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Learning and teaching English at Tartu Vocational School: comparing mature and regular
learners

MA thesis

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Abstract

The purpose of the present MA thesis is to compare mature and regular learners of English at Tartu Vocational School. In recent years increasingly more adult learners have entered the educational system; therefore, the focus on mature learners is justified.

The thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter provides a literature overview of the characteristics of mature students. The second chapter focuses on motivation and teaching methods.

Chapter three focuses on the analysis of the results of the self-reported questionnaire, which was completed by 191 respondents. The questionnaire consisted of 44 questions. The respondents were divided into three age groups – aged 16–19, 20–24, and 25–53 years..The findings of the study show that age and sex of the learners are important factors in the learning and teaching of English The mature students value experience more than the younger ones. The youngest and the oldest age groups prefer more group and pair work. The middle group prefers more digital lessons. The overall motivational levels were low in all of the age groups. Age and sex have also a great influence on where and how students are exposed to English outside school.

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INTRODUCTION

The present study focuses on comparing mature and regular learners of English at Tartu Vocational School.

One might assume that mature and regular learners differ in their motivation levels, goals, assessment of language lessons, and ideas for the improvement of teaching of English. One might think that there might be also some differences between male and female students. The goals of the present study are the following:

1. to provide an overview of theoretical literature with regard to differences between regular and mature learners as well as male and female learners;
2. to collect data from regular and mature learners of English at Tartu Vocational School by means of a self-reported questionnaire;
3. to analyse the data with regard to comparison of the motivation levels, teaching methods, and ideas about improvement the teaching of English depending on the age and sex of students;
4. to draw conclusions about similarities and differences in the motivation of mature and regular learners at Tartu Vocational School and to find out suitable methods for the teaching of English with a view to improving their motivation level.

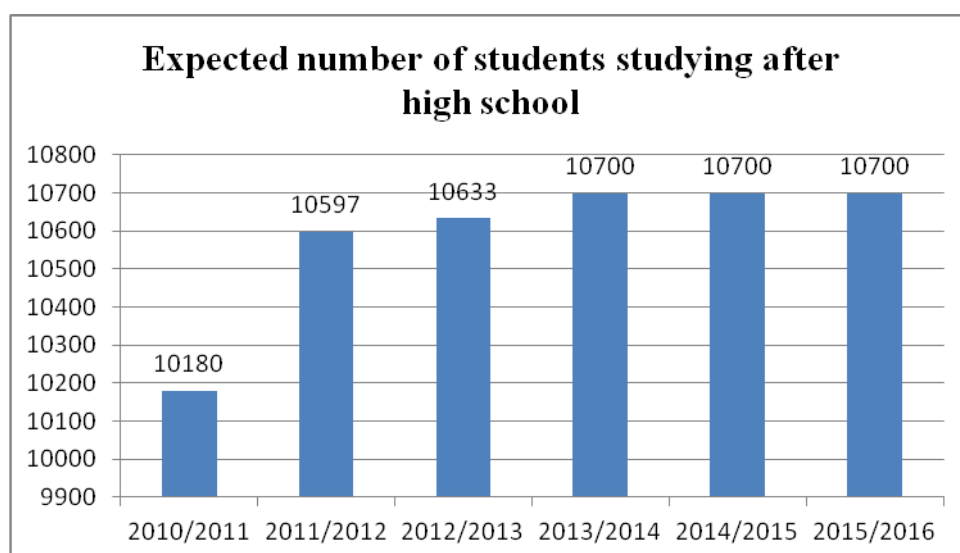
There is general understanding in our society that when a person turns eighteen years of age he or she is considered to be an adult. At the beginning of adulthood the majority of people are still studying and obtaining their education. It could be their final year of secondary school, the first course in a university, or in a vocational school.

Learning, however, is a lifelong process that continues throughout one's adult life. Nowadays it is not unusual to continue one's education at the age of thirty, forty, fifty, or even later. Nina Volles has recently claimed that "lifelong learning is now a macro theme that is a central element of EU policy" (Volles 2016: 343). According to Volles, the concept on lifelong learning first surfaced on an international scale in 1949. Interest in the lifelong learning policies grew until the 1980s. Then with a short decrease of interest, the topic again surfaced in the 1990s at the time of economic crises. Since 2008 the EU has tried to improve the effectiveness of education. Volles concludes that "the European Union perceives lifelong

learning as a means to reform and modernise the national education and training systems, which need to cure a wide range of maladies, ranging from high unemployment to low innovation rates, and the lack of entrepreneurship" (Volles 2016: 360). It is clear that lifelong learning and education policies play a vital role in our society as well as have an impact on our economics.

The statistics published by the Ministry of Education and Research about the students expected to enter the vocational school system during the next years confirms the necessity to study these students.

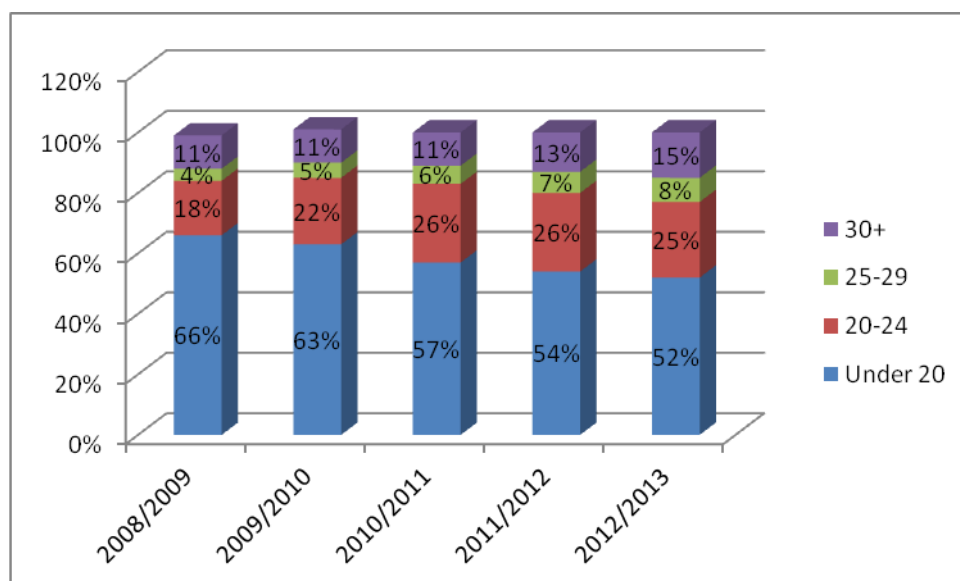
Table 1. Expected number of students studying after high school



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Table 2. Age proportions in vocational schools



Source:[http://dspace.ut.ee/bitstream/handle/10062/40731/Kutsehar_Stat12_13.pdf?sequence=](http://dspace.ut.ee/bitstream/handle/10062/40731/Kutsehar_Stat12_13.pdf?sequence=1)

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These two tables show that the number of students is remarkable. Table 2 clearly shows that the age proportions are shifting and more mature students are entering our educational establishments.

While working in the vocational school as a teacher I have noticed that overtime more and more mature students are entering the educational system. I think it is absolutely necessary to research them and their needs in order to find out about their motivational levels and factors that influence them, their preferences of learning methods, and their overall satisfaction, as well as to compare and contrast them to regular students. The purpose of the present study is to gain more information about differences between mature and regular learners, their needs, their thoughts about the learning and teaching of English, their goals and future plans.

CHAPTER 1: SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF MATURE STUDENTS

Chapter one serves two purposes. The first would be to explain the main terminology used throughout the thesis. It will explain the terms 'mature student' and 'adult student'. Second, it will introduce the characteristics of an adult learner from different authors and compare them to regular learners.

Different authors use the terms 'mature student' and 'adult student' differently. According to the Oxford Dictionary of English (OED), a mature student is "an adult who undertakes a course of study at a later age than normal"[\(\(www.oed.com\)\)](http://www.oed.com). This definition of a 'mature student' serves as a guideline for the present thesis.

According to M. Tight (2002: 62), maturity is a part of being an adult. It is one aspect, besides age, that the learners have to reach in their life. Whether a specific student has reached all of the aspects in becoming an adult is impossible to test, but with certain age the members of our society start treating the learners accordingly. Saar et al. agree with Tight in that 'adult students' can be identified on the basis of "(1) age (typically defined as 25 years of age and older); (2) entrance or re-entrance to higher education with a prior major break in their educational path; (3) mature life experience gained through work, family, and community involvement; (4) status of responsibility" (Saar et al. 2014: 692). Generally, when talking about a mature student one assumes that he or she is an adult. Maturity is an aspect of life that regular students in their young age have not reached yet. It is fair to conclude that 'mature student' and 'adult learner' are closely related terms and are sometimes used synonymously.

Sam Malone claimed that "adult learners see themselves as independent and self-directed; they like to have control over and be responsible for their own learning" (Malone 2014: 11). According to Malone, there are ten characteristics of an adult learner.

First, an adult learner is self-directed. An adult learner likes to be in control and be responsible for his or her own studies. If adult learners have no control over the learning process, they might resist learning or even sabotage it. The regular learner, on the other hand, needs guidance, and the level of control coming from the teacher has to be higher. Regular learners are used to following exact instructions and know that the teacher has control over their studies.

Second, an adult learner relies on experience. Adults learn by linking new knowledge to previous knowledge. Adult learners use their previous experience as a resource and a learning base for new knowledge. The regular learner has a smaller experience base to work with. The teacher has to start from the basics and create a knowledge base in order to move towards more difficult topics, where they could rely on their previously learned knowledge.

Third, adult learners are intrinsically motivated; they are motivated by their needs, interests and desires. They are motivated by the relevance of the materials and the prospect of achieving goals. The regular learner is usually extrinsically motivated meaning he or she is there because they have to be. They see it as a means to an end; if they sit through the mandatory education programme they will not get into trouble. Currently the Estonian law requires school attendance until completion of the ninth grade or until reaching the age of seventeen.

Fourth, adult learners are practical; they like to solve problems and learn things that will be useful to them in general. They like to see the future advantage of the things they learn. Some regular learners might also like practical tasks because that would be something different to what they are used to. Some, on the other hand, might fear new tasks and different ways of doing things simply because they have no prior experience in doing it.

The fifth characteristic concerns formal learning. Many adult learners are intimidated by formal learning due to negative experiences in the past; they may also have rusty learning skills and poor reading skills. Therefore, adult learners prefer creative teaching methods over traditional ones. The regular learner has been trained by formal learning since the beginning of school; hence they are most likely not intimidated by formal learning and are used to it.

The sixth characteristic concerns responsibilities. Adult learners may have considerably more responsibilities and roles compared to regular learners. Their training programmes should be more flexible and all home assignments should be handed out much earlier. Regular students usually do not have any major responsibilities (there are of course exceptions). For instance, there are families where the student has many younger siblings to look after, or a family may live in the countryside and has many responsibilities. For most of them, their main responsibility is to attend school and to spend their time learning and gaining knowledge.

The seventh characteristic concerns habits. Adult learners often have a certain mindset and are willing to do things only their way. Compared to a regular student, before changing anything the adult learner needs time for reflection and much explanation from the teacher. Regular learners are more open to change. They are willing to try and test out new ways of learning. The regular learner does not reflect on things that long, and you might claim that regular learners are more courageous.

The eighth characteristic concerns learning styles. Adult learners like the teachers to adopt the role of a facilitator rather than a lecturer and a peer relationship rather than a hierarchical one. They like the teachers to relate all theories to practical outcomes while combining it with their prior knowledge. The hierarchy inside a classroom with regular students and the teacher has been the same for a long time. The teacher is the one who is in charge and the students accept that. The regular student knows that he or she has to take instructions and orders from the teachers and that the teacher is in charge. The adult learners like to see themselves in partnership with the teacher, as a peer and a friend.

The ninth characteristic concerns feedback. Feedback at appropriate intervals gives the adult learner a sense of achievement and personal growth. They like to know what they are doing right and what are they doing wrong so that they could learn from their mistakes. The adult learners are much more interested in feedback no matter if it is positive or negative. Positive feedback gives them reassurance that they have done a good job and that they are on the right track. Negative feedback, on the other hand, enables them to explore their mistakes and to learn from them. Regular students, by contrast, are less interested in feedback. They are more interested in the outcome (the grade). Once they have learned how they did it, they are not interested in the mistakes and discussing them one by one. As with everything else in life there are also exceptions here. A regular learner might also be interested in receiving meticulous feedback and may wish to go through every mistake and every comment.

The tenth characteristic is about challenges. The adult learner likes to be challenged beyond their present level of ability. That is when they make an effort, learn, and sense their personal growth. If the challenge is beyond their capability, the learner may become demotivated and want to give up. This characteristic can also be used to describe a regular student. Handing the student (no matter the age) a well-planned challenge that is slightly above their abilities is a great way to make them learn and push their boundaries.

The study of adult students belongs to the field of andragogy. Some well-known authors in this field include Lindeman (1926), Knowles (1988), and Illeris (2003).

Lindeman (1926) identified several key assumptions about adult learners that have been supported by later research and that constitute the foundation stone of modern adult learning theory. His main ideas were as follows.

1. Adults are motivated to learn as they experience the need and interests that learning will satisfy; therefore, these are the appropriate starting points for organizing adult learning activities.
2. Adults' orientation to learning is life-centred; therefore the appropriate units for organizing adult learning are life situations, not subjects.
3. Experience is the richest resource for adult learning; therefore the core methodology of adult education is the analysis of experience.
4. Adults have a deep need to be self-directing; therefore the role of the teacher is to engage in a process of mutual inquiry with them rather than to transmit his or her knowledge to them and then evaluate their conformity to it.
5. Individual differences among people increase with age; therefore, adult education must make optimal provision for differences in style, time, place and pace of learning.

Andragogy came into prominence in adult learning during the 1960s and the early 1970s through the work of Malcolm Knowles. Knowles was looking for a framework to distinguish adult learning from learning in childhood. Later, Knowles suggested that pedagogy and andragogy are not limited to children and adults, respectively, but rather match the maturity and experience of the learner and given setting. Although andragogy is

sometimes described as a theory, it is probably more accurate to describe it as a set of assumptions about how people learn. According to this view, as learners mature,

1. their self-concept moves from being dependent to increasing levels of self-directness;
2. the role of the learners` experience becomes an increasingly valuable resource, and adult learning is optimized when learners are able to tap into their experience;
3. readiness to learn in adulthood is increasingly based on real-life needs and situations;
4. there is a shift from learning from future application towards learning to address immediate needs;
5. intrinsic motivators become increasingly more important than extrinsic ones;
6. before learning something, adults typically need to know why they need to learn it.

(Salkind 2008: 13–14)

Malcolm Knowles (1988: 31–51) divided mature students into three groups.

1. The goal-oriented learners use education for accomplishing fairly clear-cut objectives. These individuals usually did not make any real start on their continuing education until their middle twenties and after – sometimes much later.
2. The activity-oriented learners take part in an activity because they find a meaning in the circumstances of the learning. It need not have any connection at all to what they need or want. The learning process is pursued simply because of the desire to achieve some goals. These individuals also begin their sustained participation in adult education at the point when their problems or their need become sufficiently urgent.
3. The learning-oriented learners seek knowledge for its own sake. Unlike the other types, most learning-oriented adults have been engrossed in learning as long as they can remember

In the same book Knowles introduced a pedagogical model suitable for mature learners (Knowles, 1988: 57–63):

1. The need to know. Adults need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking learning it. Knowles also referred to A. Tough (1971), who found that when adults undertake to learn something on their own, they will invest considerable energy in probing into the benefits they will gain from learning it and the negative consequences of not learning it.

2. The learner's self-concept. Adults have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions, for their own lives. Once they have arrived at that self-concept, they develop a deep psychological need to be seen by others and treated by others as being capable of self-direction. They resent and resist situations in which they feel others are imposing their wills on them.

3. The role of learners' experience. Adults come into an educational activity with both a greater volume and a different quality of experience from youths. By virtue of simply having lived longer, they have accumulated more experience than younger learners. This difference in quantity and quality of experience has several implications for adult education.

4. Readiness to learn. Adults are ready to learn those things they need to know and are able to learn them in order to cope effectively with their real life situations. An especially rich source of "readiness to learn" is the developmental tasks associated with moving from one developmental stage to the next.

5. Orientation to learning. While children and adolescents are characterized by subject-centred orientation, learning adults are life-centred (or task-centred) in their orientation to learning. Adults are motivated to devote energy to learn something to the extent that they perceive that it will help them perform tasks or deal with problems that they confront in their life.

Furthermore, they learn new knowledge, understandings, skills, values, and attitudes most effectively when they are presented in the context of real-life situations.

6. Motivation. While adults respond to external motivators (better jobs, promotions, higher salaries, and the like), the most potent motivators are internal pressures (desire for increased job satisfaction, self-esteem, quality of life) (Knowles 1988: 57–63).

Susan Imel (1995) explained how and why the age difference influences our learners. She pointed out that "one way to approach the question of whether teaching adults is different is by examining the types of learning in which adults engage" (Imel 1995: 3–4). Drawing upon the work of Habermas et al. (1994) Imel classified adult learning into three categories.

1) Subject-oriented adult learning. The primary goal is to acquire content. The educator speaks of covering the material, and the learners see themselves as gaining knowledge or skills.

2) Consumer-oriented adult learning. The goal of consumer-oriented learning is to fulfil the expressed needs of learners. Learners set their learning goals, identify objectives, select relevant resources, and so forth. The educator acts as a facilitator or resource person and does not engage in challenging or questioning what learners say about their needs

3) Emancipatory adult learning. The goal of emancipatory learning is to free learners from the forces that limit their options and control over their lives, the forces that they have taken for granted or seen as beyond their control. Emancipatory learning results in transformations of learner perspectives through critical reflection (Mezirow 1991: 199). The educator plays an active role in fostering critical reflection by challenging learners to consider why they hold certain assumptions, values and beliefs (Imel 1995: 3–4).

Laurel Schmidt claimed that "for some teachers, driven by a high-speed approach to accountability, there is simply no time or permission for pausing to make connections and discuss relevance. Left behind are curiosity, diversity of learning styles, conversation, interaction and opportunities for invention" (Schmidt 2008: 12).

A large number of teachers are only worried about keeping to their schedule and programme. They want to stay on track with the mandatory programme without taking into account the learners needs and abilities. Every teacher should have basic knowledge of the ins and outs of teaching and learning, in order to maximize their results in a classroom. Teachers should take a step back from simply following the instructions that are given on paper and have a good look around in their classrooms.

In conclusion, the terms 'adult learner' and 'mature learner' are closely related terms that are sometimes used synonymously. An adult learner is a person who has undertaken studies at a later age than normal and has reached a certain level of maturity. The adult and regular learners reveal both similarities and differences in their characteristics. All the learners have to be somewhat self-directed and rely on experience. The difference between adult and regular learners is the amount of previous experience and the level of self-control. Adult learners are more self-directed and have more experience. Both learners are up for challenges if they are well planned and at the correct level of difficulty. It will help them to improve their abilities and increase personal growth. The two differ in motivation because adult learners are usually intrinsically motivated whereas regular learners are extrinsically motivated. The two types of learners also differ in their learning styles, responsibilities, habits, and feedback. The teaching methods of adult learners have to be flexible and varied while the regular learner is acquainted with formal teaching and does not mind it. The adult learner also might have more responsibilities and roles to fulfil in his or her life such as the

role of a parent or working full time. Feedback is also much more important to adult learners; they are keen to receive positive as well as negative feedback.

CHAPTER 2: MOTIVATION AND TEACHING METHODS

The following chapter focuses on student motivation and teaching methods. It provides an overview of the term ‘motivation’ and its types. The chapter explores male and female differences in motivation. The chapter provides a brief overview of motivational research in recent years and discusses recent research findings. The second half of the chapter focuses on teaching methods – the advantages and disadvantages of different methods and their use.

2.1 Motivation

Motivation is definitely one of the key elements in any kind of learning. Without being motivated the learning process will have minimal results. Zoltán Dörnyei is an author who has written many books and articles on motivation (books like *Teaching and Researching motivation* and *Motivation Strategies in the Language classroom*). Dörnyei and his co-author Ema Ushioda write that “there is one common feature of most motivational approaches in educational psychology: they are based on the idealistic belief that ‘all students are motivated to learn under the right conditions, and that you can provide these conditions in your classroom’ (McCombs and Pope 1994: vii) This assumption is, at best, arguable and, at worst, naïve” (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011:106). In addition, they also write that it is highly unrealistic that every student can be motivated to learn. Nevertheless, teachers believe that it is possible to increase the motivation of the majority of students. Many authors have characterized ‘learning motivation’. One of the first to do so was Illeris who stated that "motivations are rarely straightforwardly positive or negative but seem to be a mixture of social, personal and/or technical elements with a focus on the concrete skills that the adults expect to gain" (Illeris 2003: 15).

P.Eggen and K.Kauchak claimed that "motivation is the process whereby goal-directed activity is instigated and sustained“(Eggen and Kauchak 2013: 330). Motivation is often classified into two broad categories – while “extrinsic motivation implies engagement in an activity as a means to an end, intrinsic motivation is motivation to be involved in an activity for its own sake” (Eggen and Kauchak 2013: 331). Margaret Theobald has written about motivation in a similar manner: “Motivation is internal; it comes from within oneself. A student who is not motivated and does not want to learn cannot be made to learn” (Theobald 2006: 1). Extrinsic motivation refers to the external influences of praise and rewards. For

some students, extrinsic tools are necessary for motivation. This might eventually lead to a level of motivation that is intrinsic. Intrinsic motivation refers to the internal drive within oneself to do well because of a desire to be challenged, for the sheer joy of participating or learning, or because of a personal desire to succeed. Certainly, the development and nurturing of intrinsic motivation is the ultimate goal of educators for their students” (Theobald 2006: 1–3). According to Wlodkowski: ”intrinsic motivation occurs when there is value in the process of doing something. Helping students find value in learning through the implementation of various instructional strategies and multiple alternative and authentic forms of assessment, while maintaining high standards of student performance in an environment which encourages students to do their best work by effective, nurturing teachers, will help increase the motivation levels of all students” (quoted in Theobald 2006: 2). Eggen and Kauchak (2013: 331) drew up a list of experiences that will intrinsically motivate students.

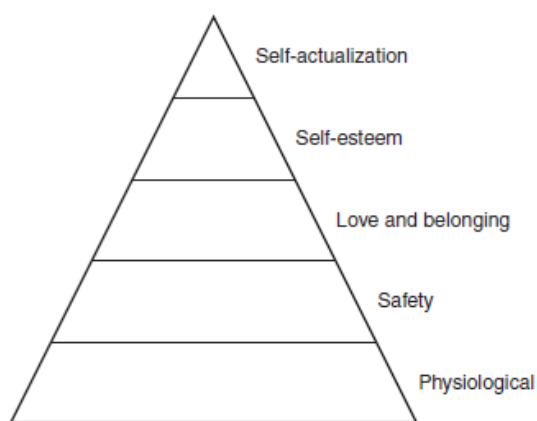
1. You have to present the students a challenge. When meeting a challenge it is emotionally very satisfying for the learner.
2. Promote autonomy. The students will be more motivated when they can feel that they have control and influence over their own learning process.
3. Evoke curiosity. When something is new or surprising it provokes interest and curiosity which will boost their motivation in what they are learning.
4. Involve creativity and fantasy. Thinking outside the box and letting go of traditional methods.

Adult students are usually intrinsically motivated and regular students are extrinsically motivated. Regular learners see their learning process in school as a means to an end while adult students have made a conscious choice and want to be there.

Robert E. Franken divides motivation into three components: the biological component, the learned component, and the cognitive component (Franken 2007: 27). The biological component ties motivation to emotions, mood, and other aspects that are mostly controlled by our brain. According to Franken, the second aspect is the learned component, which is linked to attention. The way we focus our attention is usually connected to what we need at that moment. The third component is the cognitive component. He claims that the cognitive component is made up from habits, automatic behaviours, beliefs, attitudes, values and individual differences (Franken 2007: 53).

Although all three authors approach motivation slightly differently, all of them at one point or another mention Maslow and his pyramid of needs. Peter Jarvis (2004), on the other hand, has a somewhat different view of the pyramid of needs and learning. The basic pyramid that we all know consists of: psychological need, safety, love and belonging, self-esteem and self-actualization.

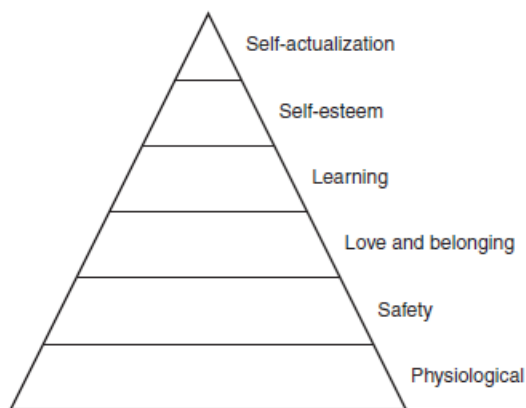
Figure 1. Maslow`s hierarchy of needs



Source: Jarvis 2001: 35

Jarvis thinks that the need to learn is and should be a part of the pyramid as well. As small children we ask the question why very often and by searching for the answers we satisfy our human curiosity and add to our knowledge base. It is argued that the need to learn is quite fundamental to humanity and manifests itself during the process of the self. Jarvis has also written that "in other words, when individuals' biographies and their current experience are not in harmony, a situation is produced whereby they recommence their quest for meaning and understanding" (Jarvis 2004: 36). He also claims that education per se is only one of the number of ways through which the learning can be satisfied. (Jarvis 2004: 36). Jarvis added an extra category to Maslow's pyramid:

Figure 2. Jarvis' pyramid of needs



Source: Jarvis 2001:37

Theobald (2006) divided motivation into 10 components: motivation is a mindset, motivation is influenced through observation, motivation is affected by timing, motivation is independence, motivation is reflected in victory, motivation involves action, motivation is increased through transfer, motivation is inherent to individuality, motivation is rooted in ownership and motivation is natural. She wrote that “by the time students reach their middle school years, they already have a mindset about who they are and what they can or cannot accomplish” (Theobald 2006: 6). She also stated that teachers can affect in several ways the mindset that individual students bring with them into school setting. First, teachers need to recognize that each student can learn. Second, teachers are responsible for providing an environment where students can feel free to make mistakes and learn from those mistakes. Third, everyone needs positive feedback once a while. She also stated that “Students watch what teachers do and how teachers act. Students learn through our example. If we cannot be excited about teaching and learning, then we cannot expect the students to be excited” (Theobald 2006: 26). In chapter eight she wrote the following: “each student is unique. Each individual is motivated in his or her own way. Strategies used to motivate one person may not affect someone else” (Theobald 2006: 88). She listed recommendations for the teachers which could prove to be helpful. She claimed that teachers can create an environment conducive to motivating most students, but if a student is not affected by that environment, the student will not be motivated. First, teachers can help students recognize their own weaknesses to overcome and strengths on which to build. Second, teachers can directly relate intellectual experiences to the rate and extent of students' cognitive abilities. Third, teachers can provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their own individual talents and skills. And last,

teachers can encourage the expression of each student's differences from others (Theobald 2006).

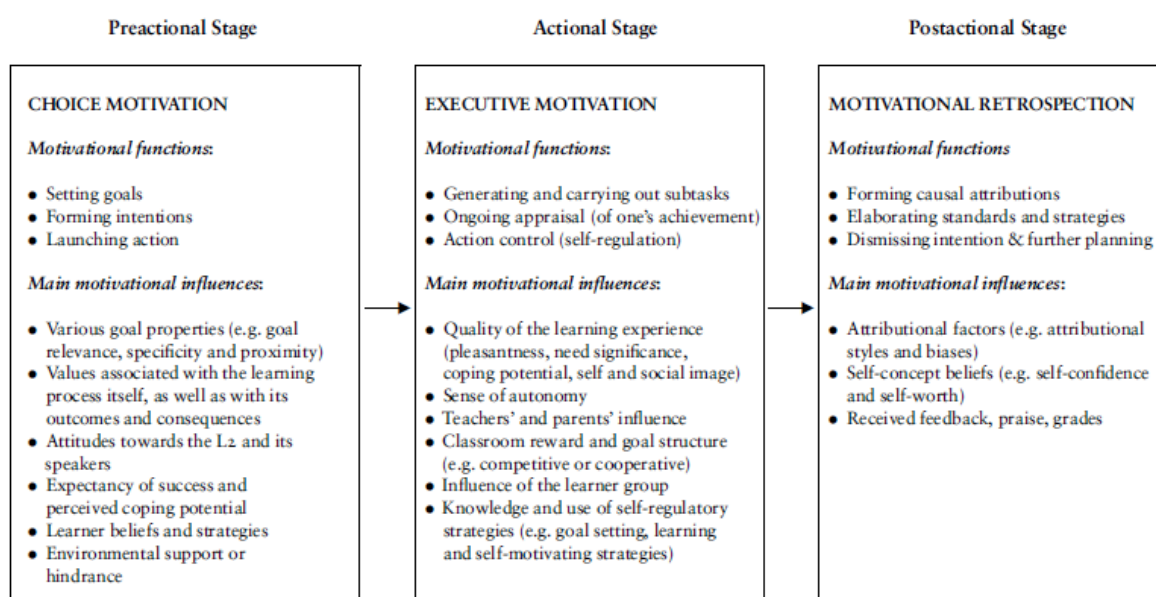
For a regular student 'school' represents primarily a social area and not the scene of academic work. The regular student is mostly in the classroom because he or she has to. Meanwhile the mature student has chosen to learn and wants to take responsibility for that choice. The regular student is more interested in such issues as love, personal image, and social status. This all implies that at any given time when you want the students to focus on certain goals you may find some of them pursue other goals in addition or instead. Getting their full attention can be very tricky, but you have won half the motivation battle if the class group can agree on common purpose and sense of direction by taking into account:

- individual goals (which may vary to having fun to passing the exam)
- institutional constraints (you are here to learn a language and this is our syllabus this year)
- success criteria (traditionally an exam or test but other communicative criteria can be more incentive) (Dörnyei 2001: 61).

According to Dörnyei, goal setting is largely underrated. It will be of great help in increasing motivation levels in regular and mature students. He even says that "although quite time-consuming, a regular goal-setting conference with each student can provide this process a firm structure" (Dörnyei 2001: 84). The inner confidence of the learner has a vast impact on their motivation and activeness in lessons. Regular or adult, all students need to have a level of confidence for the learning process to be effective. Dörnyei (2001: 89) pointed out four particularly useful strategy types: 1) provide experiences of success 2) encourage the learner 3) reduce language anxiety 4) teacher learner strategies. He offers many other strategies and tips for initiating and increasing motivation, such as promoting learner autonomy, promoting co-operation among students and teaching the students how to learn and how to deal with new information. Those strategies can be implemented with all age groups and at all levels of learning. However, after having initiated motivation it could still fade and decrease with time.

According to Dörnyei, a suitable remedy is to break the monotony of the classroom. Shake things up a bit and act unexpectedly. It will be a shake up the learner and offer a different experience. Below is Dörnyei's (2001: 22) process model of learning motivation in the L2 classroom:

Table 3. Model of learning motivation



Everything in his model starts with setting goals. The goals should be set realistically and short term. After achieving the first goals they can become more long- term and complex. In the beginning the goals have to be achievable in a short- term period because the learners' needs to get the feeling of success and achievement. If the learning process starts with unrealistic and unachievable goals the learner might lose interest in the process and give up. Differences in learning and motivation are also influenced by sex. Male and female learners vary in their learning goals and achievements. According to Jarvis (2004: 73–75), men have slightly more instrumental attitudes towards education. Men attach more importance to the idea that education is a means to getting on in the world. Women are seven per cent less interested in it. Males usually continue their education due to work, often required by the employer and also paid for. Women, on the other hand, can start continuing their education with future work and prospects in mind. Men being more instrumental mean that they are more likely to deal with situations and obligations that are already present, while women plan and think a head (Jarvis 2004). The fact that there are differences between male and female adult learners is also recognized by author Tight (2002). He talks about women who have had a career break in their educational path. Such breaks may be due to starting a family or simply misfortunes in life. A pervious study by the author of the present thesis on the adult gymnasiums of Tartu and Pärnu showed that 13% of the females had to dropped out of school because of having a child. They had a break from the educational system for at least two or

three years and starting again might prove to be somewhat difficult. After childbirth they have more responsibilities because they are responsible also for their child. They have to consider their financial opportunities very carefully (Rööpmann 2001). Our society, on the other hand, places men and women on an equal footing in continuing education. It often does not take into account the sacrifices that a female learner has to make. The time for continuing education comes at the expense of family and working time. Women often have to settle for part-time work while studying, which puts them in a tight economic situation. All such compromises and the consequences of these compromises affect the learners' motivation and mindset (Tight 2002).

Recently Negovan et al. (2015) studied differences in university students' conceptions of learning according to their learning context (regular or distance education) and their level on intrinsic motivation of learning. Their findings indicated that the students' learning context and their level of intrinsic motivation for learning, age, and gender are interacting in differentiating their conceptions of learning. The students of the regular programme, compared to the students of the distance learning programme, reported higher scores on conceptions that learning is understanding, gaining information, and a duty. The students of the distance learning programme, compared to the students of the regular programme, reported higher scores on conceptions that learning is personal change and a continuous process. "At higher level of intrinsic motivation, compared with the low and average level of intrinsic motivation, students' conceptions of learning are stronger as far as the following conceptions of learning are concerned: learning is personal change, development of social, a continuous process and a duty" (Negovan et al. 2015: 645).

L. Scanlon (2009) carried out a study about the supporters and the distracters of the adult learner. The study had 35 participants and all of them were interviewed. The study revealed two types of supporters and three different types of distracters. The supporters included family and friends who can be supportive in different ways, for example, their knowledge, experience, or specific skills. The distracters lay outside college, namely children, family and ex-partners. (Scanlon 2009: 39). Children as distracters acted in two ways. First, the students spent their time parenting and not studying and secondly the students' learner identity was difficult to maintain at home amongst family and children. Former partners were not only emotionally distracting the students but also consumed a lot of their time (when sharing children or still unfinished business to attend to). Melnic and Botez (2014) also conducted a study on motivation and students' preferences. Their study involved

42 students, aged between 20–25 years old. They concluded that “learning motivation is that which gives meaning and coherence acts of learning and living subjectively tension” (Melnic and Botez2014: 62). They also claimed that there is a tension resulting from the confrontation of needs of the learner. How difficult is the content, which are the requirements, what kind of circumstances they learn under and what is the expected outcome of learning. If we consider the reasons why students do not learn, the most frequently mentioned cause is lack of time; many students were involved in other activities. Other students do not know efficient learning techniques, which prevents them from obtaining higher school performance. To improve learning motivation, students think that the main solutions would be application of theoretical knowledge in seminars and laboratory visits, study tours; the project information should be useful and attractive; teachers should ask them to think, to judge, to assert ideas, and to take into account their ideas (Melnic and Botez 2014) Obergriessen and Stoeger (2015) studied 2400 fourth-graders and the role of emotions, motivation, and learning behaviour in underachieving children. They conducted a questionnaire where they measured emotion levels, motivation levels, and general learning behaviour. The emotions listed in the questionnaire included anxiety, boredom, anger, and enjoyment. The results showed that underachieving students dealt with much higher levels of anxiety and that there was a clear relationship between emotions and motivation (Obergriessen and Stoeger 2015).

The role of emotions in learning motivation in Taiwan was addressed by Tzu-Ling Hsieh (2013). The purpose of his study was to understand predictors of different learning outcomes among various student background characteristics, types of learning motivation, and engagement behaviour. His findings confirmed that different student background characteristics and learning motivation can predict different learning outcomes. On the classroom level Romina Asiyai (2014) conducted an interesting study. Her study examined the perception of secondary school students on the condition of their classroom physical learning environment and its impact on learning motivation. The author presented four research questions and answered those by using descriptive statistics, while three hypotheses were formulated and tested using t-test statistics at a 0.05 level of significance. Data analysis revealed a significant difference between the perception of urban and rural school students concerning the condition of their classroom physical learning environment. The findings further revealed that the conditions of the physical learning environment of the classroom had a great impact on students` learning and motivation including the motivation to actively participate in academic activities; it can influence their personal behaviour and school

attendance. The study concluded that “government and other education stakeholders should give priority attention to creating positive learning environment in schools for students’ successful learning and academic development” (Asiyai 2014: 716).

Without motivation we cannot even start to talk about learning and its various processes. Educators (for mature and regular students) should be able to recognize possible supporters and distracters for the learners and provide guidance when necessary. Teachers should pay closer attention to their students’ motivation level and react when they notice that the level decreasing.

2.2 Teaching methods

The level of motivation is affected by the methods that teachers use. Henson (1980) claimed that the concepts used in teaching methods are numerous and even confusing. Different authors use the same term to express completely different concepts. Henson divided the teaching methods into three groups: telling, showing, and doing.

Table 4. Classification of teaching methods (Henson 1980)

Telling:	Showing:	Doing:
Lecture	Demonstration	Role play
Discussion	Modelling pictures	Practice exercises
Exposition debates	Written words	Inquiry procedures
		Simulation

The lecture is certainly the oldest and most common method of them all as well as the most disliked in schools. Lecture has been around for so many years (and is still widely used) that our students have grown tired of it and long for some diversity. They do not want to sit still for the entire lesson and listen to the lecturer/teacher and simply take notes quietly. However, lecture has been the most effective way of teaching for centuries and it has its advantages and disadvantages. The following advantages and disadvantages were pointed out by The Centre for the Integration of Research (<http://www.cirtl.net/> accessed 21.04.2016).

Advantages

- Gives the instructor the chance to expose students to unpublished or not readily available material.

- Allows the instructor to precisely determine the aims, content, organization, pace, and direction of a presentation. In contrast, more student-centred methods, for example, discussions or laboratories, require the instructor to deal with unanticipated student ideas, questions, and comments.
- Can be used to arouse interest in a subject.
- Can complement and clarify text material.
- Complements certain individual learning preferences. Some students depend upon the structure provided by highly teacher-centred methods.
- Facilitates large-class communication.

Disadvantages

- Places students in a passive rather than an active role, which hinders learning.
- Encourages one-way communication; therefore, the lecturer must make a conscious effort to become aware of student problems and student understanding of content without verbal feedback.
- Requires a considerable amount of unguided student time outside of the classroom to enable understanding and long-term retention of content. In contrast, interactive methods (discussion, problem-solving sessions) allow the instructor to influence students when they are actively working with the material.
- Requires the instructor to have or to learn effective writing and speaking skills.

The aim of the study by Benzing and Christ (1997) was to determine the methods used by teachers. Their study included 207 teachers who answered their questionnaire. The results were somewhat predictable. "The predominant method and was lecture with the support of a blackboard, class discussion, and textbook. Few respondents indicated frequent use of overhead transparencies, videos, workbooks, slides, or computer simulation" (Benzing and Christ 1997: 185).

The study by Watts and Beckers (2008) had similar results. Although eight years have passed since then and the variety of methods that we use in classrooms has broadened, the

lecture is still predominant. Since the lecture is most commonly used, it is also commonly misused. According to Jarvis (2004: 159) the most common mistake is an overly prepared lecture with too much information. Too much information is introduced to the learners at once without giving them enough time to process. The more effective way would be to give a short lecture, introducing a smaller amount of information and have the lecture followed by a discussion.

Group and pair work are a very common teaching methods and widely used by teachers and lecturers. Most teachers believe that group and pair work have great advantages compared to other teaching methods and supports active learning. The majority of teachers believe that group and pair work help to achieve academic, social, and intellectual goals of students. In 2009 Turan and Perihan published a study where they researched group and pair work through the eyes of 30 language teachers. Despite all the advantages that the teachers pointed out, it was also said that "the teachers use the group work technique with low frequency and not in the most effective way" (Turan and Perihan 2009: 289). The teachers pointed out some classic problems that they come across while using group and pair work. The students turn to their native language while having discussions inside their group, the noise level increases, and it may disturb other student from concentrating.

Discussion is another widely used and practised method in lessons. It offers a change to the traditional lecture method and actively involves the students. The results of using the discussion method may vary greatly due to the background of students, subject matter, and class objectives. The instructions given to the students must be very clear, and the class size must be reasonable to avoid some of the student from being left out from the discussion. If there are too many students involved in a discussion, then the more active students will take charge of the discussion and the other students may assume the role of passive listeners. Huang (2005) studied the aspects of using the discussion method in classrooms and listed the main point of using this method. She listed ten recommendations for using discussion in a classroom (2005: 492–497):

1. expand your repertoire of ways to pose questions;
2. begin the discussion with a familiar experience and keep it on track;
3. stretch your tolerance of silence;
4. exercise effective listening skills;
5. facilitate dialogue among participants;

6. encourage students to explore a variety of viewpoints;
7. help students to clarify thoughts;
8. use the linking technique;
9. pay attention to individual participation styles;
10. learn about cross-cultural differences in communication.

Taking into consideration the digital and technical age that we currently live in, teachers are encouraged to actively use digital devices during lessons. Studies have shown that pre- and post-testing of digital lessons show the improvement of knowledge by 69%. Children show increased motivation in digital lessons. The lessons however need to be well planned, thoroughly designed, and with well-stated goals and objectives.

To conclude, mature learners are characterized by intrinsic motivation and regular learners by extrinsic motivation. The adult learner learns by his or her own choice and is working towards his or her goals in life. The regular learner, on the other hand, tends to regard learning and obtaining education as a means to an end. They feel obligated and quite often have negative emotions towards school and learning activities. Students feel that their learning motivation could be increased by combining theoretical learning with practical learning. Students in both age groups are interested in seeing where they can use the learned knowledge in real life and see its benefits. The physical environment of learning is also important – especially the conditions of the classroom such as cleanliness, surrounding noise, etc. The major distractions as well as supporters in motivation can be family members and friends. They vary from one extreme to the other. Family and friends can be supportive as far as helping out with the studies to being ignorant and not helpful at all. Lecture is the most common type of teaching method which is also most commonly misused. The most common mistake is that too much information is given at once during an extremely long period of time. All this theory will not sink in and most of it will be lost after learning it. The second most common type of teaching method is group and pair work. Students are eagerly willing to use the method but the downside of using it are excessive noise levels which prevents the learning process in some learners and the passiveness of students with low self-esteem.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY, SAMPLE SECTION, AND THE RESULTS OF THE SELF-REPORTED QUESTIONNAIRE

3. 1 Methodology and sample selection

The present study is a quantitative study which was carried out by using a self-reported questionnaire. According to Dörnyei (2003), a questionnaire can yield three types of data:

1. Factual data (typically demographic characteristics (such as age and gender), previous education, marital and social status, time spent in the second language environment and other background information).
2. Behavioural questions (lifestyle, habits and second language learning strategies).
3. Attitudinal questions (concerning attitudes, beliefs, interest, values and opinions) (Dörnyei 2003: 8). Keeping in mind these types and the optimal length, which according to Dörnyei (2003) is 4–6 pages, a questionnaire was composed of 44 questions and divided into 6 categories. The six categories were as follows: background information, learning specifications, language lessons, learning environment, possible distraction factors, and the learners' future. The sample consisted of 191 learners of different ages and from various departments of Tartu Vocational School. To ensure that all the questions would be understood properly, the questionnaire was in Estonian.

The results were divided into three groups based on age: 16–19, 20–24, and 25 to 53 (which was the oldest participant in this study). The youngest group had 124 learners, the second age group had 51 learners, and the oldest group had 16. All the results were transferred into the program Microsoft Excel and comparative charts and diagrams were

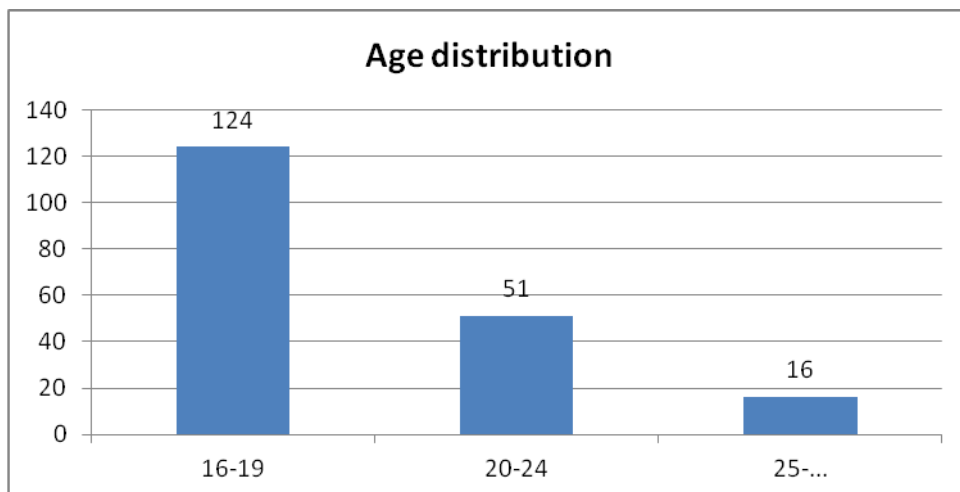
formed. The questionnaires were carried out anonymously and after using the data all the questionnaires will be destroyed.

3.2 Analysis of the data of the self-reported questionnaire

The results are given in the same order as they were presented in the questionnaire. All of the tables and diagrams show the number of students who answered the questions. Since the age groups are not equal, the explanations show the same data in percentages rather than in numbers of student answers. This way the comparison of three age groups is more clear and understandable.

1. Age distribution among the three age groups.

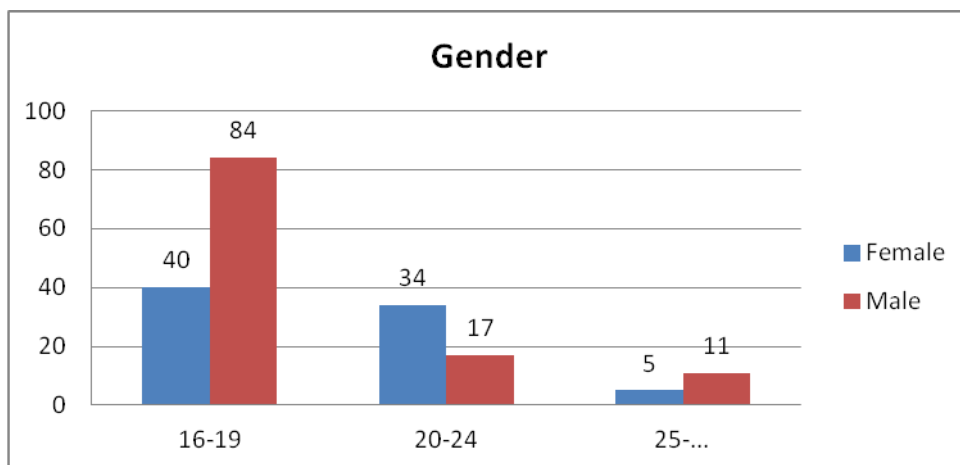
Table 5. Age distribution



The first and the youngest age group (16–19-year-olds) had the highest number of learners: 124. In the second age group there were 51 (20–24-year-olds) learners and in the oldest group 16 (25 years and older).

2. Gender

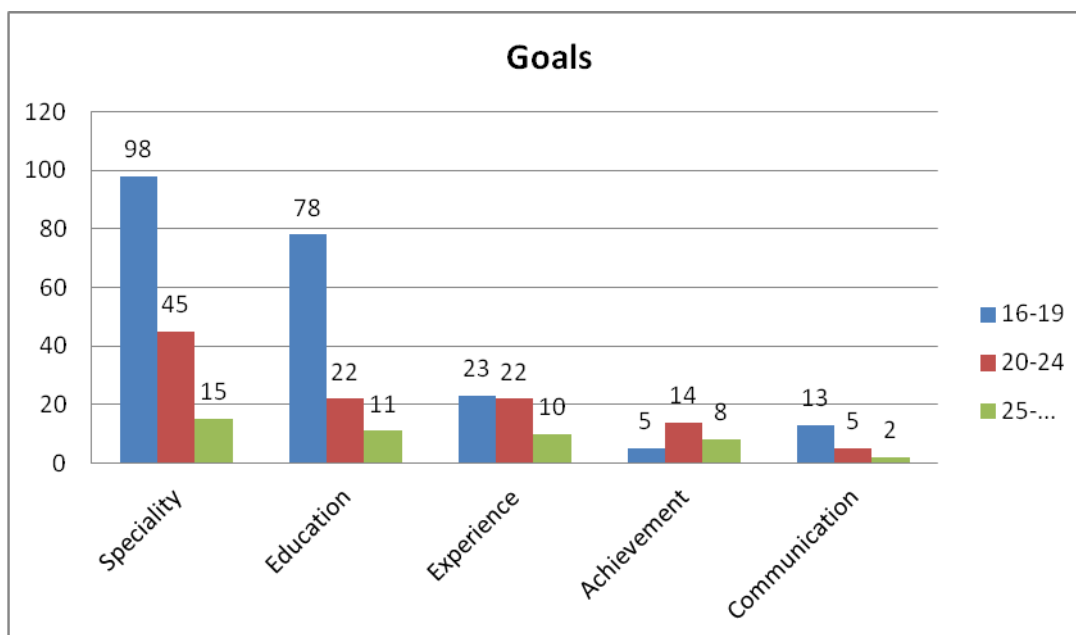
Table 6. Gender



In percentage terms in the 16–19-year-old group there were 67.75% of male learners and 32.25% of female learners. The difference between the numbers of male and female learners is remarkable, which may be due to the fact that after high school specialities are more attractive to males. In the second age group there were 66.5% female and 33.5% of male learners. The contrast is opposite to the first age group and is now in favour of female students. In the third age group there were 68.75% male learners and 31.25% female learners.

3. Goals

Table 7. Goals



The question was presented as an open question in the questionnaire and the learners had to write down three of their goals while studying in this school. The number one goal among all age groups was learning the speciality. In the younger group learning the speciality was chosen by 69% of the learners. The second goal in the younger group was receiving an education which was preferred by 63% of the learners. The third result was experience which was selected by 18.5%. Achievement and communication (communication with other experts in their field and new contacts for their future) amounted to 4% and 10.5%, respectively.

In the second age group (20–24-year-olds) the second and the third most popular goals were receiving an education and experience, both with 43%. Achievement was an important goal to 27.5% of the learners. Experience and communication was chosen by 27.5% and 9.8%.

In the third and the oldest age group (25 years old and older) the second most popular goal was receiving an education with 68.75%. The third result belonged to experience with 62.5%. Achievement and communication received 50% and 12.5% of the answers, respectively.

Education was rated very high in the first and the third age group while in the second age group the percentages dropped by almost 20%. Experience shows an increase with every group. The first group started with 18.5% and in the third group it was over sixty. Similar to experience, achievement also shows a steady increase in every age group. Starting with only 4% it reaches 50% in the third group. Age is an important factor when it comes to experience and feeling of achievement.

4. Working while studying

Table 8. Working while studying

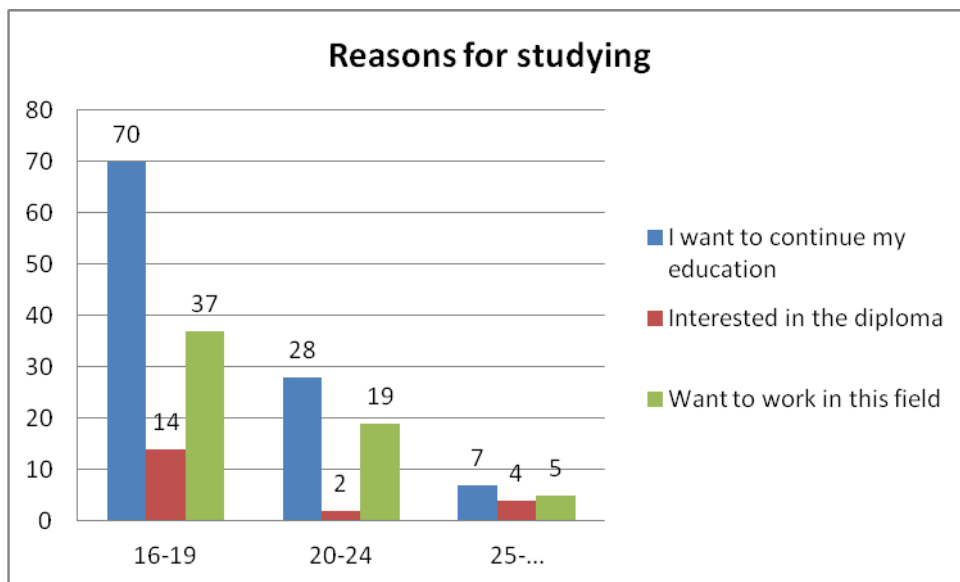
	16–19	20–24	25–...
Yes	20	17	7
No	104	34	9

In percentage terms in the 16–19-year-old group 16% are working while studying and 84% are not. In the 20–24-year-old group 33% are working and 67% are not. In the oldest age group 43.75% are working and 56.25% are not. The percentage of those who work and study at the same time increases with each age group. Comparison between the first and the third group shows that the number of students who are working and studying has more than tripled.

The majority of the working students have specified that their employer supports their learning, but there could be exceptions.

5. The reason why I came here to study

Table 9. Reasons for studying



In percentage terms in the first group 56% wrote that their main reason for studying is because they themselves want to continue their education. The second most popular answer in the group was because they want to work in that field, which received 30% of responses. 11% stated that they were in school only because they are interested in the diploma.

In the second age group 55% wrote that their main reason for studying is because they themselves want to continue their education. 37% of the learners want to find work in that field in the future and 4% are interested in the diploma.

In the third age group as well as the other two, the most popular answer was because they themselves want to continue their education (43.75%) . 31.25% said that they would like to find work in this field in the future and 25% are interested in getting a diploma.

6. Assessment of previous language lessons

Table 10. Assessment of previous lessons

	16–19	20–24	25–...
Easy for me	18	10	3
Managed quite well	36	25	8
Satisfactory	55	14	5
A difficult subject for me	15	2	0

In percentage terms the first age group the most popular answer was satisfactory, which received 44% of the answers. The second most popular answer was that the student managed quite well in language lessons and this option was chosen by 29%. 14.5% stated that the language lessons were quite easy for them, and 12% stated that the subject was very difficult for them.

In the second age group the most popular answer was that they managed well in language lessons (49% of the answers). The second most popular answer was that language lessons were rated as satisfactory with the result of 27.5%. 19.5% assessed their language lessons as quite easy for them and 4% as a difficult subject.

In the third age group 50% stated that they managed quite well in language lessons and 31.25% stated that language lessons could be assessed as satisfactory. 18.75% said that language lessons were quite easy for them and none of the learners assessed their language lessons to being difficult for them.

The table shows that with age, learners become more confident and experienced. The learners in the oldest group value their previous experience more highly.

7. What we should do more in our English lessons

Table 11. What exercise types the students would like

	16–19	20–24	25–...
Grammar exercises	51	21	11
More listening- and reading exercises	21	7	1
More oral retelling	48	20	4
Other	4	3	0

In all age groups the most popular answer was that we should do more grammar exercises. The oldest age group shows over a 20% difference in this option compared to the other two groups, meaning that older students value grammar more.

The second highest result in all age groups was oral retelling. In the youngest age group it amounted to 38.7%, in the second group it was 39% and in the third 25%.

The option ‘other’ which was chosen by some students in the first and the second age group, was mostly specified as we should be learning more speciality-related vocabulary.

8. Exercise types in our English lessons

Table 12. Currently used exercise types

	16–19	20–24	25–...
Vocabulary exercises	32	20	1
Reading exercises	3	6	3
Grammar exercises	15	1	1
All exercise types are done equally	74	24	11

All three age groups are in agreement that all exercise types are done equally. This option was chosen by 59.6% in the first group, 47% in the second group, and 68.75% in the third.

9. Conversations and debates in lessons

Table 13. Debates and conversations

	16–19	20–24	25–...
In every lesson	67	38	9
Sometimes	51	13	7
Rarely	6	0	0

In all age groups the students stated that they have conversations or debates in every lesson – in the first age group 54%, in the second age group 74%, and in the third group 56.25%. In the second age group it is almost 20% higher than in the other groups. In the youngest age group 5% also feel that conversations and debates happen rarely in classes.

10. Listening tasks during lessons

Table 14. Frequency of listening tasks

	16–19	20–24	25–...
In every lesson	24	6	5
Sometimes	66	30	10
Rarely	34	15	1

The most popular option among all the age groups was that listening tasks are sometimes done in lessons. In the first age group this option was chosen by 53%, in the second age group by 59%, and in the third age group by 62.5% of the respondents.

11. Writing tasks during English lessons

Table 15. Frequency of writing tasks

	16–19	20–24	25–...
In every lesson	103	28	15
Sometimes	17	20	1
Rarely	4	3	0

In all three age groups the learners agree that writing exercises are done in every lesson – in the first group 83%, in the second group 55%, and in the third group 93.75%.

12. Reading exercises during English lessons

Table 16. Frequency of reading exercises

	16–19	20–24	25–...
We read enough and everyone gets to read	87	35	6
We read enough but not everyone gets to read	20	6	8
We should do more reading	17	10	2

The most common answer among the first and the second age group was the we read enough and everybody get to read – 70% in the first age group and 68% in the second group.

The highest result (50%) among the oldest age group was that we read enough but not everyone gets to read. The option that we should do more reading exercise was chosen by 14% in the first age group, 20% in the second group, and 12.5% in the third group.

13. Our teacher explains grammar

Table 17. Grammar explanations

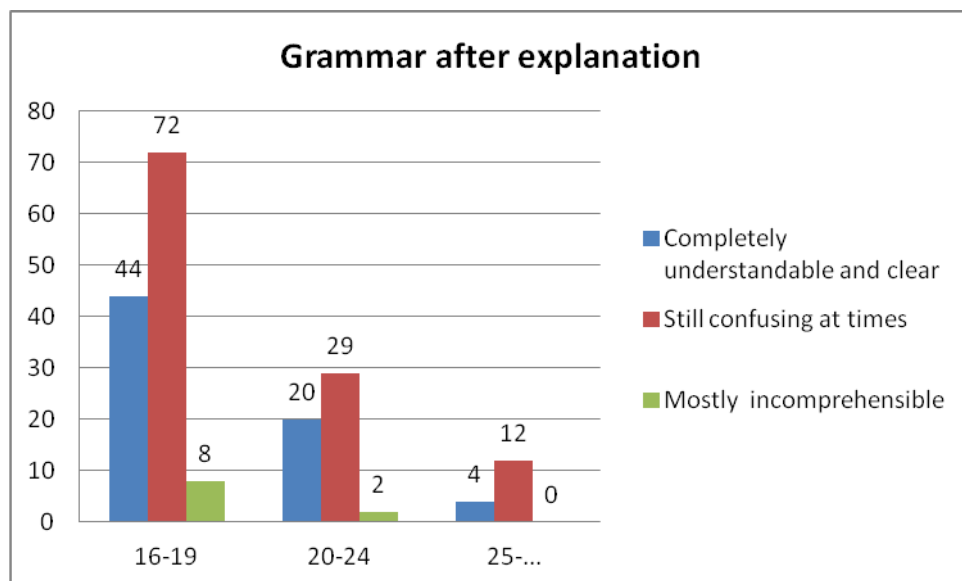
	16–19	20–24	25–...
In both languages	91	41	7
In Estonian	9	1	7
In English	24	9	2

All age groups are in agreement with each other and the most popular answer was that the teacher explains grammar in both languages – 73% in the first age group, 80% in the second group, and 43.75% in the third group.

In the first and the second age group the second most frequently chosen answer was that the teacher explains grammar in English. This option was chosen by 19% in the youngest group and 17.5% in the second group. Among the oldest age group, this option was chosen by 12.5% and was not the second most popular answer.

14. Understanding of grammar after explanation

Table 18. Understanding of grammar after explanation

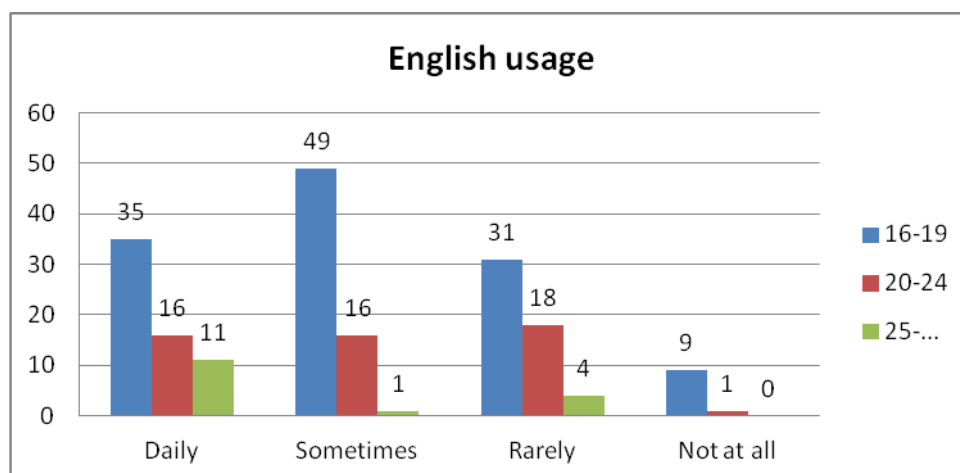


Students from all age groups state that grammar is still confusing at times after the teacher's explanations. In the first age group this option was chosen by 58%, in the second age group by 57%, and in the third age group by 75% of the respondents. Although the percentages were higher in the third and the oldest age group, there were not any students who chose the option that grammar is mostly incomprehensible. The option that grammar is clear and understandable was chosen by 35.5%, 39%, and 25%, respectively.

As a follow-up question the learners were asked which grammar topic was the most difficult for them. The highest result in the first and the second group belong to the option 'tenses' with 50% and 40%. In the third age group students stated that articles constituted the most difficult grammar topic for them, which amounted to 50% of the results.

15. Use of English outside school

Table 19. English usage



In the third and the oldest group 68.75% claimed that they used English on a daily basis. In the first age group ‘sometimes’ amounted to 39.5% and ‘rarely’ gained 35% of the answers. As a positive aspect, none of the students in the third age group chose the fourth option which was ‘do not use English at all’.

16. Computer usage

Table 20. Computer usage

	16–19	20–24	25–...
4 + hours a day	39	17	6
2–3 hours a day	57	23	9
1 hour a day	15	9	1
Don't use	13	2	0

The most popular answer in all the age groups was 2–3 hours with 46% in the first group, 45% in the second group, and 56.25% in the third age group. It came as a surprise that in the youngest age group 10.5% of the students do not use the computer at all.

17. Evaluation of the English-language teacher

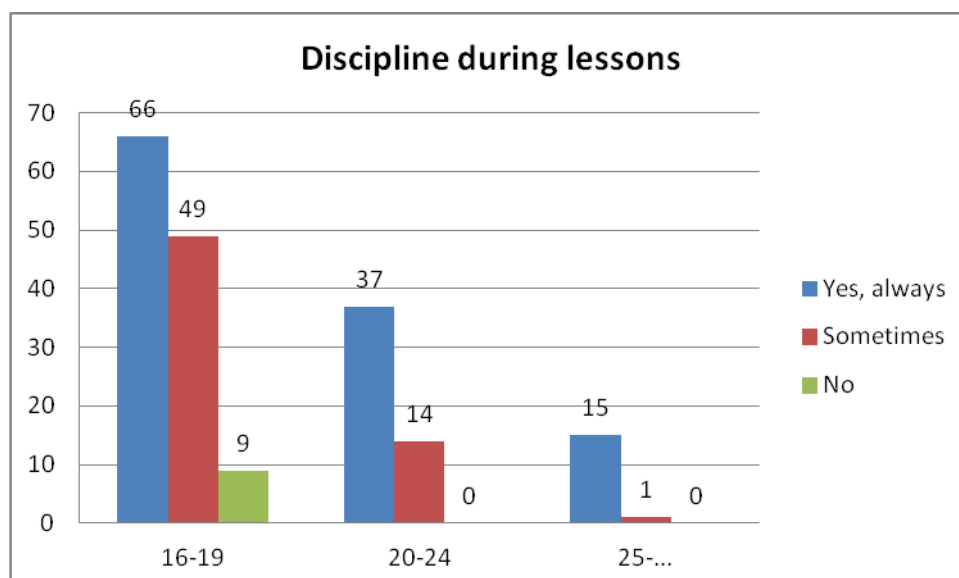
Table 21. Evaluation of the teacher

	16–19	20–24	25–...
Very good	50	26	11
Good	44	18	4
Average	22	5	1
Satisfactory	5	2	0
Poor	3	0	0

The evaluation of English-language teachers shows highly positive results. In all age groups, the learners' most popular option was 'very good' – in the first age group 40%, in the second age group 51%, and in the third one 68.75%. The second common option was 'good' – 35.5% of the respondents chose it in the first group, 35% in the second group, and 25% in the third age group. The last option 'poor' was chosen only by three students and in the first age group.

18. Discipline in lessons

Table 22. Discipline

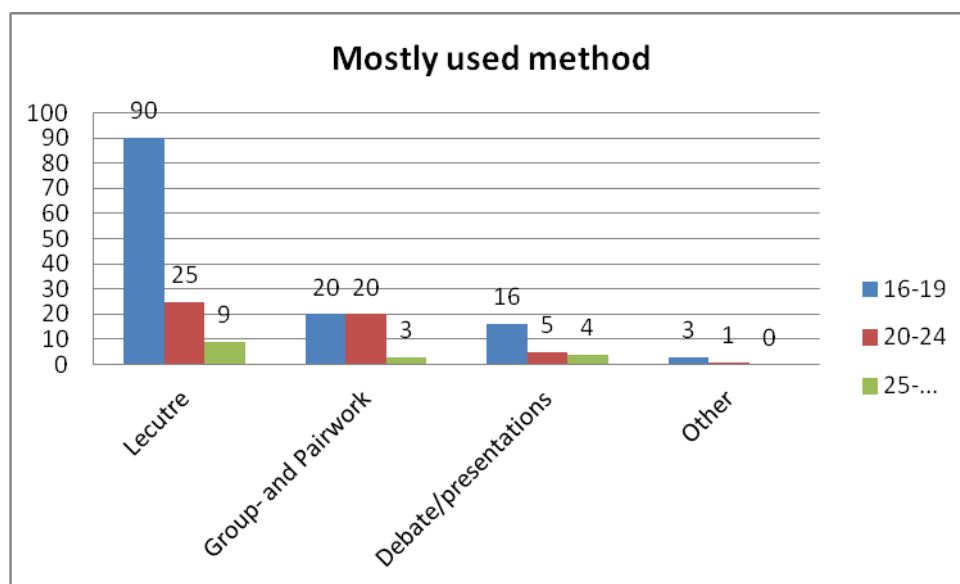


Students in all the age groups seem to agree that teachers are able to maintain discipline during lessons, which was 53% in the first age group, 72.5% in the second, and 93.75% in the third group. As the age of the students increases, so does their level of

discipline during lessons. None of the students in the second or the third age group thought that there were any discipline problems during lessons. Discipline problems were revealed in the first and the youngest age group where 9 students (7%) wrote that teachers were unable to maintain discipline during lessons.

19. Mostly used method

Table 23. Mostly used method



It appeared that all of the age groups had the same most popular answer. The mostly used method is lecture – 72.5% in the first, 49% in the second, and 56.25% in the third group. These percentages are rather high, particularly in the first age group. The option lecture was specified in the questionnaire as when the teacher does most of the talking during the lesson. The second most popular option was group and pair work with 16% and 39%, respectively.

20. Which method could be used more often?

Table 24. Recommended method

	16–19	20–24	25–...
Group and pair work	51	15	8
Digital lessons	43	17	0
Conversation/ discussion	29	19	8

The youngest age group would like to do more group and pair work during lessons (41%). Second, they would like to have more digital lessons, which was reported by 34.6% of the students. In the second age group (20–24-year-olds) the students would like to have more conversation and discussion in their lessons (37%), which is in accordance with the low result concerning the methods that are currently used in lessons. In the oldest age group there is a tie where both options received equally 50% of the answers. They would like both group and pair work in their lessons as well as conversation and discussions.

21. Use of digital devices in language lessons

Table 25. Digital devices

	16–19	20–24	25–...
Yes	26	31	11
Sometimes	70	12	3
No	28	8	2

The majority of the students in the second and third groups agree that digital devices are used. The option ‘yes’ was chosen by 60.7% in the second and 68.75% in the third group. The youngest age group found that digital devices are sometimes used (56%). The next question in the questionnaire asked if the students themselves were allowed to use digital devices during lessons. The first and the second age group preferred the option ‘sometimes’, 47.5% and 55%, respectively. It came as a surprise that 62.5% of the students in the third group found that they were not allowed to use digital devices during lessons. One might think that all the teachers and the students follow the same rules, but it appears that the rules of using digital devices may vary among different teachers and student groups.

22. The teachers’ characteristics and their lessons

Three open questions were presented in the questionnaire where the students could write down the name of a teacher who in their opinion is an excellent teacher. They could write down the things that this teacher does differently and what makes his/her lessons so special. Presented below is a list of most frequently mentioned teachers and a list of most commonly stated reasons why their classes are enjoyable and pleasant.

The teachers most frequently mentioned:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| 1. A. Sester | 4. V. Vetka |
| 2. Aivar Krull | 5. D. Eller |
| 3. H. Alberg | 6. L. Arus |

What makes their lessons enjoyable and pleasant is that he / she explains very well; has interesting lessons; communicates with the students; has a friendly personality and is reasonable; maintains discipline in his/her lessons and does practical exercises during lessons.

23. Home assignments

Table 26. Amount of home assignments

	16–19	20–24	25–...
A lot	9	13	2
Average	90	38	14
Not at all	25	0	0

The students in every age group felt that the amount of home assignments is average, the percentages being 72.5%, 74.5%, and 87.5%, respectively. The second and the third age groups did not choose the option 'not at all', but the youngest age group indicated a 20% answering rate to the same option. This particular result is in fact somewhat mysterious and poses many questions.

24. Doing homework at home

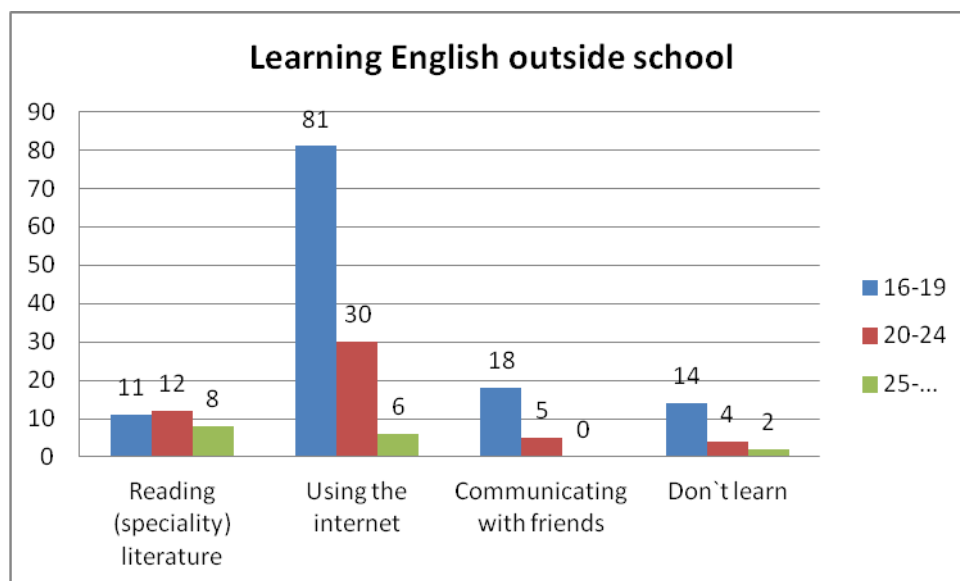
Table 27. Doing assigned homework

	16–19	20–24	25–...
Yes	37	33	9
Sometimes	76	16	7
No	11	2	0

The most frequent answer in the second and the third group was 'yes'. They, in fact, do their assigned homework (65% in the second group and 56.25% in the third age group). The top answer for the first age group was 'sometimes' with 61 percent. The option 'no' was not chosen by any of the students in the third group, 4% in the second age group, and by 9% in the first age group. This nine percent is definitely related to the 20 percent of the students who also stated that they are not given any home assignments.

25. Learning English outside school

Table 28. English outside school



The first and the second age groups answered that the Internet was their main source of learning English – 65% and 58.8%, respectively. The highest result among the oldest age group was reading specialized and literature in general (50%).

The second most popular answer amongst the first age group was 'communicating with friends' (online gaming, chat rooms, etc.) with 14.5%. In the second age group the second result belonged to literature with 23.5%. In the third age group the second most frequent option was 'using the internet' with 37.5%.

The option 'I do not learn' was chosen by 11% in the first age group, 7.8% in the second, and 12.5% in the third group. The highest result in the third age group is not surprising. This may be attributed to the fact that they may have already started a family and

might even have a job; hence they do not have as much free time as younger students. The importance of literature, on the other hand, showed an increase with age. The older the students, the more they value literature.

26. I use the English language

Table 29. Use of English

	16–19	20–24	25–..
Daily	50	24	12
A few times a week	53	19	2
A few times a month	21	8	2

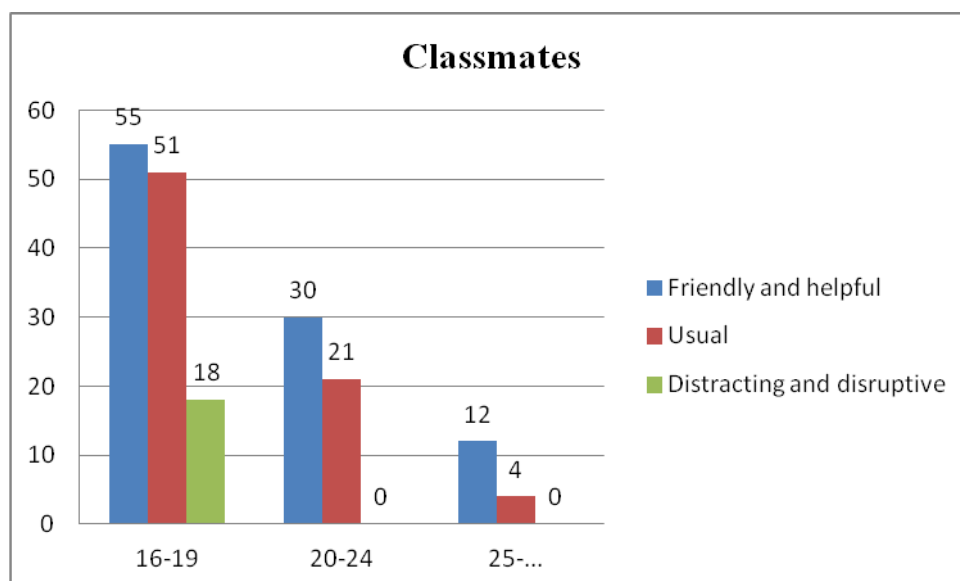
As a sequel to the previous questions, the learners were asked how often they actually use the English language. In the first age group the highest result belonged to ‘a few times a week’ with 42.7%; closely behind was the second most popular answer that the students use English ‘on a daily basis’ (40%). The third option ‘a few times a month’ was chosen by 17%. Amongst the second age group, using English daily was the top answer with 47%. ‘A few times a week’ was chosen by 37.25% and ‘a few times a month’ by 15.75%. In the third age group the option ‘daily’ was the highest result with 75% of the students. The other two options were chosen equally 25% of the students.

27. The state of classrooms

All three age groups were in agreement with each other that the classrooms at the school were appropriate for learning (71%; 62%, and 93.75%) . None of the students in any of the age groups thought that the classrooms were inappropriate for learning.

28. Classmates

Table 30. Classmates



All the students thought that their classmates were mostly friendly and helpful – 44% in the first age group, 59% in the second, and 75% in the third age group. The students of the second and the third age groups did not think that their classmates are in any way distracting and disruptive, however, students in the first age group did. In the youngest age group 14.5% of the learners wrote that their classmates were distractive and disruptive. This is a fairly alarming result and would certainly have an influence on their learning motivation.

29. Absence from school

Table 31. Absence from school

	16–19	20–24	25–...
A lot	10	5	1
Average	52	15	12
A few	48	30	1
None	14	1	2

In the first age group the options ‘average’ and ‘a few’ were rather close. While the option ‘average’ was chosen by 42% and ‘a few’ was chosen by 39%, 11% stated that they were never absent, and 8% stated that they were absent rather often.

In the second age group 59% claimed that they had been absent only a few times, and 29% claimed that they had been absent on an average times.. In the oldest age group 75% perceived that their number of missed lessons could be regarded as ‘average’.

29.1 When absent

Table 32. Coping when absent

	16–19	20–24	25–..
I manage on my own	63	23	11
Need help from teachers	18	2	3
Receive help from my classmates	40	25	2
Catching up is very difficult and a lot of work is left undone	3	1	0

The majority in the first age group stated that they could manage on their own after being absent (51%). 32 % thought that they needed help from their classmates, and 14.5% needed help from teachers. In the second age group the top answer was that they needed help from their classmates (49%) and 45 % could manage on their own. The majority in the third age group stated that they could manage on their own (68.75%).

29.2. Reasons for being absent

The prevailing answer in all the age groups was illness (44% in the first age group, 51% in the second, and 62.5% in the third age group). In the second group 17.5% stated that one of the main reasons why they had been absent was working. The students also listed: personal reason (25 occasions), oversleeping in the morning (21 instances), public transport and the distance from the students` residence, being exhausted, a sick child and being simply lazy.

30. Friends' support studying

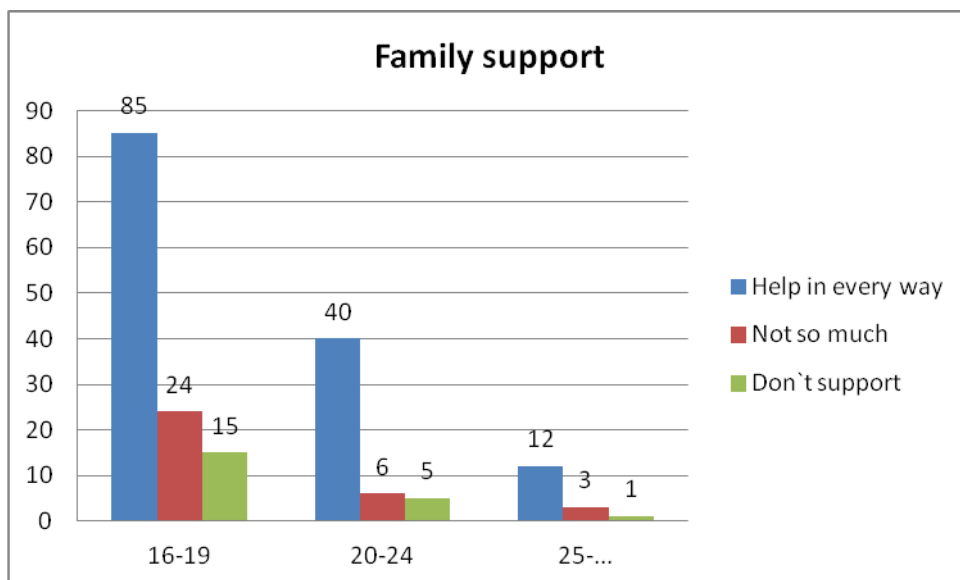
Table 33. Friends' support

	16–19	20–24	25–...
Yes	77	35	12
Not so much	42	15	3
Do not support	5	1	1

Thankfully the highest result among all the age groups was the option that friends supported their studying. In the first group this option was chosen by 62%; in the second age group it was chosen by 68.5% and in the third age group by 75% of the respondents. It confirms once again that age plays a certain role in the support of friends. The older a student, the more supported he or she feels by one's friends. 34% in the first age group did not perceive as much support from their friends as they would have hoped, and sadly 4% do not perceive any support at all.

31. Family supports studying

Table 34. Family support



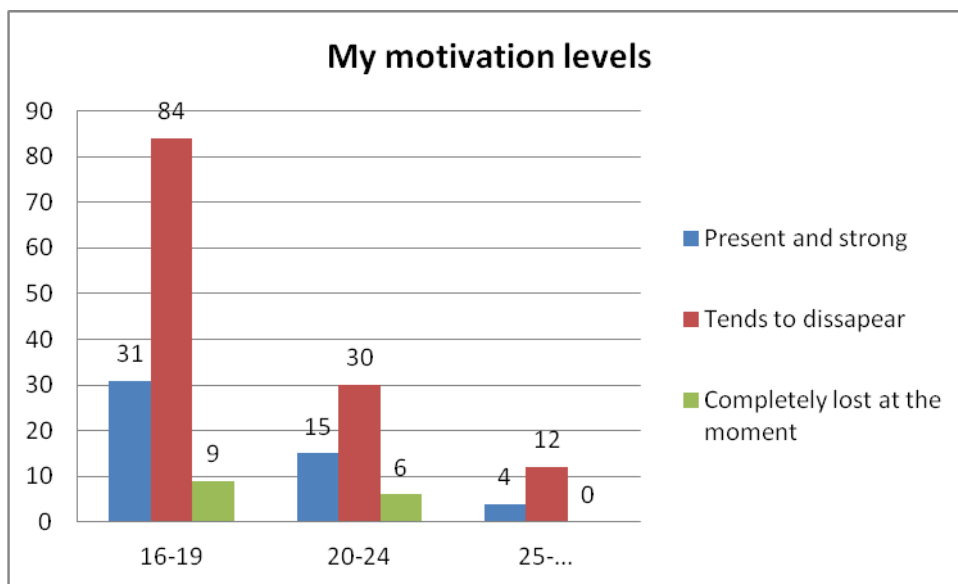
In the first age group 67.7% stated that their families were supportive and helped in every possible way. 19.3% stated that their families did not support much and an astounding 12% stated that they did not feel any family support at all.

In the second age group 78% stated that they felt their family support and that they helped in every possible way. 12% did not feel their family support as much, and 10% did not feel any family support at all.

In the third age group 75% stated that their family supported them, 18.75% did not feel as much support as they would like from their family, and 6.25% did not feel any support from their family.

32. My motivation

Table 35. My motivation



All the age groups reported that they tended to lose their motivation – 68% in the first age group, 59% in the second age group, and 75% in the third group. These percentages are high and raise concerns. 7% in the first age group and 12% in the second age group reported that their motivation at the moment had completely disappeared. Thankfully, no such percentages were reported in the third and the oldest age group.

Motivation is still strong and at 25% in the first age group, 30% in the second, and 25% in the third age group.

33. What motivates me to study

Table 36. Sources of motivation

	16–19	20–24	25–...
Praise and good grades	52	14	3
Diploma	53	28	3
My family	9	3	5
Other	9	6	5

In the first age group the students are almost equally motivated by praise and good grades and receiving a diploma with 42% and 43%, respectively. 7.25% stated that they are motivated by their family and other aspects.

In the second age group the majority of the learners are motivated by the diploma (55%). Praise and good grades amount to 27% of the students' motivation. 12% of the students chose the option 'other'.

In the third age group the two most popular options were 'family and 'other' both with 31.25%. The option 'other' was most commonly specified as that the learners motivate themselves or they are motivated by the knowledge they are gaining.

34. Where do I get my motivation

Table 37. Where do I get my motivation

	16–19	20–24	25–...
Family and friends	55	25	9
Classmates	10	7	1
Teachers and school staff	18	4	0
Usually I manage on my own	41	15	6

In the youngest age group the majority stated that they received some support and motivation from their family and friends (44%). In second place was the option that they 'managed on their own' and do not need anyone to help them (33%). 14.5% said that they received the necessary support and motivation boost from the school teachers and staff. Support from their classmates held the last place with 8.5%, which is in accordance with the

results presented in assessing their classmates where a high result in classmates being distracting and disruptive was evident.

In the second age group the majority stated that they received the necessary support also from their family and friends (49%). The option ‘managing on their own’ (29%) held the second place, and in third place were the classmates with 13.5%. Going to the school teachers and staff for support and motivation was their last choice with 7.5%.

In the third and the oldest age group the majority also stated (as in the two other age groups) that they received most of their support and motivation from their family and friends (56.25%). The second option was ‘managing on their own’ (37.5%). None of the students wrote that they would go to the school staff for support and motivation.

35. Why is English needed

Table 38. Why is English needed

	16–19	20–24	25–...
Necessary for the future	55	20	3
Communicating with other nations	27	18	11
A good skill for myself	39	13	2
Not necessary at all	3	0	0

In the first age group the majority of the students stated that English was needed because it is necessary for their future (44%). 31.5% thought that English was needed because it is a good skill for themselves, and 22% thought that English is needed for communication with other nations.

In the second age group the majority reported that English would be necessary for the future (40%). 35% stated that they needed English for communication with other nations, and 25% thought that English was a good skill for themselves.

In the third age group the majority stated that English is needed in order to communicate with other nations 68.75%. 18.75% thought that English is necessary for the future, and 12.5% said that English was a useful skill.

36. English as a working language

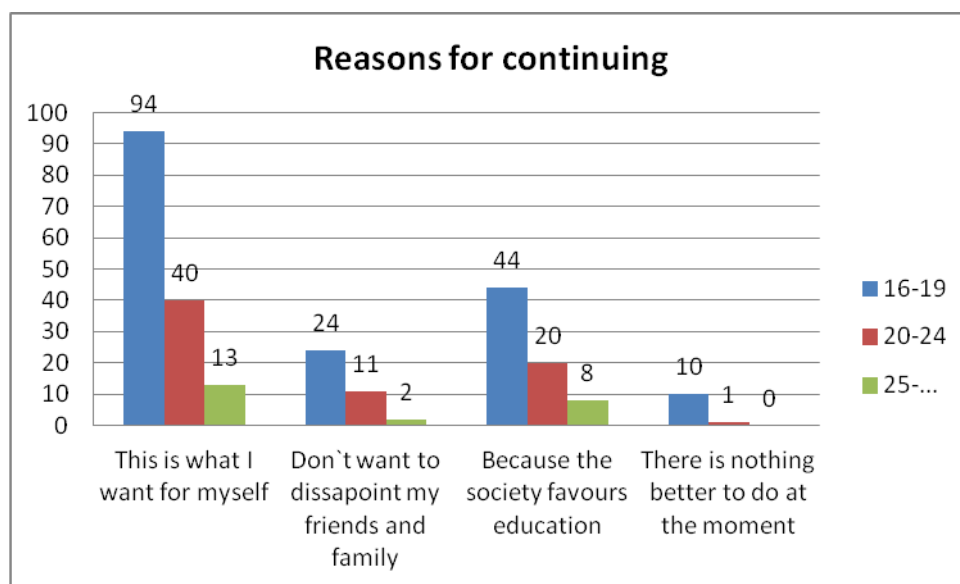
The majority in all three age groups agreed that English could be their future workplace language – 76 % in the first and the youngest age group, 88% in the second age group, and 81.25% in the third group. The highest result of the option ‘no’ was reported in the youngest age group where 24% thought English as a potential workplace language was not a future possibility.

37. Working abroad

The majority in all the age groups stated that there was a possibility that they would work abroad in the future – 84% in the first, 80% in the second, and 68.75% in the third group. The high percentages show that it is safe to speculate that a large number of students consider working abroad with the knowledge and education that they receive.

38. Reasons for wishing to continue one’s education

Table 39. Reasons for continuing



This was a multiple choice answer and the learners were allowed to choose more than one answer.

In the first age group the most popular answer was that the reason for continuing one’s education was because this is something they wish for themselves (76%). The second most popular answer was that they wished to continue because society favours education (35%), and the third option ‘I don’t want to disappoint my family’ was chosen by 19% of the

respondents. Unfortunately, 8% also stated that they were in school only because there was nothing better to do at the moment.

In the second age group the most popular answer was also continuing one's studies because they themselves wanted it (78%). 39% wrote that they continued their studies because our society favours education, and 21.5% wanted to carry on because they did not want to disappoint their family.

In the third age group the most popular answer was once again because they themselves want to learn (81.25%). 50% wrote that they keep on studying because our society favours education, and 12.5% claimed they did not want to disappoint their family.

These research findings show that there is an increase in perceiving the pressures of society with every age group – starting with 35% and ending up with 50%. The older the student, the more he or she feels the pressure from our society, which clearly favours education and high qualifications.

39. Thoughts of dropping out

Table 40. Thoughts of dropping out

	16–19	20–24	25–...
Often	9	7	0
Sometimes	25	10	8
Rarely	43	18	3
Haven't had such a thought	47	16	5

In the first age group the most popular answer was that the learners had not had any thought of dropping out (38%). The second popular answer was that they had rarely thought about it (35%). As the two most positive options hold the first and the second place, one might conclude that this is a fairly good result.

In the second age group the most popular answer was 'rarely' with 35%, and the second most popular was 'haven't had such a thought' with 31%. Again the two most positive options hold the first and the second place.

In the third age group the most popular answer was 'sometimes' with 50%. Ideally this number could be much lower and this result should be looked into more closely. The second

highest result, on the other hand, is the option that the learner has never had such a thought (31.25%).

40. I receive the necessary knowledge from this school

In all three age groups the learners were in agreement with each other, and the highest result was with the option 'rather yes', which was chosen by 50% in the first, 63% in the second, and 50% in the third age group. The number of learners who thought they were not receiving the necessary education from this school was thankfully minimal – 1.2% in the first age group and 1.9% in the second age group. None of the students in the third age group chose this option.

41. Thoughts about continuing my studies in the future

Table 41. Future studying

	16–19	20–24	25–...
Yes	45	11	2
No	18	7	7
Maybe	61	33	7

It is encouraging to see that most students in the first and second age groups considering to continue their education in the future (49% in the first and 67% in the second age group). The third age group showed equal results regarding the options 'no' and 'maybe' both with 43.75%.

Below are two lists of some of the mentioned specialities and schools where the students would like to study.

Possible future occupations: blacksmith, car technician, welder, engineer, kindergarten teacher, information technology, logistics, personnel management, mechatronics, psychologist and marketing manager.

Schools that the students consider attending: business school, military school, medical school, police academy, aviation college, law school, and beauty school.

3.3 Discussion

The results showed many differences among the age groups. The first difference was evident with the sex of the learners. The first age group with the youngest learners had almost 68% of male learners while the second age group showed exactly the opposite results: 66.5% were female learners. The second difference was revealed in goals. It appeared that with an increase in age there is also an increase in the value of experience. The older the student, the more he or she values the experience that they receive from school. Working is also a factor that might influence learning and starting from 16% with the youngest group the result climbed up to almost 44% with the oldest age group. This means that the older the student, the more likely he or she is also working alongside studying. Assessment of their previous studies showed that age plays a significant role, the older the student the more confident and experienced they felt. Discipline during lessons or the lack of it has a definite effect on learners. Distracting and disruptive classmates may have a devastating effect on the learners' motivation. The results showed that age is definitely a key factor here. In the first age group 53% students (where there are mainly male students) stated that the teachers were able to maintain discipline, in the second age group it was 72.5%, and in the third age group 93.75%. The difference between the first and the second age group is almost 20%. The second age group is affected by the age of the learners. However, girls constitute a majority in this group, and the assessment of maintaining discipline increased by 20%. 14.5% of the students in the youngest age group (with mostly male students) stated that their classmates were distracting and disruptive during lessons, which is a serious problem. The older the students, the less discipline problems there are in lessons. Age and sex definitely play a vital role in maintaining the discipline during lessons. Females and older students are less rebellious and follow the teacher's instructions much better.

Answers about the structure of the lessons and the exercise types used were the same throughout the age groups. Everybody seems to agree that all types of exercises are used in lessons equally. When it comes to the preferred teaching methods, the different age groups revealed important differences. The youngest age group would prefer to see more group and pair work while the second age group would prefer more digital lessons, and the third age group likewise indicated that they would like to have more group and pair work during their lessons. When asked how the students learn English outside school then in the digital age literature has lost its attractiveness. The first and the second age groups answered that using the internet was a way to learn, but the third and the oldest age group still valued literature

and reading as the source of language learning. The sex of the student is a factor to be considered. The majority of boys are less interested in books, literature, and reading than girls. That is one of the main reasons why the level of learning by means of literature increases in the second age group. Amongst the third age group the males and females are both now old enough to appreciate literature and acknowledge its benefits. Another alarming finding appeared in the first age group where 12% of the students do not feel supported by their family and friends. The younger group with mainly male learners feel that they are not supported by their family and friends while in the second and mostly female age group there is no such problem. Males, especially young males, do not feel close to their family and do not discuss such important topics as education and school with their friends. Females, on the other hand, are more open towards talking about serious issues and are most likely closer to their family members.

The current motivational level was rather low throughout those age groups where the majority of the students claimed that their motivation tends to disappear, which means that age and sex are not significant factors here. The common denominators here are the school, teachers, and the methods that are used. The reason why students continue their education is another aspect where the age and sex of the students come into play. Young male students from the first age group do not pay as much attention to society and its expectations compared to female and older students. Females in general are more susceptible to the opinions of others and are more eager to follow societal norms. They expect more approval and praise than males. Male learners start to understand the society and its expectations at an even older age (the third age group). Males mature more slowly than females, which is one of the reasons why there are differences in these age and sex groups. In general, it could be said that the older the student, the more they feel the pressure from the society to have an education and the necessary qualifications.

CONCLUSIONS

The present thesis focused on comparing mature and regular students at Tartu Vocational School with regard to age and sex. The study sample consisted of 191 students. As for the sex of the students, the age groups revealed important differences. The first and the youngest age group had more males and the second age group had more females. The third age group had again slightly more males than females. It can be concluded that specialities that can be learned after basic school are more attractive to male learners while specialities that can be learned after graduating high school are more attractive to female learners.

The results indicate another difference in the goals of studying. The older and more mature students value experience more than the younger ones. The older age group has also more students who are working while studying, meaning they have more than one responsibility. General assessment of previous studies is also higher due to previous experience and confidence. The younger students are more modest with their assessments. As for teaching methods, the main method turned out to be lecture in all of the age group, but the preferences differ among the age groups. The youngest and the oldest age groups would prefer more group and pair work. The middle age group would prefer the teacher to use more digital devices and digital lessons. Maintaining discipline during lessons is also an aspect where age and sex are important factors. Students in the younger group (where there are mainly male learners) claimed by 14% that their classmates are distracting and disruptive. While the second age group where there are mainly female learners stated no such problem. It is evident that both age and sex play a significant role here.

When asked where and how they learn English outside of school the top answer for the youngest (mostly male group) was the internet. They play online games and visit different chat rooms. The percentage of the students in the first group who read and learn from literature was quite low (13%), but in the second group (mostly females) the percentage increased to 23.5%. It can be concluded that age and sex have a great influence on where and how students are exposed to English outside school. Possible supporting and distracting factors are family and friends. In the younger group about 12% feel that are not supported by their family and friends. This is where age and sex again play a vital role. Young males are simply not always on good terms and open with their family. Females are much more open and closer to their family members. Another difference that is affected by age and sex is concerned with the reasons for studying. The older the students get, the more they feel the

pressures of society. They feel that they need to be educated and have qualification to succeed in life. In the first age group the levels are rather average because males and especially young males do not pay much attention to society and its expectations yet. The second age group, however, which had more females, showed an increase in the pressure that they feel from the society. Females in general are more susceptible of popular opinions and social standards.

Motivation levels are low at all age groups and do not appear to have any links to sex as well. It was stated in the first age group by 68%, in the second by 59% and in the third by 75% that the students feel their motivation tends to disappear. This implies that the problem might not only be with the learners but the school, the teachers and the teaching methods used. The learners expect an interesting lesson to have a practical side; the teacher teaches a well-planned and interesting lesson, and they understand the use of the material in the future.

It is safe to predict that the number of mature learners in our education system will continue to keep increasing. According to Nina Volles (2016: 360), lifelong learning is seen as a means to modernize and reform our national education system, which is in need of a cure due to high unemployment and low innovation. Problems with high unemployment and low innovation can both be linked to lack of education or qualification. A substantial number of unemployed, uneducated or unskilled adults will find their way back into the education system in the near future.

The findings of the present study will be presented to the teachers along with the proposals the students made. A discussion of the findings of the study will follow most certainly (at least amongst language teachers). In conclusion, it can be said that the study achieved all of its goals and was a success.

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Keeletunnid

- 8) Varasemalt hindan oma inglise keele tunde (põhikoolis): Olid minu jaoks kerged
- Saan üsna hästi hakkama
Rahuldav
Väga raske aine minu jaoks

- 9) Mida Sina arvad, et sul oleks vaja inglise keele tunnis rohkem õppida:

Tahaksin rohkem grammatikaharjutusi
Tahaksin rohkem kuulamis- ja lugemisülesandeid
Tahaksin rohkem suulist jutustamist
Muu

- 9.1) Kui valisid eelmises küsimuses variandi "muu" siis palun täpsusta.....
.....

- 10) Inglise keele tunnis tegeleme: peamiselt sõnavaraharjutustega
lugemisülesannetega
grammatikaharjutustega
kõiki ülesande tüüpe teeme võrdselt

- 11) Keeletunnis toimub vestlus/arutelu: igas tunnis
vahetevahel
harva

- 12) Kuulamisharjutusi teeme: igas tunnis
vahetevahel
harva

- 13) Kirjutamisharjutusi teeme: igas tunnis
vahetevahel
harva

- 14) Kui inglise keele tunnis teeme lugemisülesandeid siis arvan, et
loeme piisavalt ja kõik saavad lugeda
loeme piisavalt, kuid kõik ei saa tunni jooksul lugeda
peaksime rohkem lugemist harjutama

15) Kui tegeleme grammatika ülesannetega siis:

õpetaja seletab reegleid mõlemas keeles (nii eesti kui inglise)

õpetaja seletab eesti keeles

õpetaja seletab inglise keeles

16) Grammatika osad saavad mulle peale õpetaja seletamist: Täiesti selgeks ja arusaadavaks

Kohati siiski veel segaseks

Enamasti arusaamatuks

17) Millised grammatikaosad tekitavad sinu jaoks raskusi: Ajavormid

Artiklid

Kaudne kõne (reported speech)

Tingimuslauseid (conditional sentences)

Mitte ükski

18) Inglise keelt väljaspool kooli kasutan:

Igapäevaselt

Vahetevahel

Harva

Üldse mitte

18.1) Igapäevaselt kasutan arvutit:

4 tundi ja rohkem

2–3tundi

1tund

ei kasuta

19) Rahulolu keeleõpetajaga: väga hea hea keskmine rahuldav halb

19.1) Õpetaja suudab tunnis hoida vaikust ja distsipliini: jah, alati vahel ei suuda

20) Tunnis kasutatavad meetodid (võid valida mitu) Peamiselt loeng (õpetaja seletab)

Rühmatööd /paaristööd

Arutelud/ettekanded

Muu

20.1) Kui valisid variandi muu siis palun täpsusta.....

21) Õpetaja kasutab tunnis digivahendeid (smart tahvel, powerpoint ettekanded jne)

Jah

Vahel

Ei kasuta

22) Õpetaja laseb meil tunnis kasutada digiseadmeid (paaris ja rühmatöödeks oma telefone või viib meid näiteks arvutiklassi)

Jah

Vahel

Ei

31) Kuidas omandan puudumiste korral õpitu ja tegemata tööde materjali: Saan ise hakkama
 Vajan õpetaja juhendamist
 Saan abi klassikaaslastelt
 Järele jõudmine on raske ning paljud tööd jäävadki tegemata

32) Minu tundidest puudumise põhjused on tavaliselt.....

33) Sõbrad on õppimist soosivad: Aitavad igati
 Mitte nii väga
 Toetus pigem puudub

34) Perekond on õppimist soosiv: Aitavad alati
 Mitte nii väga
 Toetus pigem puudub

35) Minul endal on õppimise jaoks motivatsioon: Igati olemas ja tugev
 Kipub vahetevahel kaduma
 Hetkel puudub täielikult

36) Mis motiveerib mind hetkel õppima: Kiitus ja head hinded
 Lõputunnistuse saamine
 Perekond
 muu

36.1) Kui valisid variandi "muu" siis palun täpsusta.....

37) Mina arvan, et minul on inglise keelt vaja sellepärast, et:

Tulevikus ilma selleta hakkama ei saa
 Suhtlemiseks teiste riikide elanikega
 Enda jaoks hea ja vajalik oskus
 Arvan, et tegelikult polegi vaja

37.1) Tulevikus on võimalik, et minu ametil töökeel on inglise keel: jah ei

37.2) Kaalun kunagi tööle minekut välismaale: jah ei

38) Ma püüan iga hinna eest õpinguid jätkata, sest: (valikuvariante võib olla mitu):

See on asi, mida ma iseenda jaoks teha tahan
 Ei taha perele/sõpradele pettumust valmistada
 Sest ühiskond soosib haridust
 Midagi muud pole lihtsalt hetkel teha

- 39) Õppimise pooleli jätmise peale olen mõelnud: Sageli
 Vahetevahel
 Harva
 Siiani pole sellist mõtet üldse mõelnud
- 40) Kui motivatsioon on madal või koolis on probleeme siis tuge saan: (valikuvariante võib olla mitu): Perekonnalt/sõpradelt
 Klassikaaslastelt
 Õpetajatelt/ kooli personalilt/kursusejuhatajalt
 Tavaliselt saan üksi hakkama

Sinu tulevik – õigele vastuse variandile tee joon alla või kirjuta punktiirjoonele!

41) Ma arvan, et siit koolist saan ma enda tulevikuks vajalikud teadmised ja tarkuse edasiseks eluks: Jah Pigem jah Pigem ei Ei

42) Peale Selle kooli lõpetamise on mul plaan minna edasi õppima: Jah Ei Võib-olla

42.1) Kui vastasid eelmisele küsimusele variandiga „jah“, siis täpsusta: ülikool
 uuesti kutsekool

muu

42.2) Kui oled juba tulevikule palju mõelnud ja tead umbeski, mida sa õppima tahaksid minna, siis palun kirjuta.....

43) Mida sa koolile öelda sooviksid? Mis on näiteks väga hästi või mis on suurim probleem?

.....

44) Teiepoolsed kommentaarid (kas kommentaar mõne küsimuse kohta, väite kohta või midagi muret tekitavat, mida mina siin ankeedis küsida ei osanud☺)

.....

SUUR, SUUR AITÄH!

RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL

INGLISE FILOLOOGIA OSAKOND

Madli Rööpmann

ENG: Learning and teaching English at Tartu Vocational School: comparing mature and regular learners

EST: Inglise keele õppimine ja õpetamine Tartu Kutsehariduskeskuses: täiskasvanud ning tavaõpilaste võrdlus

Magistritöö

2016

Lehekülgedearv: 68

Antud magistritöö eesmärk on uurida inglise keele õppimist ja õpetamist Tartu Kutsehariduskeskuses erinevast soost ja erinevas vanuses olevate õppjate seas. Kuna täiskasvanud õppijate osakaal Tartu Kutsehariduskeskuses igal aastal kasvab, siis on oluline uurida, kuidas eristuvad täiskasvanud õppijad tavaõppijatest. Ankeedi vastuseid analüüsid selgub, et täiskasvanud õppijaid iseloomustab rida erinevusi võrreldes tavaõppijaga õpimotivatsioonis, õppimise eesmärkide seadmises ning keeletundide hindamises.

Käesoleva töö peamised eesmärgid on:

- 1) anda ülevaade täiskasvanud õppijatele iseloomulikest eripäradest keeleõppes ning võrrelda neid tavaõppijatega;
- 2) uurida täiskasvanud õppijaid ning tavaõppijaid küsimustiku abil;
- 3) analüüsida saadud tulemusi vastavelt ankeedis vastanute vanusele ja soole.

Käesolev töö on jaotatud kolmeks peatükiks. Esimene peatükk tutvustab täiskasvanud õppijat iseloomustavaid jooni ning võrdleb täiskasvanud õppijat tavaõppijatega. Lisaks annab peatükk ka ülevaate teoreetilisest materjalist ning varem läbiviidud uurimustest keeleõppija iseloomustamisel.

Teine peatükk keskendub õpimotivatsioonile ning õppemeetoditele. Peatükk selgitab motivatiooni erinevaid tüüpe, võrreldes omavahel tavaõppijat täiskasvanud õppijaga. Lisaks annab peatükk number kaks ülevaate õppemeetoditest, nende eelistest ja puudustest ning varem avaldatud uurimustest võõrkeeleõppijate õppemeetodite ning õpimotivatsiooni kohta.

Kolmandas peatükis kirjeldatakse töö metoodikat, valimit ning tulemusi. Töös kasutatakse 44-st küsimusest koosnevat küsimustikku, mis on jaotatud kuueks kategooriaks. Töö valimi moodustasid Tartu Kutsehariduskeskuse 191 õpilast, kes jagati kolme erinevasse

vanusegruppi (16 – 19; 20 – 24; 25+...). Küsimustiku tulemused kanti Microsoft Excel programmi, et koostada võrdlusi ja vaadelda tulemusi. Kolmanda peatüki teises pooles tuuakse välja ka tulemused, mis on esitatud tabeli või diagrammina ning mille all on andmete kirjeldus. Tulemustele järgneb lühike kokkuvõttev analüüs.

Töö tulemuste põhjal selgub, et erinevused tulevad esile nii erineva soo kui ka vanuse puhul. Esimeses vanusegrupis (16–19 aastat) on enamasti meessoost õppijad ning teine vanusegrupp (20–24) koosneb enamasti naissoost õpilastest. Õppimise eesmärgistamise juures mängis rolli ankeedis osalejate vanus ja sugu. Vanemad ja naissoost isikud väärtustasid rohkem haridusest saadavat kogemust.

Uuringust selgus, et vanemad õppijad käivad õppimise kõrvalt ka tööl ning hindavad varasemaid keeletunde kõrgemalt kui tavaõppijad. Kõrgem hinnang tuleneb nende varasemast kogemusest ning nende enesekindlusest. Nooremasse vanusegruppi kuuluvad õppijad on suuremas osas vähese keelekasutuse kogemusega ning võõrkeelt kasutades ebakindlad. Uuringust selgus samuti, et distsipliin ning sellega seonduvad aspektid on tihedalt seotud õppija vanuse ning sooga. Kõige noorem vanusegrupp, kus olid enamasti meessoost õppijad, väitsid, et keeletunnis esineb distsipliiniprobleeme. Vanemas vastajategrupis, kus on enamasti naissoost õppijad, distsipliiniprobleeme ei esine. Tavaõppijate grupis on 14,5% õppijaid, kes väidavad, et klassikaaslased on segavad ja häirivad.

Kaks kõige olulisemat õpilase motivatsiooniallikat on perekonna ja sõprade toetus. Tavaõppijate hulgas nooremas vanusegrupis ei tunneta 12% noormeestest sõprade ja perekonna toetust. Vanemal ning enamasti naissoost grupil sellist tulemust ei esine. Põhjused, miks õpinguid jätkatakse on samuti seotud vanuse ning sooga. Vanemad ja naissoost õppijad tunnetavad rohkem ühiskonna survet olla haritud ning omada vastavat kvalifikatsiooni. Tavaõppijad (16–19 aastased ja enamasti meessoost õppijad) aga ei pööra niivõrd palju tähelepanu ühiskonnale ning selle normidele. Motivatsioonitase on madal kõigis kolmes vanusegrupis, protsentuaalselt üle kuuekümne. Sellest lähtuvalt võib järeldada, et madala motivatsiooni probleem ei ole mitte õppijates, vaid põhjuseid selleks tuleks otsida teiste ühiste nimetajate hulgast nagu näiteks kool, õpetajad ja kasutatavad õppemeetodid. Uurimuse eesmärgid said saavutatud ning uurimusega võib rahule jääda.

Märksõnad: täiskasvanud õppija, tavaõppija, õpimotivatsioon, õppemeetodid, inglise keele õpe, andragoogika, kutseharidus.

Lihtlitsents lõputöö reprodutseerimiseks ja lõputöö üldsusele kättesaadavaks tegemiseks

Mina, Madli Rööpmann,

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Learning and teaching English at Tartu Vocational School: comparing mature and regular learners, mille juhendaja on Enn Veldi

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Tartus, 18. mai 2016.a.

Madli Rööpmann

