

Motivations of Hong Kong Chinese students learning German as a third language as part of their tertiary education and changes of their motivations during their learning process

Summary

The proposed study aims at exploring the motivations of Hong Kong Chinese students learning German as a third language as part of their tertiary education and changes of their motivations during their learning process. The research questions posed in this study suggest a quantitative, ethnographic approach. The study is designed as a longitudinal, cross-sectional case study. The data will be collected from three students of each proficiency level (beginners, intermediate and advanced) during their learning process for the duration of two semesters by mainly using semi-structured, in-depth interviews and will subsequently be compared across all proficiency levels in order to define the differences in learners' motivations at various stages of their studies. Within the framework of grounded theory, the data collected during the study will be constantly analysed, compared and interpreted forming the ground for the next round of data collection. Preliminary findings of the pilot study indicated that students' motivations fluctuate during their learning the language due to situational, individual and socio-cultural factors and that they consist of multiple dimensions such as introjected, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, resultative and affiliative motivation. The findings seem to confirm the stance of the cognitive-situated, process-oriented approach in language learning motivation research that motivation is not a single, static unit but that a multi-faceted concept determining students' engagement in language learning that is subject to change.

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