

The study of strategies to improve students' motivation and interest in Arabic

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Abstract

Learning motivation is the psychological processes that guide and maintain students' behavior towards learning. If students are disinterested and unmotivated towards the lesson, they will not make much progress in that lesson. But if they are interested in the lesson and there is enough motivation in them, they will have more growth and progress in that lesson. In this context, 73 students have been selected as the statistical population, 23 of them from Tizhoshan Farzangan High School (2nd Secondary) of Ahvaz Metropolitan City and 29 from Shahid al-Ghadir High School (2nd Secondary) of Shush Daniyal (AS). And 21 people were from Golestan High School (1st High School) of Aghili region of Getund city. The questionnaires received from these 73 people showed that 60% of them are not interested in Arabic lessons. Finally, we examined the factors of students' lack of interest in Arabic lessons, which include 6: 1. Failure to state goals 2. Anti-religion and anti-revolutionary propaganda 3. Difficulty of the Arabic language and its rules 4. Use of non-specialist teachers 5. Type of exam questions 6. The number of students in the classroom and the lack of teaching hours were obtained. Then we identified strategies to increase the interest and motivation of students, which include: 1. Stating goals 2. Countering the cultural invasion of religion 3. Encouraging students 4. Creating work groups 5. Appropriate evaluation 6. Presenting literary materials 7. Using various strategies and methods in teaching. After examining an important factor called motivation, the question that arises is: What other factors affect the level of students' learning?

Keywords: Arabic language teaching, reluctance factors, strategies to increase motivation

Introduction

Arabic is one of the six official languages of the United Nations and the official language of 25 countries, which is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world with 310 million speakers as their first language and 270 million speakers as their second language. (Arabic language, Wikipedia, Azad Encyclopaedia)

According to Article 16 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, since the language of the Quran and Islamic sciences and knowledge is Arabic and Persian literature is completely mixed with it, this language must be taught in all classes and in all Courses should be taught. (Taibi, 2021, p. 30)

Shabani defines the concept of teaching in the books of educational skills as that part of educational activities that takes place with the presence of the teacher in the classroom and the purpose of which is to create favorable conditions for learning by the teacher.

Learning is the process of creating a relatively stable change in behavior or behavioral ability that is the result of experience. And teaching is the teacher's professional activity. (Seif, 2021).

Now that we are familiar with the concepts of education, learning, teaching and also the necessity of having an Arabic course in the education system of the country, we will go to know the term motivation as well as the importance and necessity of this important thing in the matter of education and teaching.

One of the most comprehensive definitions of the term motivation is the force that creates and maintains and guides behavior. Learning motivation is the psychological processes that guide and maintain students' behavior towards learning.

If the students have a low level of motivation, they will not pay attention to the teacher's explanations, they will not do their homework seriously, and finally, they will not make much progress.

But if they are interested in the lesson (having a high level of motivation), they will listen carefully to the teacher's explanations, they will do their homework seriously, and they will look for more information about the subject, and they will also get a lot of progress (Sif, 2021)

By realizing the importance of motivation and interest in learning and development of students, we found it necessary to measure the level and degree of students' interest in Arabic lessons in a statistical population. The findings reported that about 60 percent of students are not interested in Arabic lessons. Therefore, we looked for the factors of students' lack of interest and motivation and interest solutions in them.

Materials and methods

In this article, we first tried to measure the interest and motivation of students in Arabic lessons in a statistical population.

For this purpose, 23 students of Tizhoshan Farzangan second secondary high school in Ahvaz metropolis were randomly selected, 56.5% of them were not interested and 43.5% of them were interested in Arabic.

29 people from Shahid Al-Ghadir second secondary high school in Shush Daniyal (AS) city were randomly selected, 65.5% of them were not interested and 34.5% of them were interested in Arabic lessons.

Finally, we went to a village in Der Aghili section of Getund city and randomly selected 21 students of Golestan first secondary high school.

There, 57% of the students were not interested in the Arabic lesson and 43% of them were interested in this lesson. The overall result was that out of 73 students studying in the metropolis, city and village, 60% are not interested and 40% are interested in Arabic lessons.

Then we referred to books, sites and articles in this field to find out the factors of lack of interest and ways to increase interest and motivation in students while studying them.

Background research

In order to find the opinions of experts in the field of the factors of students' lack of interest in Arabic lessons, as well as to know their proposed solutions to solve this problem, we read a number of articles written under these or similar titles, which we will refer to below.

One of these articles, the article "Causes of students' disinterest in Arabic language; The methods of creating students' interest in Arabic lessons" is written by Yavor Rezaei (2013), in which he mentioned a number of factors of lack of interest as well as ways to solve it.

"Arabic Teaching Techniques 2" written by Zahra Darandeh and Fariba Bairamzadeh (2020) is another article in which things like encouraging students and creating work groups to increase their motivation are mentioned.

Another article, "Sometimes, use an unusual method (a look at academic evaluation)" was written by Fahmieh Rezaei Niaraki (2022), in which she discussed the importance of evaluations in students' interest or disgust.

"The causes of lack of motivation and weakness of secondary school students in Arabic from the point of view of teachers in the three cities of Qom" written by Masoud Bawanpour, Fatemeh Mohdzadeh and Fatemeh Akbari Sultanbaji (2022) is one of the other articles written in this field.

Another article that is related to this topic is "Effective teaching and learning strategies of Arabic language in secondary school" written by Zainab Tayibi (2021).

Factors of students' lack of interest and motivation towards Arabic lessons

After examining the level of students' interest in learning Arabic, the results of which showed that more than half of the students in our statistical population were not interested.

It was necessary to investigate the reasons and factors of their lack of motivation and lack of

interest. The investigations produced the following results:

Failure to express the goals and use of Arabic for students

In the questionnaire that was provided to the students, a large number of them stated that the reason for their lack of interest in the Arabic course was the lack of use of this course unit.

While the truth of the matter shows that learning Arabic has many reasons and uses for us. From here, it is clear that the goals for Iranian students to learn Arabic have not been explained to them. In this context, Bhavan Puri and others (1401) say that students' lack of knowledge about the general goals of Arabic lessons is one of the causes of their weakness.

Anti-religious and anti-revolutionary propaganda

By observing the existing conditions in the society and the mentalities created in the students, it was found that the anti-religious and anti-revolutionary propaganda was not so ineffective in their opinions.

Some of the enemies are inherently against the religion of Islam and do not hesitate to make any effort to degrade Islam. Some others are opposed to the current ruling system in Iran due to political issues, and since it is an Islamic government, they inevitably fight against Islam.

As we all know, the Arabic language is one of the manifestations and symbols of the Islamic religion, and naturally, someone who propagates against Islam and the Islamic Republic system, also attacks the Arabic language because it is the language of Islam and the Qur'an and one of the symbols of this religion.

Difficulty of the Arabic language (rules)

According to the reports we received from the students through the questionnaires, one of the causes and factors of the lack of motivation or apathy of most of them is the hard and difficult rules and the specific complexities of the Arabic

language. They believed that the volume of the book, the number of lessons and grammar topics are too much and this has reduced their interest and motivation.

Use of non-specialist teachers

One of the problems of this rich and expensive curriculum is the use of non-specialist teachers. Unfortunately, most of the Arabic hours are used to fill the teachers' hours, for example, the teacher of educational sciences or counseling, Islamic insight, literature, etc. considers himself ready to teach this very specialized and difficult unit, and since the teacher's lack of specialized knowledge causes the lesson to Students are discouraged if they are not well understood or their questions are answered incorrectly. (Rezaei, 2011, p. 2)

Type of exam questions

Sometimes, the test that the teacher takes from the students causes them anxiety and stress due to being too hard and difficult, non-standard and disproportionate. In such a situation, students' interest in that lesson decreases. In other cases, the exam, which is exactly similar to the problems and questions in the book, reduces the effort and motivation of the students, and they simply rely on memorizing the textbook exercises. According to Rezaei (2012), the most important issue regarding learning motivation is the type of exam questions. Since often the exam questions are exactly like the book questions, the student remembers the book content without learning and even gets a high grade, so he does not take any steps to learn the book content. If the type of questions is such that the student is interested in learning and eager to take initiative, he will feel pleasure from this learning and progress in the lesson.

The number of students in a class and the lack of teaching hours

Among the other factors that can be mentioned in the field of students' lack of love for Arabic is the lack of hours for this lesson during the week, as well as crowded classes.

Bhavan Puri and others (1401) say: "The number of students in a class and the lack of teaching hours take the opportunity of any communication and creative activity from the Arabic teacher".

After examining and reflecting on the factors that cause students' lack of motivation and lack of interest in Arabic lessons and knowing the reasons that contribute to the learners' lack of interest in this lesson, it is necessary to find solutions to change these conditions. In the continuation of this article, we will examine a number of ways to increase students' desire to study Arabic.

Expressing the goals of teaching Arabic

As mentioned before, one of the important factors of students' reluctance towards the Arabic lesson was the lack of goals for this lesson. They said that this lesson is not applicable in our lives.

So why should we learn it? A teacher should explain the goals and applications of the lesson to his students in order to make them interested in the lesson. In this context, the Arabic teacher can mention the following, each of which is among the purposes or uses of the Arabic language for Iranians:

1. Arabic is one of the six international languages of the United Nations, which has many speakers in the world.
2. The language of religion, Quran and our teachings is Arabic.
3. Because of Iran's presence in the Middle East and its proximity to Arab-speaking countries, learning this language is necessary to communicate with our neighbors.
4. The great fusion of this language with Persian literature. In such a way that a third of the deep understanding of Persian literature requires learning the Arabic language. (Rezaei, 2011, p. 10)
5. Most of the works and books of Iranian Muslim scientists are in Arabic. Like the works

of Abu Rihan Biruni and Abu Ali Sina, who are both great scientists of the world.

Countering the cultural invasion of religion

As stated, widespread anti-religion and anti-revolutionary propaganda has caused a part of society under the influence of this factor to distance themselves from Islam and its manifestations and prioritize ancient customs and traditions.

One of the ways to strengthen students' interest in Arabic lessons is to confront the teacher with these anti-Islamic propaganda. For this purpose, he can explain religious principles and answer doubts as much as he can.

Encouraging students

One of the important ways to motivate students is to encourage them. Darandeh and Bairamzadeh (2020) state that: "In order to encourage students, sometimes encouraging sentences should be written in Arabic or Persian in their notebooks or on their exam papers. Sentences like "I'm sure you are one of the best in the class, well done and...)"

Create group work

Forming group work in the Arabic class with the aim of: creating motivation, solidarity and unity among students and making them interested in Arabic lessons, improving their academic level and introducing the Arabic language as a sweet and eloquent language that is the common language of one billion Muslims around the world. (Owner, Bairamzadeh, 2020)

Appropriate evaluation

As mentioned, difficult exams cause students' stress and anxiety and eventually reduce their interest in studying. Therefore, the teacher can avoid this problem by holding appropriate and standard evaluations.

The creativity of teachers In using new methods of evaluation in the classroom and exam is a type of evaluation that is done according to certain

principles and is a means to describe and measure the change of students' behavior towards the goals of education and help to improve their learning.

But the way of dealing with some exams in life causes the formation and increase of anxiety . Therefore, if the educational system moves in a direction where other methods are used except for exams and evaluations.

Or the plans are such that teachers are given more freedom to use creative assessment methods that are useful in reducing anxiety, it can be hoped that it will lead to the goals of assessment to a large extent and have better results in the academic progress of students. (Rezai Niaraki, 2014)

Presentation of literary materials

If the teacher can use literary texts in the classroom, in addition to textbooks, daily Arabic expressions and religious concepts and choosing and presenting beautiful and pleasant Arabic prose and poems has sometimes been effective in increasing students' interest in Arabic.

The effect of presenting literary materials is a topic that has been mentioned in Roshd Journal of Qur'anic Education and Islamic Education, number 42, autumn 2019, pages 57 to 59.

Using various strategies and methods in teaching Arabic

The vastness of Arabic materials and their difficulty has caused that simply using one method for teaching does not arouse students' desire and learning does not occur completely.

On the other hand, if the teacher has the ability to choose the right and appropriate method and strategy according to the conditions and atmosphere of the class as well as the topic discussed in the Arabic book, it has been effective in the enthusiasm, interest and learning of more students.

Some of the most effective teaching strategies in teaching Arabic are:

1. Question-oriented teaching of Arabic lessons
2. Group-based teaching of Arabic lessons
3. Research-oriented teaching of Arabic lessons
4. Arabic education with the benefit of information and communication technology
5. Arabic education based on individual differences
6. Arabic education based on understanding the text with religious context
7. Game-based Arabic education
8. Learning based on critical thinking of the Arabic course

(Taibi, 2021, p. 6 to 14)

Conclusion

The learning and comprehension of the material by the student, which is the ultimate goal of education and teaching, depends on several factors.

One of these factors is the student's interest and motivation towards that lesson. In this way, the more his interest and motivation is, the more progress he will make and vice versa. Therefore, it can be said that there is a direct relationship between a student's motivation and his learning rate in a lesson unit.

In the area of Arabic language, it was found that more than half of the students of our statistical community are reluctant and do not have enough desire towards Arabic language and its teaching in schools.

For this reason, we identified the factors of students' lack of interest in Arabic. The following were obtained:

1. Failure to express the goals and use of Arabic for students
2. Anti-religious and anti-revolutionary propaganda
3. Difficulty of the Arabic language
4. Use of non-specialist teachers
5. Type of exam questions
6. The number students in a class and lack of teaching hours.

After that, we investigated ways to increase students' interest and motivation in the field of Arabic, and the following were obtained:

1. Stating the goals of teaching Arabic
2. Countering the cultural invasion of religion
3. Encouraging students
4. Creating group work
5. Appropriate evaluation
6. Presenting literary materials
7. Using various strategies and methods in teaching Arabic.

A professional teacher must first measure the motivation of his students and then, in case of

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their reluctance, identify the effective factors in this field. Because the use of appropriate strategies to increase students' motivation should be related and proportional to the reason for their lack of motivation. After examining an important factor called motivation, the question arises, what other factors affect the level of students' learning?

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