



The Effect of Motivation on Second Language Acquisition

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Abstract. Motivating learners to engage in second language acquisition is a crucial aspect of the learning process. However, previous research has overlooked this topic regarding the strategies teachers can employ to stimulate learner motivation. Hence, this study addresses this gap by exploring appropriate strategies for enhancing learner motivation as English teachers. The study utilizes the Literature Research Method, focusing on Dornyei's motivation theory of foreign language learning which has application in English teaching through the Ten Commandments for Motivating Language Learners. The research provides specific methods to stimulate English learners' motivation.

Keywords: Motivation, Second Language Acquisition, Teaching method

1 Introduction

Motivation is crucial in English learning. This essay explores Dornyei's motivation theory and its implications for English teaching. It comprises three parts: introducing motivation theory, discussing motivation factors in language learning, and exploring strategies to enhance English learners' motivation as a teacher.

2 What is Motivation?

Motivation is the driving force that determines individuals' behavior and provides direction. Motivation theory encompasses various perspectives in psychology that seek to explain the reasons behind human actions. In the context of second language learning, motivation is a complex process influenced by individual thoughts, beliefs, emotions, and values. This essay focuses on three important motivation theories: expectancy theory, goal theory, and self-determination theory.

Firstly, motivation is a process. Pintrich and Schunk argued the limitation when explaining motivation by the paradigm of behaviorists, they instead identify a constructivist perspective in which people's beliefs, cognitions, influences, and values play a role in achievement situations. Motivation is no longer seen as a reflection of internal forces, such as instincts, wills, and mental energies, nor is a stimulating and reinforcing function in strict conduct. In contrast, current cognitive methods focus on individual

thoughts beliefs, and emotions. As Pintrich and Schunk defined, "motivation is the process of encouraging and maintaining goal-directed activity".

Secondly, there have always been two different traditions in discussing motivational theories. Motivational psychologists focus on intrinsic factors such as drive, arousal, and cognitive self-evaluation, while social psychologists emphasize the role of social context, interpersonal relationships, and personal social attitudes. The motivational psychology that this study concerned including expectation theory, goal theory, and self-determination theory.

2.1 Expectation Theory

Expectancy theory highlights two key factors that drive motivation for task performance: individuals' expectations of success and their emphasis on achieving success (Nagle, 2021). The perceived potential of the target strongly influences motivation, with higher value assigned to targets that are perceived as more attainable. The first aspect of expectancy theory focuses on expectations of success, which are shaped by past experiences (attributions), self-assessment of abilities (self-efficacy), and the desire to maintain self-esteem (self-value theory)^[1]. Attribution processes play a significant role in shaping students' expectations, as past successes and failures impact future achievements. Self-efficacy theory refers to individuals' ability to judge their performance in tasks, with a strong sense of self-esteem bolstering their motivation and resilience^[3].

Covington's self-value theory emphasizes the importance of self-acceptance in achievement motivation. Efforts to enhance and protect self-awareness significantly influence school performance dynamics. The second aspect of expectancy theory focuses on the concept of value. Psychologists use various labels, such as valence, incentive value, attainment value, task value, and achievement task value. Eccles and Wiegfeld's task value model comprises four components: attainment value, intrinsic value, extrinsic utility value, and cost. The overall achievement value of a task depends on the interaction of these components, shaping the intensity of behavior.

2.2 Goal Theory

The Locke and Latham's goal-setting theory asserts that human behavior is caused by purpose and that the place and goal of action must be set and pursued. According to Locke and Christophe, four mechanisms affect the performance of the goal: (a) they devote attention and energy to goal-related activities rather than irrelevant actions. (b) they manage the efforts that people spend; and effort to adjust to the level of difficulty required by the task. (c) Encouraging them to persevere until they achieve their goals. (d) they proposed to find out relevant action plans or strategies. It is essential to point out that the goal is both shooting results and measuring one's performance, especially the latter part in our context. Therefore, the settings of near-terminal goals may have powerful incentives for activities that target long-term^[2], such as language learning tasks that are continuously completed because they have made progress and provided

direct incentives. The achievable sub-goals can also be used as an important tool to cultivate students' self-efficacy.

2.3 Self-determination Theory

Deci and Ryan introduced the self-determination theory into the exposition of the intrinsic/extrinsic paradigm. According to Deci and Ryan, autonomy is the natural need for humanity, referring to the desire to be self-initiating and self-regulating in one's actions. Therefore, self-determination of participation in activities with desire, choice, and personal recognition is considered a prerequisite for any internal reward. According to the self-determination theory, extrinsic motivation is no longer considered as an antagonistic object of intr^[4] motivation but rather as a continuum of self-determination and controlled motivation. The most developed form of extrinsic motivation is integrated regulation, involving choices of behavior that are fully assimilated to other values, needs, and identities of individuals (Urhahne&Wijnia, 2023). For example, people who pursue their own interests or language interests to learn a language^[10].

3 Motivation Factors in Language Learning

The motivation for language learning plays a crucial role. The motivation for developing effective second-language communicators is to build confidence in them (Dara-sawang&Reinders, 2021). It has also successfully created learners who continue to learn despite achieving their goals. Dornyei's theory of motivation for learning foreign language provides a more scientific framework for studying foreign language learning. Dornyei's theory of foreign language learning and Dornyei's motivation framework of foreign language learning explores a three-level motivation model which consists of language level, learner level and learning situation level.

3.1 Language Level

The language level includes various factors related to the target language, such as culture, the political and economic conditions of the target language society, and the practical value of the language. These factors will directly affect the individual's choice and learning objectives. The linguistic level includes the integrative and instrumental motivation subsystems. Integrative motivation refers to the desire to master their language in order to participate in the activity of a target language community^[9].

3.2 Learner Level

The learners are interested in the culture and life of the destination language community. The purpose of language learning is to understand the cultural practices of the destination language community in order to communicate with people. L2 motivation has been defined as the orientation of learners to second language learning ^[7]. Many researchers believe that integrative motivation refers to the learners having an apparent

attitude toward the target language and they desire to integrate into the community and society of the target language. It is also mainly related to the interest of the target language's culture, a need for the learning environment, and the desire to be linked with the target language society. The most successful learners of learning a target language are those who like to speak, appreciate the target language's culture and want to become acquainted with or even integrate with the community that uses the target language. Instrumental motivation refers to the desire to master a foreign language to find a job or improve self-cultivation and social status by acquiring a second language. It is characterized by a desire to obtain useful or specific things from learning in a second language. With instrumental motivation, the purpose of language learning is more practical [8]. In a formal language learning environment, integration motivation is more important than instrumental motivation. Instrumental motivation does not provide learners with the conditions to use the target language to communicate. So, there is not enough motivation to communicate with the target language people. However, social conditions largely determine which motivation for the learners' language learning is more important. According to Brown [4], integration and instrumental motivation can coexist in second-language learning. Learners are motivated by both the need for achievement and self-confidence throughout the learning process. The need for achievement fuels their desire for status, respect, and praise. Self-confidence, on the other hand, can be shaped by factors such as Language Use Anxiety, Perceived L2 Competence, Cause Attribution, and Self-efficacy.

3.3 Learning Situation Level.

The Learning Situation level has three specific sets of motivational factors: course-specific, teacher-specific, and group-specific motivational components. Based on Keller and Crookes and Schmid [7], motivation theory emphasizes the importance of aligning the course with learners' intrinsic interests and personal goals. Learners' satisfaction and anticipation of success in the curriculum are crucial. Motivational components within the course include the syllabus, teaching materials, teaching methods, and learning tasks, which significantly impact motivation. Teacher-specific factors, such as behavior, personality, and teaching style, directly influence students' motivation and their desire to please the teacher. Teacher authority, modeling, tasks, presentation, and feedback are key factors affecting motivation. Group-specific components pertain to the learning environment, goal orientation, and group dynamics, including cohesion and classroom structure (e.g., cooperation, competition, or goal orientation)[5]. Standardization and reward systems also play a role. Domyei's motivation theory provides a comprehensive analysis of foreign language learning motivation. It points out that the motivation of foreign language learning is related to the object (target language) and language learners, and the learning situation.. These theories have positive guiding significance for teachers on how to positively influence learners' motivation in foreign language learning in many ways[5].

4 How to Stimulate English learners' Motivation as a English Teacher

One of the most important variables influencing learners' motivation toward learning language is teachers. Recent researches on SLA in education indicated teacher engagement and guidance is significant for learning. In fact, factors such as a teacher's personality, expertise, enthusiasm, commitment, and professional classroom management skills all have a direct and multiple impact on learners' motivation to learn (Tanang&Abu, 2014). Dornyei points out that "Ten Commandments for Motivating Language Learners: 1. Set a personal example with your own behaviour. 2. Create a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. 3. Present the tasks properly. 4. Develop a good relationship with the learners. 5. Increase the learner's linguistic self-confidence. 6. Make the language classes interesting. 7. Promote learner autonomy. 8. Personalize the learning process. 9. Increase the learners' goal-orientedness. 10. Familiarize learners with the target language culture." According to the ten commandments for motivating language learners, it gives us enlightenment to stimulate English learners' motivation as English teacher. Next, specific teaching strategies will be recommended to stimulate students' English learning motivation.

Firstly, Using appropriate "matching homework" or "group work" is beneficial for creating a pleasant classroom atmosphere. Cooperative language learning fosters effective language acquisition as learners assist each other in a relaxed setting. Communication-based teaching necessitates a trusting atmosphere, provided by "pairing" or "group work," fostering a positive teacher-student relationship. Seating arrangements significantly impact lesson dynamics. Altering the seating model enhances team cohesion and student satisfaction ^[6]. When selecting a seating mode, principles such as maximizing eye contact between students and teachers or among students should be followed. Maintaining eye contact throughout the course encourages participation and prevents students from feeling isolated. Additionally, ensuring student comfort and group inclusion is vital, as distant seating arrangements create a relaxed atmosphere that may demotivate students.

Secondly, to increase the students' self-confidence, the teacher may pay attention to correcting students' mistakes because students may reduce their enthusiasm if they overcorrect their mistakes. Therefore, it is important to recognize when correct mistakes and how to correct errors without any harm or humiliation. As for the ways to correct mistakes, we can choose self-correction, peer correction, and teacher correction. By using appropriate correction methods, students' self-confidence and self-esteem can be protected so that students' learning motivation will not be reduced.

Thirdly, role-play activities enhance class enjoyment, altering the lesson rhythm while adhering to teaching principles. They engage less active students and involve activities like warm-up games, and interviews with shoppers or doctors, fostering real-life communication skills and integrative motivation. Teaching aids serve as valuable tools, catalyzing learning by facilitating the teaching of new terms like fruits, vegetables, and clothes, especially for English beginners. Additionally, teaching aids help overcome classroom errors. Multidisciplinary ways like Incorporating music form to

teach grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation spark student interest, fostering enduring learning motivation.

In addition, the use of multimedia in English teaching has many advantages. Multimedia contain many opportunities for learners to contact the Western culture, learners will form their autonomy if they are interested in the western culture. Besides, materials are carefully selected according to the student's learning needs. Thus, teachers can provide students with reliable and interesting information through multimedia. By combining multimedia technology, English teaching can be made more effective.

Moreover, in a few cases, student's mother tongue can be applied in English class. When there are gaps or misunderstandings between teachers and students, teachers use students' mother language to save time on invalid explanations and instructions. This way is good for reducing students' anxiety. In a harmonious environment, students' learning motivation can be simulated.

5 Conclusion

This essay introduced motivational theories and motivation factors in language learning. Then, according to these theories, to put forward some enlightenment of English teaching. Finally, to provide specific methods to stimulate English learners' motivation as an English teacher.

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