

# THE INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN ATTRIBUTIONS AND SECOND LANGUAGE ATTAINMENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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## ABSTRACT

Affective factors are undoubtedly considered to be vital in second language acquisition. Among these factors attribution theory is of primary significance, as it affects learners' final achievement. It indicates that people attribute various causes in their lives to their success and failure.

With the employment of attribution theory, this study examines Polish secondary school adolescent students' attributions for success and failure in second language learning. The main purpose of the study is to investigate, whether Polish secondary school students' attributions have an impact on their achievements in second language acquisition. In order to conduct the study, the researcher administered attribution questionnaires to the students and an achievement sheet to the teacher to fill in with students' semester grades in English. Then the data obtained from the questionnaires and the achievement sheet were correlated. The results show that successful students are more likely to attribute their success to internal facets such as ability and effort and unsuccessful learners attribute their lack of success to external factors, among which task difficulty or luck could be enumerated.

**Key words:** second language acquisition, affective factors, attribution theory, school achievement, adolescents

## AFFECTIVE FACTORS AND ATTRIBUTION THEORY IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Effective language teaching has always been the teachers' responsibility. Thus, many studies have been conducted in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) in order to provide students with successful language teaching.

Discussing SLA, we must take into consideration two facets. The first one is the cognitive and the latter is the affective learning state. Among cognitive factors intelligence, language aptitude and language learning strategies

can be distinguished. Yet, numerous research findings show, affective factors contribute to the learners' language achievement. Jane Arnold (1999) claims, affective factors cannot be opposed to cognition, therefore they both should be taken into account as complementary facets. Affective factors facilitate understanding how students feel and respond in SLA. Therefore, specific notions and how they respond to the SLA are worth discussing.

Heidi Dulay & Marina Burt (1976) were the first to deal with affective factors in the 1970's. Later, Stephen Krashen (1982) developed and perfected their Affective Filter Hypothesis. He pointed out the significance of affective factors blocking effective foreign language learning.

According to S. Krashen, affective filter is an obstacle that hinders foreign language learners from absorbing comprehensible input effectively. Affective factors determine the amount of language input and intake. Namely, when the filter is too high, the input will encounter obstructions in receiving language acquisition and correspondingly, when the filter is lower the acquisition is more available.

S. Krashen recognised three essential factors which have an impact on SLA. Among these factors motivation, self-confidence and anxiety can be distinguished. Learners with high motivation and self-confidence, but low anxiety are equipped in low affective filter. On the contrary, learners with low motivation and self-confidence, but with high anxiety possess high affective filter and will receive little input.

Among affective factors which are omnipresent components of human behaviour and which contribute to the foreign language learning inhibition, self-esteem, risk taking, self-efficacy, willingness to communicate, anxiety, empathy, risk taking and motivation can be identified (Brown, 2007).

Before analysing attribution theory, motivation is worth discussing, as it explains why motivated learners are more prone to achieve goals than students who are not motivated. According to Jack Richards & Richard Schmidt (2002, p. 343) motivation refers to "the driving force in any situation that leads to action". Robert C. Gardner (2010) suggested orientations, which could justify why people learn the language. He introduced integrative and instrumental motivation orientations. Integrative orientation reflects student's decision to become part of a foreign language society. Students with instrumental motivation want to integrate with the foreign language community and become involved in the social interaction. Instrumental orientation points out benefits for students. It concerns learning a language as an instrument for achieving instrumental goals, such as pursuing a career or getting into university.

Reza Gholami, Negah Allahjar & Shameem Rafik-Galaea (2012) in their study proved that integrativeness is followed by higher grades in foreign language tests. Nevertheless, Zahra Vaezi (2008) in her research showed that among students with instrumental orientation, language can also be successfully learnt for merely instrumental goals. It can be then concluded that some learners may acquire the language successfully being integratively oriented, while the others achieve more from instrumental orientation.

The other division of motivation is based on overall degree to which students possess intrinsic or extrinsic motivation to achieve success. Intrinsically motivated learners pursue their learning for their own sake, not because of any expected extrinsic reward or punishment. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation involves the expectations to get a reward from the outside.

James Nickolson (2013, p. 278) claimed that “intrinsic motivation is present when learners actively seek out and participate in activities without having to be rewarded by materials or activities outside the reasons, to which individuals attribute their successes or failures in situations when achievement is expected”. Therefore, it could be said that intrinsic motivation is an influential source of motivation. Foreign language class environment must be then supportive, so that students react to the stimulus to stay motivated and to accomplish their goals.

In social and educational psychology, attribution theory is strictly related to motivation and it was added to affective factors by J. Arnold (1999). This theory clarifies why some people are prone to achieve success, whereas others display the tendency to fail (Weiner, 1992). Attribution theory is a study of motivation which makes an attempt to answer such questions as “why did I fail my exam?”. Language students deal with those questions very frequently in the learning process and answer them in various ways. In the case of each learner, different factors are counterproductive for their learning abilities or disabilities (Hosseini & Asghari, 2012)

Attribution theory was introduced by Fritz Heider (1958) and developed by other scholars. F. Heider’s research was focused on how an individual identifies the event. He acknowledged that humans actively interpret events in their lives. They try to analyse and clarify those events towards understanding the world.

Bernard Weiner constructed attribution theory describing factors to which people attribute their success and failure in education and other areas (Williams & Burden, 1997). Among these factors are: ability, effort, luck and task difficulty. The first two notions are originated in the inside of an individual, whereas luck and task difficulty are constructs which come from the outside of a person.

When students constantly fail in certain activity, they start to believe they lack in ability, despite the effort put into accomplishing the task. Moreover, when they compare their results with the results of others, especially when the learners do not succeed in the task, while the others are successful, they certainly attribute their failure to lack of ability. On the other hand, when they are successful learners and others fail, they attribute their success to ability. According to B. Weiner (1994) reasons to which learners attribute their past success create motivational dispositions. Therefore, students who connect their past failure with low ability will not take up the activity again, as they are convinced that they are unable to show any improvement. Consequently, ability requires a lot of interest in education, because it is related to students’ affective states and their success in the future.

Learners’ success is frequently attributed to the fact that they studied hard, that is they put a lot of effort to accomplish the task. B. Weiner (2010) claims

that learners explain their excellent grades with high effort. Conversely, when learners' failure is attributed to lack of effort, students tend to feel guilty and responsible for their failure.

Sometimes learners attribute their success or failure to task difficulty. Unsuccessful learners may perceive the task as too difficult to deal with. On the other hand, students may believe that the task is too easy and success can be easily achieved. B. Weiner (1992) argues that successful students attribute their success to the easiness of the task. Nevertheless, they also attribute students' failure to task difficulty.

B. Weiner (1985) called those forms of internal and external facets locus of causality. He also identified the other notion- stability, which decides whether the factor is stable or unstable. Furthermore, he distinguished controllability which concerns notions with or without people's control. Controllability indicates, whether the factors can be controlled by people.

Effort and ability belong to controllable facets, but effort is strictly related to self-esteem. Learners with high self-esteem will display higher expectations for success, more persistence and as a result, will show better ability (Covington, as cited in Pajeras & Urdan, 2002). Also, students who put a lot of effort to complete the task, believe that they can improve their language performance studying hard. Nevertheless, task difficulty and luck are uncontrollable factors. Students who attribute their success to task difficulty or luck frequently give up in striving for better performance, due to the fact that these are factors that they are unable to control.

To protect self-esteem, individuals make casual judgments about themselves, that is when they achieve good results, they attribute their success to internal factors and when they have bad outcomes, they attribute them to external factors (Weiner, 2000).

Attribution theory is particularly essential in second language learning, owing to the fact that students frequently experience failure in achieving expected level of language proficiency (Dörnyei, 2005). This theory explains students how to behave in the future to become a successful learner. Therefore, being aware of the most likely causes of events can provide students with an insight into reasons for successes as well as failures in SLA (Genc, 2016).

Among the researches some did not discover any distinction in male and female attributions for students' success and failure (Vu, 2011). Female as well as male students regarded stable, internal and controllable factors as the reason for success in English learning. However, there are numerous studies indicating that women are more likely to attribute their success to external factors such as luck, whereas men are more likely to attribute their success or failure to ability (Mohammadi, 2016). The other study showed that males attribute their success to ability, while females to studying and being attentive. Furthermore, males attribute their failures to not studying and females to lack of abilities (Beyer, 1998).

According to some studies, one of the most successful predictors of academic achievement is attributional style (Sukariyah & Assad, 2015). Researchers

created a basis, which helps to understand the interdependence between attributions and academic performance. Kitila Mkumbo & Jacqueline Amani (2012) conducted studies in which they analysed undergraduate university students. They assumed that most students attributed their academic achievements to internal, stable and controllable factors, whereas academic failure to external and uncontrollable factors.

Carol S. Dweck (1975) discovered that encouraging learners to attribute their low achievements to unstable factors led to stronger effort and as a consequence, better performance. She concluded that students who perceive their intelligence as a stable factor respond to failure in a way, which differs from students, who treat their intelligence as an unstable factor. Thus, being aware of attributional styles can help students improve their school achievements (Metalidou & Vlachou, 2007).

According to Peggy Pei-Hsuan Hsieh (2004), learners who possess more internal, personal and stable attributions obtain better grades in English language, contrary to those, who possess more external, impersonal and unstable attributions. Later, Peggy Pei-Hsuan Hsieh & Diane L. Schallet (2008) investigated the role of foreign language attributions in second language achievements. The results of the research indicated that ability was a strong predictor of foreign language success. Comparable study carried out by Lei Lei & Xiaoging Qin (2009) showed interdependence between students' effort and their language achievement.

The correlation between learners' attribution for success and failure in foreign language learning was also studied by Reza Pisghadam & Reza Zabithi (2001). The research showed that significant interdependence between attributions and final school grades exists. Furthermore, this research pointed out that effort in attribution was the best predictor of learners' success and revealed that those, who attributed test results to effort achieved higher grades in the final exam. The study also indicated that only stable and personal attributions resulted in foreign language achievement.

Marion Williams and Robert L. Burden (1997) in their research discovered essential notions in foreign language learners. They answered the question how students establish various factors to attribute their success and failure and the interdependence between their language proficiency and their attributional model. They also suggested that attribution for success and failure is influenced by learner's age, social interactions, contexts, feeling and environment.

Studies carried out with university students studying English (Taskiran, 2010) showed that students who identified themselves as successful possessed more internal, controllable and rather stable attributions. Similarly, Mehmet Kocyigt (2011) pointed out that attribution to failure is rather external and externally controllable, but with limited personal controllability.

On the contrary, attributing success or failure to task difficulty was connected with lower English proficiency. Thus, those learners who attribute their failures to task difficulty are encouraged to change their approach, as task difficulty belongs to external factors, which are outside students' control (Hashemi, 2011).

All of the studies discussed above seem to indicate that attribution theory is one of the most prominent factors in the area of teaching and learning. Therefore, it is suggested to examine this phenomenon from various perspectives. Still, very few research studies have been conducted in Poland especially among secondary school students. Thus, it would be reasonable to analyse how Polish students attribute their failure and success in the school context.

## EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The main objective of the study was to investigate the correlation between adolescent students' attribution and their attainment in SLA. The researcher formulated a null hypothesis on the lack of any interdependence between adolescent students' attribution and their attainment in SLA. Furthermore, positive correlation between students' attribution and their attainment in SLA was studied.

## PARTICIPANTS

30 secondary school students from the secondary school in Mysłowice aged 17 years old participated in the study. All of the students had a minimum of 10 years of exposure to English as a second language in primary school and junior high school. They were required to take English final exams focused on reading, writing and grammar after each stage of language education.

## MATERIALS

Considering materials applied in the study, the researcher established attribution questionnaires comprising of twelve questions (see Appendix 1). The students' English teacher was provided with an achievement sheet (see Appendix 2). The students were to fill in the questionnaires choosing one of the options: "strongly agree", "agree", "neither agree nor disagree", "disagree" and "strongly disagree". The teacher was to fill in the achievement sheet with the semester grade in English for each of the subjects.

## PROCEDURE

The research procedure consisted of two stages. First, the attribution questionnaires were administered to 30 subjects. Secondly, students' English teacher filled in the achievement sheet. On the basis of six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 6, each student was assigned the semester grade. The results obtained from the attribution questionnaires and the achievement sheet were then computationally correlated by employing Pearson product moment correlation coefficient.

In this study an attempt was undertaken to find the evidence that the values of the independent variable - the learners' attribution, determine the

values of the dependent variable – the learners' attainment in SLA. Attribution refers to the way learners evaluate their achievements based on the attribution questionnaires prepared by the researcher. Students' attainment in SLA was evaluated in the achievement sheet by the English teacher.

There were some variables in the study which the researcher controlled to minimise their impact on the final outcome of the study. All of the learners began foreign language learning at the same age of 6-7 years old. Also, the subjects participating in the study were students with almost the same amount of language exposure. The subjects represented the same age group, as the researcher considered that attribution in this group of adolescents is rather stable. However, one should be aware of the fact that self-evaluation is a challenging and subjective task.

The researcher identified some intervening variables. Learners' aptitude, which is learners' ability to achieve success in SLA may affect the final results of the study. Therefore, an attempt to control it, choosing the subjects to the study from students of similar, average foreign language aptitude, was made.

Difference in gender was not a significant factor in this research therefore the female subjects could outnumber male students (22 females, 8 males). Nonetheless, one might present a hypothesis that gender differences may influence the final outcome of the research, as girls are thought to underestimate their potential to achieve success in SLA.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

The analysis of the results from attribution questionnaire indicates that the most frequent response was "neither agree, nor disagree" (123 answers) and the least frequent was "strongly disagree" (19 answers). It means that the respondents mostly possess neither internal nor external attribution. However, they display low external attribution.

The analysis of the individual questions from the attribution questionnaire provides us with many interesting findings about internal attributions in SLA.

In the first question "I think of myself as a good language learner" the subjects present neither internal nor external attribution (10%- strongly agree, 40%- agree, 46.7%- "neither agree nor disagree", 3.3 %- disagree). Surprisingly, none of the respondents answered "strongly disagree".

The next question was related to learners' satisfaction with their achievements in SLA. The answers were almost evenly distributed as 30% of the respondents provided answers "agree" and "disagree". Additionally, 20% of the students responded "strongly agree" and "neither agree nor disagree". Again, none of the subjects "strongly disagree" with the question statement.

The researcher also elicited whether students' success in SLA depends on luck. The majority of students attribute their success to effort, as 50% provided the answer "agree" and 20% "strongly agree". Only 6.7% answered "disagree" and "strongly disagree". Also, 16.7% were undecided. It can be inferred from

those results that the highest number of students are equipped in internal attribution and believe that their success depends on effort.

In the next question related to students' success, the subjects were to evaluate, whether their success in SLA does not depend on luck. In this question 30% of the respondents did not believe in luck and provided the answer "agree". However, also 30% of students are not convinced whether luck plays role in foreign language achievements. On the other hand, only 6.7% of the respondents are convinced that luck is an important factor in SLA.

Moreover, the researcher elicited from the students, whether a person can change personality or behaviour pattern. The majority of subjects (53.3%) have no opinion on the issue and responded "neither agree nor disagree". Nevertheless, 27% of the students are certain that people are likely to change behaviour or personality. It can be concluded that over one-fourth of the respondents believe that they can become high achievers. Still, 13.3% disagree with their opinion and 6.7% strongly disagree. Furthermore, none of the students strongly agree with the question statement.

Very frequently, people attribute their failures to bad luck. Therefore, the researcher elicited from students the answer to the question, whether bad things in life take place because of bad luck. The majority of students (33%) are not sure, if bad luck influence their life. Only 6.7 % provided answers "agree" and "strongly agree", which means that they do not think about bad luck as a factor important in their life. However, 13.3% of students are definitely convinced and 6.7% thought that bad luck has an impact on their life.

The researcher also provided a question about intelligence, because there is a general tendency to perceive intelligence as something inborn which cannot be changed. The greatest number of students (40%) have no opinion, whether intelligence can be trained. Nonetheless, 26.7% of respondents believe that intelligence can be a matter of change. Also, up to 30% are sure that intelligence cannot be trained and none of the students are strongly convinced about that.

The next question concerned students' goals. Half of the respondents (50%) are certain that if they set realistic goals, they can achieve them, 20 % strongly believe that their goals can be achieved, but 30% of them have no opinion on that issue. What may be surprising, there are no students, who do not believe in achieving goals. Those results point out that students are willing to take up new foreign language challenges and succeed.

Also analysis of the question related to the correlation between attribution and success revealed that 53% of the respondents are strongly convinced that if they study hard, they can succeed and 40% of them believe that hard work can result in school achievements. Furthermore, only 6.7% of the subjects have no opinion whether hard work results in high achievements. On the other hand, none of the students claim, that there is no interdependence between students' hard work and school achievements. It can be concluded from those results that students' internal attribution mostly decides about their school success.

In the next question the author of the study elicited from students, whether they think that chance may decide about their triumphs. The prevalent



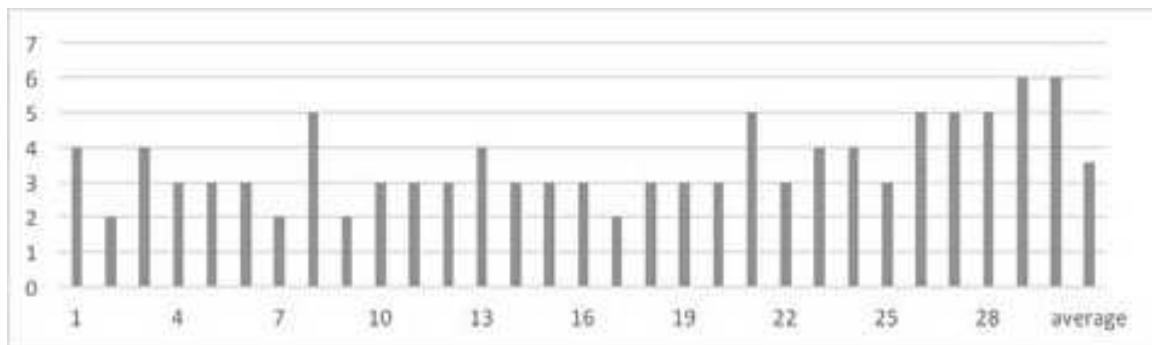
answer was that they attribute triumphs to their skills and intelligence (50%). However, 33.4% of the respondents were not certain what decides about their triumphs and none of them attributed their triumphs to the chance.

Another question was related to school success and students' socio-economic background. In this case, students believe that socio-economic background has an impact on their success, as 26,7% responded "disagree" and 10% "strongly disagree". Nonetheless, the greatest number of students (46.7%) have no opinion on the issue and only 6.7% of the respondents definitely do not believe socio-economic background is an essential factor in their achievements.

Finally, the last question in the attribution questionnaire was related to heredity. From the data collected, it is noticeable that the vast majority of subjects (53.4%) are not decided, whether heredity determines their personality. Only 3.4% are certain that heredity has no connection with the personality. Still, 20% of the subjects believe that heredity shape the personality as well as 16.7% are strongly convinced about that.

Taking all these data together, the author of the study established the scale to classify the subjects into three groups of learners corresponding to high, medium or low internal attribution. The subjects with "strongly agree" responses ranging from 12-9 were categorized as high internal attribution learners. Medium internal attribution learners provided from 8-5 "strongly agree" responses and low internal attribution learners were subjects with 4-0 "strongly agree" responses. The subjects were classified to one of three groups: high internal attribution learners (H), medium internal attribution learners (M) and low internal attribution learners (L). To make computational correlation calculation easier, each category of learners was ascribed points from three to one, which corresponded to intensity of internal attribution that is: H3, M2 and L1. The data show that overwhelming majority of respondents (26 subjects which make 86.7%) possessed low internal attribution. Three subjects alone were classified as those with medium internal attribution (10%) and only one subject (3.3%) displayed high internal attribution (see Table 1).

Following the procedure, the researcher gathered the semester subjects' grades from achievement sheet. The subjects' achievements were assessed according to six-point Likert scale where 6 refers to "excellent" and 1 means "very poor". The mean for 30 subjects was 3.56, which is not a really satisfactory result taking into consideration the fact that all respondents had the same long (10 years) foreign language exposure in the classroom context. The mode for 30 subjects was 3. This result is rather low, which means that students' English performance in the classroom is rather poor. Only 2 students achieved the highest grade (6) and 4 of them obtained the lowest passing grade (2). The standard deviation that is the spread of scores obtained by the students in achievement sheet amounted to 0.14, which indicates that the subjects created a rather homogeneous group. As to the results obtained by the subjects in the achievement sheet, descriptive statistics are provided in Table 2.

**Figure 1** The results from the achievement sheet

Source: Author.

**Table 1** Compilation of the data for all subjects

Subjects	Attribution questionnaire	Semester grades obtained by the students
1	1	4
2	1	2
3	1	4
4	1	3
5	1	3
6	1	3
7	1	2
8	1	5
9	1	2
10	2	3
11	1	3
12	1	3
13	1	4
14	1	3
15	3	3
16	1	3
17	1	2
18	1	3
19	1	3
20	1	3
21	1	5
22	1	3
23	1	4
24	1	4
25	1	3
26	1	5
27	2	5
28	1	5
29	2	6
30	1	6

Source: Author.

According to the procedure, the researcher compared the ratings from achievement sheet and the results from attribution questionnaire that is, the three levels of internal attribution to which all the subjects were ascribed (3- high internal attribution, 2- medium internal attribution, 1- low internal attribution). Table 2 presents compilation of all the data for each individual.

As the main objective of the study was to investigate the interdependence between adolescent students' attribution and their attainment in SLA, Pearson product correlation coefficient was calculated. Analysis showed a statistically significant dependence between the two variables (1.14). It indicates that the more internal attribution students possess, the better their school achievements in SLA are.

**Table 2** Descriptive statistics for the results obtained in the achievement sheet

Statistics	Value
Mean	3.56
Standard deviation	0.14

Source: Author.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that attribution has an impact on students' school achievement in SLA. The null hypothesis presented by the researcher was rejected and an alternate hypothesis was supported. According to the research results, successful learners seem to put more emphasis on effort and ability that is internal dimension. Correspondingly, students achieving lower grades are more likely to attribute their failures to external factors, which are task difficulty and luck. As the majority of subjects are rather weak students, they mostly display external attributions.

The way in which learners justify their success or failure is essential due to the fact that it has an impact on their actions, emotional responses and motivation. Furthermore, it is not surprising in language classes that many students are found in the situation where they experience constant failure and as a result, they lose their motivation to learn successfully. Some of the students may be even affected by learned helplessness, when they start to believe that reasons for their failure are internal, stable and uncontrollable.

This study as well as the literature review show that learners' attributions have an impact on the way they react cognitively, affectively and behaviourally. For that reason, attributions are perceived by many researchers as vital factors having an impact on students' persistence, future learning expectations, motivation and consequently school and academic achievement (Bandura, 1977).

Taking this knowledge into consideration, it appears inevitable to improve teacher's instructions and feedback in order to promote learner's autonomy. To accomplish this, the teacher should strengthen students' positive beliefs in their abilities. According to Zoltan Dornyei (2001), the importance of effort

in achieving successful outcome should be stressed and modelled by the teacher.

Better awareness of attributions and their influence on success is essential. Therefore, it is strongly recommended for the teachers to inform students about attributions and their impact on school failure. Teachers' training to use positive attribution and encourage mastery learning could help students raise their self-efficacy. Students would perceive their success as a result of their hard work and improvement following it. They could take up the challenge and employ relevant strategies in the learning process.

As a consequence, to enhance school achievements and motivation of foreign language students, the teacher should promote natural and clear relationship between effort and school results and demonstrate that failure is unstable and controllable. These could be activities in which students do not receive grades, but are only monitored by the teacher. When students fail at learning tasks, their activities should be analysed to find achievable solutions to the problems. Teachers also need to serve as models and present the examples from their own experience. These types of models will allow students to deal with problems. Also, reasons for school failures should be shifted from lack of abilities to lack of effort (Gray, 2005).

Teacher's role is to implement tasks that students can manage and that evoke the feeling of success, which consequently leads to students' self-confidence. For that reason, the understanding, praise and relevant feedback are essential aspects in the language classroom. Z. Dörnyei (2001) advocates that providing effort feedback and making the learners notice the relation between effort and its outcomes can make them believe that they will manage to control their achievements and perform better in the future.

However, there are some limitations of the study. The research results cannot completely support the hypothesis on the correlation between attribution and SLA. They can be only applied to the group of adolescents being subjects of the study. Certainly, the sample was too small to draw reliable conclusions. Therefore, it is essential to conduct the research again with a larger number of subjects.

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## APPENDIX 1

### ATTRIBUTION QUESTIONNAIRE

1. I think of myself as a good language learner.  
A) Strongly agree B) Agree C) Neither agree nor disagree D) Disagree E) Strongly disagree
2. I am satisfied with my achievements in SLA.  
A) Strongly agree B) Agree C) Neither agree nor disagree D) Disagree E) Strongly disagree
3. My success in SLA depends on effort.  
A) Strongly agree B) Agree C) Neither agree nor disagree D) Disagree E) Strongly disagree
4. My success in SLA does not depend on luck.  
A) Strongly agree B) Agree C) Neither agree nor disagree D) Disagree E) Strongly disagree
5. A person can change his/her personality or behaviour pattern.  
A) Strongly agree B) Agree C) Neither agree nor disagree D) Disagree E) Strongly disagree
6. Bad things in my life never happen because of bad luck.  
A) Strongly agree B) Agree C) Neither agree nor disagree D) Disagree E) Strongly disagree
7. Intelligence is not given and can be trained.  
A) Strongly agree B) Agree C) Neither agree nor disagree D) Disagree E) Strongly disagree
8. If I set realistic goals, I can succeed no matter what happens.  
A) Strongly agree B) Agree C) Neither agree nor disagree D) Disagree E) Strongly disagree
9. If I study hard I can succeed.  
A) Strongly agree B) Agree C) Neither agree nor disagree D) Disagree E) Strongly disagree
10. I attribute triumphs in my life to my skills and intelligence rather than to chance.  
A) Strongly agree B) Agree C) Neither agree nor disagree D) Disagree E)

Strongly disagree

11. School success is not a result of one's socio-economic background.

A) Strongly agree B) Agree C) Neither agree nor disagree D) Disagree E)

Strongly disagree

12. Heredity does not determine one's personality.

A) Strongly agree B) Agree C) Neither agree nor disagree D) Disagree E)

Strongly disagree

## APPENDIX 2 ACHIEVEMENT SHEET

Student's number	Semester grade
1.	4
2.	2
3.	4
4.	3
5.	3
6.	3
7.	2
8.	5
9.	2
10.	3
11.	3
12.	3
13.	4
14.	3
15.	3
16.	3
17.	2
18.	3
19.	3
20.	3
21.	5
22.	3
23.	4
24.	4

25.	3
26.	5
27.	5
28.	5
29.	6
30.	6