‘Motivation’ is a term that has provoked a lot of debate, differing theories and disagreements over the decades among scholars. Countless different theoretical models have been created to explain the science of human motivation. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011:4) give a definition that most researchers agree on: motivation concerns the direction and magnitude of human behaviour. In other words,

motivation consists of why people do what they do, how long they are willing to do it and how much effort they are going to expend on it. It is an internal process that results in energy, direction and persistence in the behaviour of an individual (Reeve 2013).

Early models on motivation focused on the unconscious and emotions as driving forces of human behaviour, later models have emphasized conscious cognitive processes (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011:4-5). According to Ryan (2007), there has been a recent resurgence of interest in emotions in motivational psychology. Evolutionary, cross-cultural and positive psychology and neuropsychology have all contributed to the increased interest in the role of personal meanings, emotions, motives, values and psychological needs in creating motivation (Ryan 2007:1-3).

In addition, there has been debate on whether motivation is a ‘cause’ or an ‘effect’ of learning, but now scholars agree that motivation and learning are in a cyclical relationship: high motivation creates high achievement which in turn creates high motivation, or in negative cycles the opposite (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011:5-6).

However, according to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011:6), most people do not experience motivation as a simple cause-and-effect state before and after an action. Motivation usually develops gradually through a complex mental process that involves, for example, planning, goal setting, intention formation, task generation, action implementation, action control and outcome evaluation. Moreover, when participating in a long-term activity, such as learning a new language, motivation is not consistent over time, but changes according to different internal and external influences (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011:6).

2.1.1 Key theories in psychology of motivation

Throughout the second half of the 20th century, the cognitive revolution, which emerged in response to behaviourism, shaped theories of motivation. Cognitive theories of motivation emphasize the role of mental structures, beliefs and information processing in the behaviour and actions of an individual. Although social and environmental factors play a part, motivation is viewed as located within the individual (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011:12-13). As is common in motivation research, there is great variation between different theories. This subchapter will briefly introduce the ones that are the most prominent in the field and that continue to influence thinking today.

According to expectancy-value theories, motivation can be explained by individual's expectations of how well they will succeed in the task and how valuable the achievement is to them. The greater the likelihood of attaining the goal and the greater the value of the goal, the higher the degree of positive motivation. If either of these factors is removed, it is unlikely that effort will be invested in the activity (Wigfield and Eccles 2000). Atkinson's achievement motivation theory (Atkinson and Raynor 1974) incorporated these constructs of expectancy and value and the theory dominated the field for decades. He also added two further components: need for achievement and fear of failure. Achievement motivation was, thus, the sum of need for achievement, probability of success and the value of successful task fulfilment, minus the fear of failure, the probability of failure and the need to avoid failure. In other words, the conflict between avoidance and approach tendencies (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011:13-14).

In determining one's expectancy of success, processing one's past experiences plays an important role. This is what the attribution theory examines. Attributional processes influence the formation of people's expectancies enormously and especially the research on student motivation was based on this in the 1980s. The main principle according to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011:15) is that the causal attributions an individual makes of past failures and successes influence future achievement strivings. The most common attributions in school environments are those to ability, effort, task difficulty, luck, mood, family background and help or hindrance from others (Graham 1994).

Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory on the other hand refers to people's own judgement of their capabilities and their sense of efficacy to determine which activities they attempt, how much effort they put in it and how much persistence they display. Closely linked to this is Covington's (1992) self-worth theory, which is based on preserving personal value and worth, especially when facing failure and negative feedback. This could result in motivational face-saving measures, when potentially poor performance threatens student's self-esteem. An example of motivational face-saving measures is not trying at all, since in this case failure would be attributed to lack of effort instead of low ability (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011:17, Dörnyei 2001:11).

To illustrate these above-mentioned theories of motivation, a student's lack of effort towards a task is according to Bandura's theory (1997) the result of low sense of self-efficacy. If combined with the attribution theory, it could be argued that this hypothetical low self-efficacy is a result of bad past experiences with similar tasks. If combined further with expectancy-value theories and achievement motivation theories, the student does not expect success and wants to avoid a failure, since the

probability of failure is greater than the probability of success. To save face, as self-worth theory suggests, he or she withholds effort to preserve personal value.

To continue with the most prominent motivation theories, the Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory (2000) is one of the best known in the field. According to this theory, as Dörnyei (2001:11) puts it, human motives can be placed on continuum between self-determined, or *intrinsic*, and controlled, or *extrinsic*, forms of motivation. Intrinsic motivation concerns behaviour that is performed for its own sake to experience joy and satisfaction. Extrinsic motivation on the other hand means behaviour that is carried out to receive some extrinsic award, good grades for example, or to avoid punishment. As the present study concerns adults who study English at an older age, it is interesting to see whether they study it for the joy of learning a new language and getting to know a new culture, or whether English serves as a means to something extrinsic, like communicating with grandchildren or travelling for example.

2.1.2 Learner autonomy

The term "learner autonomy" was first coined by Henri Holec (1981), who defined it as 'the ability to take charge of one's own learning'. It has been popular concept in foreign language learning since the 1980s and has widely influenced classroom practices and given origin to self-access language learning centres and the development of new technologies promoting independent learning.

In order to "take charge" as Holec put it, one must first take responsibility for the learning process and acknowledge that successful learning depends only on one's own efforts. This entails that students have the ability to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning. Like motivation, learner autonomy includes the active involvement of the learner with the learning process (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011:58). According to Dickinson (1995), there is substantial evidence that successful learning and enhanced motivation is conditional on students taking responsibility for their learning and perceiving that they control the learning outcome rather than an outside factor.

2.1.3 Motivation to learn a second language: historical developments

The motivation to learn a new language cannot entirely be explained by the mainstream motivation theories, which is why it has evolved into an independent research field. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011:39-40) describe the second language learning motivation theory (henceforth L2 motivation

theory) as integrating partly with the mainstream theoretical perspectives, while at the same time maintaining a focus on aspects of motivation that are unique to language learning. The historical development of L2 motivation theories can be divided into three distinct phases: The social psychological period (1959-1990), the cognitive-situated period (1990s) and the process-oriented period (turn of the century) (Dörnyei 2005).

The social psychological period was characterised by the work of Robert Gardner. The key concepts of his theory of L2 motivation comprise of the following: motivational intensity or effort, desire to learn the language and attitudes towards learning the language (Gardner 1985). Gardner developed this model suggesting that L2 cannot be explained only by the aptitude or the competency to acquire languages. Besides aptitude, there are also social, contextual and pragmatic reasons that drive an individual to learn a new language (Gardner 1985). The concept of the ‘integrative motive’ is one of the best known in Gardner’s motivation theory. It is defined as a “motivation to learn a second language because of positive feelings towards the community that speaks the language” (Gardner 1985:82-3). Based on this theory, one can assume that negative attitudes and emotions towards the people who speak the target language create challenges for staying motivated towards learning the language.

The cognitive-situated period on the other hand was characterised by the cognitive theories in educational psychology. Cognitive perspectives focus on how the psychological processes of the individual influence their motivation.

An aspect that all the motivation theories introduced above have failed to describe is the temporal organisation of motivation, i.e., motivational processes fluctuate and change over a period of time. As learning a second language is something that usually takes several years, it is an interesting aspect to examine. Changes in motivation may occur either during a single task, a language course, or even across the lifespan. The most well-known model of the process aspect of the L2 motivation was created by Dörnyei and Ottó (1998). According to the theory the motivated behavioural process can be divided into three phases: preactional, actional and post-actional. The preactional phase includes goal setting, intention formation and initiation of intention enactment. In the actional phase an individual commits to action, for example enrolling in a language course, and at the same time three processes come into effect: subtask generation (learning itself), appraisal process and action control. The final stage is the post-actional phase which begins after either the goal has been attained or the

action has been stopped. The individual evaluates the outcome and the accomplishment and considers possible implications for future actions.

2.2 Extramural language learning

This section aims to define and introduce extramural learning, i.e. learning beyond the classroom. The word *extramural* comes from Latin, *extra* meaning ‘outside’ and *mural* ‘wall’. Hence, extramural learning refers to learning that happens outside the walls of a classroom (Sundqvist 2009:39). There are a number of alternative terms referring to the field of learning outside the classroom. These include, for example, out-of-school, extracurricular, non-formal, informal, naturalistic, self-directed, non-instructed and autonomous learning, just to mention a few. In this study I will use either the term ‘extramural learning’ or ‘language learning beyond the classroom’. The focus will be on language learning specifically.

Language learning beyond the classroom is an extensive field that is not easily defined. Benson (2001:62) defines it as “any kind of learning that takes place outside the classroom and involves self-instruction, naturalistic learning or self-directed naturalistic learning.” According to Benson (2001), self-direction can be understood as a deliberate long-term learning project which the learner plans and carries out without any intervention from a teacher. Naturalistic learning refers to direct spoken interaction with a speaker of the target language or to interaction with target language texts. Self-directed naturalistic learning on the other hand refers to a naturalistic learning situation that the learner creates with the intention to learn the language.

In this study, the term ‘extramural learning’ does not mean that intention to learn is required from the learner, nor is planning a long term project and carrying it out without the interference of a teacher, as Benson puts it. I am interested in finding out whether activities that are carried out in English, even if without any deliberate intentions of learning, can affect motivation, or vice versa. However, I am not ruling out intentional learning via extramural activities either.

There has been plenty of research concerning language learning in the classroom, but very little that examine extramural learning. Most language teachers would agree that combining formal education with extramural learning is the most effective way to learn languages, but there is not much research on the effectiveness of extramural language learning (Benson and Reinders 2011). Students can increase their exposure to the target language by continuing their learning outside the classroom.

According to Sundqvist (2009), studies have found that motivation and learner awareness were important aspects of language learning beyond the classroom. Also students' proficiency influenced which extramural activities they engaged in and how often. In the next section, I discuss the characteristics of older adults as language learners.

2.3 Older adults as language learners

Over the next few decades, the number of retired people will increase drastically in many countries. Nowadays older generations not only live longer but also stay healthier and more active. After hectic working years, many choose to start new leisure activities after retiring, which for many different reasons can include language studies. It is important to focus attention to older language learners and their unique strengths and challenges.

A significant proportion of second language acquisition research has focused on age, but mainly on the difference between children and adults. According to Singleton and Ryan (2004), middle-aged and elderly language learners can be as successful in acquiring the language as younger learners. Muñoz (2010) states that older learners may even have some advantages compared to younger learners, at least at the initial stages of L2 acquisition. Older learners proceed faster in the beginning, which gives them an advantage in the short term.

On the other hand, it is widely researched and generally accepted in the academic community that as an individual ages, physical and cognitive abilities decline (Singleton and Ryan 2004). These changes most likely affect language learning abilities or at least create challenges for older learners. Short-term and long-term memory, eyesight and hearing are all aspects that can suffer losses as one ages, which in turn affects language learning. Singleton and Ryan (2004:214) still point out that "there is no particular point in the aging of healthy adults where L2 learning becomes impossible".

Even if there is encouraging news for older learners, they still face an obstacle that can make acquiring a language more difficult. According to Murray (2011:141), the elderly L2 students lack occasion to put their speaking skills in use. Usually this happens at school or work-related settings. Retired students may no longer have access to these resources. Different kinds of learner communities, such as the adult education centre in this study, might provide solutions for this problem.

3 PRESENT STUDY

3.1 Aim and research questions

The aim of this study is to find out whether there is a link between English out-of-class activities and motivation in adult English learners. In other words, whether those students that engage more in extramural activities outside formal education are more motivated than those who engage less or not at all. I am also interested in finding out if the students feel that the extramural activities helped them learn English. The research questions that the study will focus on are the following:

1. Is there a link between motivation and the amount of different extramural activities the students engage in in English?
2. Have they experienced extramural activities helpful to their language learning?

3.2 Data and methods

The data consists of 25 questionnaire responses that were collected during September 2016 at an adult education centre in Eastern Finland. The questionnaires were administered to three groups of adult English students whose study levels ranged from beginners to intermediate. Students with highly advanced English skills and those with no prior experience of English studies were excluded from the study.

The questionnaires were mailed to language teachers who handed them out to their groups. Each teacher was given guidelines for executing the hand-out to avoid any misunderstandings since the researcher was not present during data collection.

For this study, the different categories of extramural English activities chosen were the following: reading books and/or magazines, listening to music, playing computer games, interacting with others face-to-face or via Internet, using the Internet, and watching movies and TV-series, subtitled ones included.

The five-page questionnaire consisted of 14 questions, including the questions on the students' background (Appendix 1). The multiple choice questions were designed to find out how often the respondents carried out extramural activities in English, such as reading books and/or magazines, listening to music and watching movies or TV-series, how motivated they were towards studying English and how helpful they had experienced these activities to be to their English learning. Open-

ended questions were included to give the respondents a chance to elaborate their answers if necessary. I was interested in finding out whether extramural activities would appear in these answers.

On the first page the general purpose of the study was explained and a research permit was collected by a signature from each informant. Twenty-six responses were received but as one had an unsigned research permit, only 25 responses were admitted to the study. The students answered the questionnaire in Finnish, as that was the mother tongue of almost all of them. Only one had Estonian as their mother tongue, but that person was also able to answer the questions in Finnish.

The participants of this study consisted of 25 students of English at an adult education centre. The respondents had significant variation in their age, youngest being 28 and oldest 77 years old. The average age of the respondents was 62, 5 years. One third of the participants were male and two thirds female. All but one had Finnish as their mother tongue, Estonian being the other mentioned mother tongue. Only 20 percent of the respondents were still in the work life while the rest were all retired.

The data was analysed using mixed methods: statistical analysis and content analysis. The multiple choice tables measuring the frequency of extramural activities, motivation and connection between extramural activities and learning English were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics 20 and Microsoft Excel. Even though the sample size was in reality too small to be analysed with SPSS, by using these methods it was possible to look for correlations between two broad phenomena, motivation and frequency of extramural activities. This was done to both variables measuring motivation and extramural activities. The relevant open-ended questions were analysed using qualitative methods, i.e. content analysis. The methods of analysis are explained in detail in Chapter 4 together with the results.

4 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Extramural activities

The questionnaire was, among other things, designed to find out how often the participants carried out English activities outside formal education. The answers to this were sought by using statistical methods. First, each questionnaire and each item in the questionnaire was given an identification number and the data was computerised. Statistical analysis was carried out using Excel.

The activities chosen for this study were reading books and/or magazines, listening to music, playing computer games, interacting with others either face-to-face or via Internet, using Internet (such as reading the news, email, social media) and watching TV-series and/or movies. In the questionnaire, the participants were asked to select how often they did these activities. The options were “daily”, “weekly”, “monthly”, “few times a year” and “never”. Out of all the activities the most popular ones were *listening to music* with 68 percent of participants responding either “daily” or “weekly” and *watching TV-series* with the equivalent percentage being 44 (Table 1). *Playing computer games* was the least popular activity, with 80% responding “never”. This could possibly be explained by the respondents’ relatively high age, since computer games tend to be more popular among the younger population. There was also the possibility to specify possible other English activities. Two participants specified additional activities, which were singing and listening to shortwave radio. Both carried out these activities weekly.

Table 1. How often extramural activities are carried out in English

	Daily (%)	Weekly (%)	Monthly (%)	Few times a year (%)	Never (%)	No response (%)	Total (%)
Reading books/magazines	4	32	8	16	40	0	100
Listening to music	40	28	16	12	0	4	100
Playing computer games	0	4	0	4	80	12	100
Interacting with others face-to-face or via Internet	0	28	4	24	44	0	100
Using the Internet	8	16	8	32	28	8	100
Watching TV series	12	32	24	20	12	0	100
Watching movies	8	24	16	24	24	4	100

4.2 Connection between motivation and extramural activities

The purpose of this study was to find out whether those adult students of English who carried out extramural activities more frequently also were more motivated towards studying the language. Since both motivation and extramural activities are broad phenomena that were measured using several items on the questionnaire, it was not possible to analyse correlations between the two without forming sums of the variables by using the SPSS program. The analysis was carried out following the guidelines provided by Metsämuuronen (2005).

Before forming the sum variables of both motivation and extramural activities, each item that was to be included into the sum variable had to be tested to conclude that they all measure the same

phenomena the same way. This was done by testing the correlations between the items within each phenomena. Cronbach's alpha was used to evaluate the reliability of the correlation test. It must be noted that the use of these kinds of statistical tests usually requires a substantially larger sample, approximately 60 participants or more, and thus the results cannot be considered entirely reliable. According to the results of the Cronbach's alpha, all the items in extramural activities and motivation measure the same phenomena.

After this, the sum variables were created, which means combining different items into one single number that reflects the phenomena as a whole. After completing this phase, it was possible to calculate the correlations between the two sum variables. According to the Pearson's correlation coefficient, which measures the linear dependence of two variables, extramural activities and motivation correlate only weakly ($r=.085$, $p=.72$) and it was not statistically significant.

Even though the amount of extramural activities that the respondents participated in regularly was fairly low, most of them felt that the activities motivated them to study English, or that they had become interested in an activity once learning English. In the questionnaire a multiple-choice question was designed to find out whether motivation is in a causal or an effectual relationship with extramural activities, or whether the activities have any effect on motivation at all. The participants were asked to fill out a table asking whether the activity in question motivated them to improve their language skills, whether they had become interested in the activity after learning English or whether the activity was not connected their English learning. The frequencies of the answers can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Respondents' views on the relationship between motivation and extramural activities

	Motivates to improve English skills (%)	After learning English has taken an interest in the activity (%)	The activity is not connected to English learning (%)	Blank (%)	Total (%)
Reading books/magazines	44	32	20	4	100
Listening to music	32	40	28	0	100
Playing computer games	4	0	88	8	100
Interacting with others face-to-face/via Internet	80	16	4	0	100
Using Internet	40	16	36	8	100
Watching TV series	80	8	8	4	100
Watching movies	84	4	12	0	100

As can be seen from Table 2, the majority of the respondents had felt that interacting with others, watching TV-series and watching movies had motivated them to learn English. Little less than half felt that reading books and magazines and using Internet had motivated them. Rather surprisingly, 40% answered that after learning English they had taken an interest in listening to English music. Only one respondent experienced playing computer games motivating to English learning, while the rest answered that it did not have an effect or left it unanswered. This is most likely due to the high average age of the respondents, as noted before.

These results reveal that the respondents experience a connection between motivation and extramural activities. This implies that these activities could be used to increase motivation and curiosity towards the target language.

4.3 Extramural activities in assisting language learning

In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to answer in their own words what helped them learn English. The answers were analysed following the guidelines of Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2002) on content analysis. First, the answers were carefully read through and initially divided into two categories: those that mentioned extramural activities, and others (Table 3). After all the answers were written down the “others” category was divided further into school/formal education related, personal attribute related, necessity related and reinforcing previously learned skills. The first two categories were mentioned both six times in the answers and the latter two both four times. Extramural activities, in which travelling was included, was mentioned altogether twenty times. Again, the most common ones were watching TV-series, interacting with others and reading books and/or magazines. Altogether, there were forty items in the twenty-five questionnaire responses that were categorised.

Table 3. Answers to the question “What helps you learn English?”

	Frequency	Percentage
Category 1: Extramural activities (travelling included)	20	50
Category 2: Others		
<i>School/formal education related</i>	6	15
<i>Personal attribute related</i>	6	15
<i>Necessity related</i>	4	10
<i>Reinforcement of previously learned skills</i>	4	10
Total	40	100

5 CONCLUSION

Out-of-class learning activities provide diverse options for language learners to improve their skills, motivation and cultural knowledge. According to the results of this study, they are helpful for older learners in language acquisition and improving motivation. Even though the results did not show a statistically significant correlation between motivation and extramural activities, the qualitative analysis of the students' written responses showed that the majority of the respondents considered extramural activities helpful to their learning.

The results of this study were in line with previous research. According to Sundqvist (2009), motivation is key in students that engage in learning activities outside the traditional classroom. Previous research has also noted that proficiency is connected to the amount of extramural activities practiced (Sundqvist 2009), which can also be seen from this study. The participants, for the most part, did not have high proficiency in English and did not engage in extramural activities as much as students with higher proficiency might have. Also the age of the respondents is a factor in the proficiency level, since most had not studied English at school, as younger population has.

These results are not generalizable and should be taken cautiously, since the sample was small regarding the tests performed on it. The respondents' average age was over 60 years, which quite likely affects the amount of extramural activities they participate in on a regular basis. To improve the reliability of the statistical tests, a larger sample would be needed and the variance among the respondents ought to be significantly more diverse with regard to age, gender, language skills and profession. Future research on the topic would be useful, and should have the previously mentioned criteria including a larger sample size and more variation among the participants.

In addition, the variables chosen to measure phenomena like motivation are limited in a small-scale study like this. Motivation is a highly complex subject that requires an experienced researcher and extensive, detailed and tested questionnaires to be reliable in terms of results. All in all, the study can be considered successful, since, based on the views of the respondents, it established a connection between motivation and extramural English activities. Broadening the view on language teaching and emphasizing students' own responsibility for their learning process can be advantageous also for older learners. Many elderly students are used to the more traditional way of teaching and learning and are

not even aware what they themselves could do more to improve their own learning. The hope is that this study has raised awareness that there are vast resources available for any learner outside the traditional classroom.

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APPENDIX 1: THE QUESTIONNAIRE (FINNISH)Aikuisten kielen oppiminen

Hyvä aikuisopiskelija!

Opiskelen Jyväskylän yliopistossa Humanististen tieteiden kandidaatiksi pääaineenani englannin kieli. Teen kandidaatin tutkielmaa **aikuisten kielten oppimisesta**. Toivoisin Sinun osallistuvan tutkimukseeni vastaamalla seuraaviin **14 kysymykseen**. Kysely koostuu monivalinta- sekä avoimista kysymyksistä. Vastaaminen on helppoa ja kestää n. 10 minuuttia. Jokainen vastaus on tärkeä eikä vääriä vastauksia ole. Aineisto käsitellään nimettömänä ja luottamuksellisesti.

Huomaa, että alla pyydetään suostumustasi käyttää antamiasi tietoja tutkimuksen aineistona kandidaatin tutkielmassa. **Allekirjoituksellasi annat suostumuksesi**. Annan mielelläni lisätietoja tutkimuksesta niin halutessanne. Tutkimuksen on määrä valmistua _____ alkuvuonna _____ 2017.

Kiitos paljon osallistumisestasi!

Ystävällisin
Mirka Tervonen
mirka.j.tervonen@student.jyu.fi

terveisin,

Suostun siihen, että antamiani tietoja voidaan käyttää saatekirjeessä mainittuihin tutkimuksen tarkoituksiin.

Allekirjoitus

TAUSTATIEDOT

Rastita sopivin vaihtoehto ja vastaa kysymyksiin annetuille viivoille.

1. Syntymävuosi

2. Sukupuoli

- Nainen
 Mies

3. Äidinkieli

- suomi
 ruotsi
 muu, mikä? _____

4. Koulutus:

- Ei koulutusta
 Perusaste (kansakoulu, keskikoulu, peruskoulu)
 Toinen aste (ammattikoulu, lukio)
 Alempi korkeakoulutus (opistotutkinto tai alempi korkeakoulututkinto)
 Ylempi korkeakoulutus

5. Elämäntilanne:

- Työelämässä
 Työtön
 Eläkkeellä
 Opiskelija
 Muu, mikä? _____

6. Kuinka monta vuotta olet yhteensä opiskellut englantia elämäsi aikana?

7. Mitä muita kieliä olet opiskellut?

8. Englannin tasoryhmä kansalaisopistossa (rastita):

- 1 4
 2 5
 3 6

9. Valitse Sinulle sopivin vaihtoehto ja rastita ruudukkoon, kuinka usein teet vapaa-ajallasi seuraavia aktiviteetteja **englannin kielellä. (Huom. *tekstitetyt englanninkieliset tv-sarjat/elokuvat lasketaan englanninkielisiksi aktiviteeteiksi.*)**

	Päivittäin	Viikoittain	Kuukausittain	Muutaman kerran vuodessa	Ei koskaan
Luen kirjoja/lehtiä englanniksi					
Kuuntelen englanninkielistä musiikkia					
Pelaan tietokonepelejä englanniksi					
Keskustelen muiden kanssa englanniksi kasvokkain/Internetin välityksellä					
Käytän Internetiä englannin kielellä (esim. luen uutisia, käytän sosiaalista mediaa, luen sähköposteja)					
Katson tv-sarjoja englanniksi					
Katson elokuvia englanniksi					
Muu, mikä?					

10. Rastita seuraavien väittämien kohdalle Sinulle sopivin vaihtoehto.

	Täysin samaa mieltä	Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	En osaa sanoa	Jokseenkin eri mieltä	Täysin eri mieltä
Opiskelen englantia, koska englannin kieli kiinnostaa minua					
Olen kiinnostunut englanninkielisten maiden kulttuureista					
Opiskelen englantia, koska siitä on hyötyä työelämässä					
Opiskelen englantia, koska siitä on hyötyä harrastuksissa/matkaillessa					
Kansalaisopiston englannin kurssin sisällöt ovat mielenkiintoisia					
Haluan oppia englantia, jotta voin luoda/ylläpitää sosiaalisia suhteita					
Haluan oppia englantia, jotta voin tutustua uusiin kulttuureihin					
Tavoitteenani on pärjätä englannin kielellä arkielämän tilanteissa					
Tavoitteenani on ylläpitää jo hankittua englannin taitoa					
En opiskele englantia vapaa-ajalla määrättyjä kotitehtäviä lukuunottamatta					
Kurssin tehtäviin paneutuminen on minulle hankalaa					
Olen itse kehittänyt keinoja parantaa kielitaitoani					

11. Kerro omin sanoin, miksi opiskelet englantia.

12. Jos Sinulla on vaikeuksia englannin opiskelun suhteen, kerro minkälaisia: _____

13. Rastita jokaisen aktiviteetin kohdalle sopivin vaihtoehto.

	Motivoi minua parantamaan kielitaitoani	Opittuani englantia olen kiinnostunut ko. aktiviteetista	Ko. aktiviteetilla ei ole ollut vaikutusta englannin opiskeluuni
Kirjojen/lehtien lukeminen englanniksi			
Musiikin kuuntelu englanniksi			
Tietokonepelien pelaaminen englanniksi			
Keskusteleminen muiden kanssa englanniksi kasvokkain tai Internetin välityksellä			
Internetin käyttäminen englanniksi			
TV-sarjojen katselu englanniksi (myös tekstitetyt)			
Elokuvien katselu englanniksi (myös tekstitetyt)			

14. Kerro omin sanoin, mitkä asiat auttavat Sinua oppimaan englantia:

Kiitos vastauksistasi!

APPENDIX 2: THE QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH)

Adult language learning

Dear adult student!

I'm a student at the University of Jyväskylä, majoring in English. I'm doing a Bachelor's Thesis on the topic of adult language learning. I hope you participate in my study by answering to the following **14 questions**. The questionnaire consists of both open and closed questions. Answering is easy and should take only about 10 minutes. Every answer is important and there are no wrong answers. The data will be handled with anonymity and confidentiality.

Notice that below you are asked to give your agreement for your answers being used in this study. **By signing you give your agreement.** I am happy to give you more information on the research. The study is to be completed by January 2017.

Thank you for participating!

Kind
Mirka Tervonen
mirka.j.tervonen@student.jyu.fi

regards,

I agree that the information I provide can be used for research purposes mentioned above.

Signature

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Check the box most suitable to you and answer to the questions on the given line.

15. Year of birth

16. Gender

Female

Male

17. Mother tongue

Finnish

Swedish

Other, please specify: _____

18. Education:

No education

Basic education (primary and secondary school)

Upper secondary/vocational school

Polytechnic

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

19. Life situation:

Employed

Unemployed

Retired

Student

Other, please specify: _____

20. How many years have you studied English altogether?

21. What other languages have you studied?

22. Study level at the adult education centre (check the box):

- 1 4
 2 5
 3 6

.....

23. Pick the option best suitable for you and make a cross in the table how often you participate in the following activities **in English. (Note that *subtitled TV series/movies* are considered *English activities*)**

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Few times a year	Never
Reading books/magazines in English					
Listening to English music					
Playing computer games in English					
Interacting with others in English face-to-face or via Internet					
Using the Internet in English (e.g. reading the news, using social media, reading emails)					
Watching TV series in English					
Watching movies in English					
Other, please specify:					

24. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. Check the option most suitable to you.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	I don't know	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
I study English, because the English language interests me					
I'm interested in the cultures of the English-speaking countries					
I study English because it is useful in working life					
I study English because it is useful in hobbies/ travelling					
I find the adult education centre English course interesting					
I want to learn English in order to create/maintain social relationships					
I want to learn English in order to get to know new cultures					
My goal is to know enough English to cope in everyday situations					
My goal is to maintain the English skills I've acquired already					
Apart from assigned homework, I don't exercise my English skills in my leisure time					
It is difficult for me to delve into my English assignments					
I have come up with ways to improve my English skills					

25. Please describe in your own words why you study English:

26. If you have any difficulties in learning English, please describe what kind: _____

27. Check the most suitable option for each activity.

	Motivates me to improve my English skills	After I've learned English I've taken an interest in the activity	The activity is not connected to my English learning
Reading books/magazines in English			
Listening to English music			
Playing computer games in English			
Interacting with other in English face-to-face/via Internet			
Using Internet in English			
Watching TV series in English			
Watching movies in English			

28. Describe in your own words what helps you learn English:

Thank you for your answers!