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MOTIVATION AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

English as a foreign language has witnessed positive changes in the course of the last two decades. Maybe one of the reasons for these changes is methodology and suitable technique of teaching presented by applied linguists that produce and increase motivation. It goes without saying that motivation is one or the main key factor that plays an important role in English language teaching environments as a foreign language, since no learning occurs without it. Thus, English instructors are expected to get a deeper understanding of methodology theories and get familiar with different techniques and strategies appropriate to the level of learner in order to provide an exciting learning situation

This paper aims to provide teachers with some guidelines to cope with teaching problems, and have effective views to teaching in order to improve students' proficiency.

So it has a descriptive nature, and the content is of great importance for the field of language teaching. It presents a variety of techniques and strategies which instructors can use to motivate their learners. Some comprehensive definitions of motivation along with various kinds of it, how to create and sustain motivation, and its role in education as a whole have been presented.

Keywords: Motivation, Intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, Integrative motivation, Instrumental motivation

INTRODUCTION

It is motivation that plants the key factor of self-confidence in learners and encourages them to engage themselves in learning.

Skill in motivating students to learn is of paramount importance. It is strongly believed that motivation plays a critical role in learning

process in general and in the "sustained process of mastering an L2", in particular (Dornyei, 2005, p.616).Teachers should rely on appropriate approaches to manage their classroom and motivate their learners. But what is motivation? Motivation is the force that makes us do things: this is a result of our needs being satisfied so that we are able to complete the task. These needs vary from person to person. Depending on how motivated persons are, it may determine the effort they put into their work and therefore increase the standard of the output.

Motivation to learn is the most important factor to students' success. It can be defined as a means that directs behavior towards an end. People work longer, harder, and with more energy and intensity when they are motivated than when they are not.

What does it mean to say that someone is motivated? The definition and application of motivation is a big problem in teaching and learning of a foreign language. When teachers find a specific answer to this, in fact they have received an important answer to the problem of language learning.

Why knowing about motivation is important in foreign language learning? According to some studies on the one hand teachers may have to go along with the students' motivation or at least be sufficiently aware of the students' motivation so that any problem can be solved, on the other it helps textbook writers reflect their assessment of the students' motivation (Cook, 1991).

Success in a task depend on the fact that person is motivated. Harmer (2001)says that motivation is a real factor for most fields of learning, since it causes success in those fields, and without it making any necessary effort is impossible.

Language is not learnt by groups, but by individuals. At the end of each class, the group turns into individuals who use language as they will. In other word some factors such as learners' personality and mind characteristic block or encourage L2 learning. Motivation or the lack of it is one of these characteristics (Cook, 1991).

Often English language teachers appeal to different approaches, techniques, and activities to create a rich language input in class. By this, in fact, they are going to sustain interest in learning a language. But how do they maintain their interest in language learning when English is not seen as an important tool during their life other than to pass the examinations?

Some adopt some approaches that focus on form and accuracy of their output. Others found drilling the students with language especially the grammatical exercises at the

primary school level. Although the drill-and-practice approach has some advantages in teaching, it does not help the learners to learn the language in the long term. Often there are students who are good test-takers and yet they are not able to speak and write acceptably when they graduate from high school. To solve this problem to a considerable extent teachers or instructors need to find creative ways for teaching so that the students' motivation will be increased.

Even though so many papers are education-oriented, they often fail to offer an efficient guide to foreign language instruction. Thus the main goal of this paper is to suggest some techniques and strategies for motivating learners.

Motivation Definition

The success of any action usually depends on the extent to which individuals try to attain their purpose. Generally speaking, this psychological factor is called motivation. According to the Short Oxford English Dictionary, motivation is "that which moves or induces a person to act in a certain way; a desire, fear, reason etc., which influences a person's volition: also often applied to a result or object which is desired."

Williams and Burden (1997) see motivation as "a state of cognitive and emotional arousal, a state which leads to a conscious decision to act and gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort." Gardner (1985) has the same idea in different words. He says motivation is a combination of effort plus desire to achieve a goal with favorable attitudes towards the goal to be accomplished. Motivation's main ideas have been taken from Noam Chomsky who believed that language is a rule-governed system from which infinite number of sentences can be produced. From a cognitive perspective motivation concern people decision in acting in certain ways and that what factors influenced their choices. In other words, according to Cognitivists motivation is the inner desire to do something that leads to a conscious decision to act and sustained efforts Though language teaching has never been influenced by Chomsky's ideas, it paved the way for different theories of language acquisition with various names. All of them are based on the belief that learner is the center of the learning process.

According to Richards et.al (1992) "the factors that determine a person's desire to do something" is motivation.

Types of Motivation

For several decades research on motivation in second language acquisition has been influenced by the work of many researchers. Motivation has chiefly been talked about in

L2 learning in terms of two types of motivation-integrative and instrumental by some researchers. Others believe in two other types-intrinsic and extrinsic.

Based on the studies of researchers there is a distinction between integrative and instrumental orientation, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Here remembering one point is valuable: some wrongly consider instrumental/integrative orientation and extrinsic/intrinsic motivation as the same thing, but they are separate issues, since orientation is different from motivation.

According to Brown (2001) orientation refers to a context or purpose for learning; while motivation is the degree of interest to learn. An integrative orientation means a learner wants to learn. An integrative orientation means a learner wants to learn a second language for social or cultural purposes, and within that purpose the degree of motivation may be high or low.

Based on definition; "integrative orientation and desire to learn a language stems from a positive effect toward a community of its speakers"(Brown 2001), while instrumental orientation refers to "desire to learn a language in order to attain a certain career, educational or financial goals. Both orientations pave the way of success.

Harmer (2001) asserts extrinsic motivation comes from outside, such as the need to pass an exam, or the hope of financial reward. But intrinsic motivation comes from the individuals-a person might be motivated by the enjoyment of the learning process itself.

Yasmeen Lukmani(1972) in Brown (1987) demonstrates that among "Marthi-speaking Indian students" who learn English in India, those with higher "instrumental" motivation scored higher in tests of English proficiency. The instrumental motivation means whether the learner learns the language for another purpose unrelated to its use by native speakers .Cook (1991) believe that motivation in language learning should not be considered as a "forced choice" between these two. A student might learn a language well with an integrative motivation or with an instrumental one, or with both, for one does not dominate the other.

Edward Deci(1975) in Brown (2001) says that intrinsically motivated individuals receive no apparent reward. They do the activities for their own sake. They are pleased by internally rewarding consequences. In contrast externally motivated person receives a reward from outside and beyond the self," money, prizes, grades, and even certain types of positive feedback" can be mentioned as typical extrinsic rewards.

In supporting extrinsic motivation he says that traditionally, elementary and secondary schools were fraught with extrinsically motivated behavior. Tests and exams were imposed on students with no consultation with the students themselves. There was no "collaborative process of competence building". There was competition instead of cooperation among learners. For creativity and satisfying some of the explorations no appreciate was felt.

Schools or institutions can change themselves in such a way to have a more positive /affirming environment by changing their view of the students. Teachers can help students to look at tests as feedback instrument for 'self-diagnosing. Students thus become motivated by achieving the "*self-knowledge*".

Maslow (1970) in Brown (2001) says intrinsic motivation is superior to extrinsic, since, we are motivated to obtain "self-actualization" when the basic "physical safety and community needs" are met. Extrinsic rewards are not so important we try to get "self-esteem. In addition,

Bruner (1962) asserts that the best way that we help children and adults to learn effectively is to free them from outside rewards and punishments, because the learner becomes dependent on them.

Now we may think that extrinsic motivation plays no role in learners' motivation and learning. Cohen (1990) illustrates one example: In one experiment subjects were asked to solve an intrinsically fascinating puzzle with no stated rewards. When halfway the subjects were told there would be a reward intrinsic motivation decreased.

Gardner (1985) has drawn a distinction between two types of motivation. He says when the aim of learning a foreign language is obtaining something, such as passing the exams, or getting a job the motivation is extrinsic(instrumental),external factors causes it and it is used to gain something. But when the aim of person is communicating with the people of other cultures, then it is considered intrinsic or integrative motivation.

Spolsky(1989) uses Harter's model (1982) and shows it in this way:

Intrinsic   **Extrinsic**
Preference for challenge   Vs.   Preference for easy work
Curiosity/inerest   Vs.   Pleasing a teacher/getting grades
Independent mastery Vs. Dependence on teacher in figuring out problems
Independent judgment   Vs. Reliance on teacher's judgment about what to do
Internal criteria for success Vs. External criteria for success

Based on these distinctions, both internal and external factors have important roles in motivating learners.

In Applied Linguistics Dictionary, Richards et.al (1992) distinguish two kinds of motivation:

a. Instrumental motivation; to learn a language because it will be useful for certain "instrumental" goals, such as getting a job, reading a foreign newspaper, passing an examination.

b. Integrative motivation; to learn a language for communication with people of other cultures who speaks it.

These findings are not necessarily contradictory to each other. They points out that there is no single means of learning a foreign language. Some learners in some classes benefit from an integrative orientation and others in another contexts from an instrumental one. So these findings suggest that two types of motivation are valuable in different situations.

Graham (1984) in Brown (1987) talks about another kind of motivation: "assimilative" motivation. It is the interest in becoming an indistinguishable member of "a speech community" in which deep contact with the second language culture is necessary. Elsewhere he says "it is characteristic of persons who learn a second language and second culture in order to be identified almost exclusively with that second culture".

Creating and Sustaining Motivation

At the beginning of a course of instruction, teachers confront with students with different degree of motivation. Some of them have a clear goal and an extrinsic motivation to achieve it. Others have intrinsic motivation .Others participate in a language program with a weak motivation. Harmer (2001) asserts that the students' initial motivation of any degree will not remain the same forever. It may be weak or can be increased. He adds increasing the student's motivation is to some extent one of a teacher's responsibilities. According to him there are three areas that influence learner's participation. One of them is "goals and goal setting." It means when learner likes to achieve a goal it has a close relationship with motivation. Learning environment is another area. One of the factors that play a vital role in initiating and sustaining motivation is the classroom environment; its physical appearance, and emotional atmosphere of the lessons. When students walk into unattractive classes, their motivation decreased.

But how motivation sustains? Harmer (2001) says it is up to the teacher and the emotional atmosphere that create it. Teachers have to be careful about how to give feedback and to correct learners' mistakes. The final area in this regard is "interesting classes." It refers to the subjects, activities, and exercises that learners are presented with. More important than all is the way by which the materials are taught. So initiating and sustaining

motivation, and keeping students engaged are crucial to their success.

In cognitive definition there are a number of cognitive psychological viewpoints. The proponents of this view consider rewards as a vital issue. They say motivation comes from innate drives, such as "exploration, manipulation, stimulation, and knowledge." All of these issues act as "innate predispositions", force us to investigate the unknown, to control environment, to be physically active, to receive mental, emotional, or physical stimulation. Elsewhere cognitive psychologists, like, Hunt (1971) in Brown (2001) asserts that when humans can make choices motivation will be highest.

Driscoll (1994) talks about Keller's model called motivational design. In this model motivation is considered as a sequence. You first gain the attention of the learner, and then relate the materials to their goals and needs. The model is called "ARCS" model, I which 'A' stands for 'attention',' R' stands for 'relevance', 'C' stands for 'confidence', and 'S' stands for 'satisfaction.' One by one is explained below:

1)Attention: Gaining attention at the beginning of a lesson is easy, sustaining the attention is difficult; since it requires providing variety in presenting the materials through media, demonstrations, small group discussions, or whole class debates.

2) Relevance: Helping students find relevance while learning can be a frightening task for some subjects. Linking the materials which are to be taught to something that is familiar and relevant to the students creates motivation in them. Kellerconsiders familiarity as a component of relevance. If the instructor uses the concrete examples of learner's experience (such as analogies and stories) in his instructions, it is relevant to the learner; since the students are familiar with and helps them to understand the idea. Once the students understand the relevance, they set goals, and setting goals can be a main source of motivation. In addition, by goal setting, an external criterion will be formed by which they evaluate their level of performance. Goals must be explicit and attainable to sustain motivation.

3) Confidence: Three stages for developing confidence are outlined by Driscoll (1994):1) Creating a positive expectation for success by making it clear what is expected of the students is necessary. Complex goals should be broken into smaller chunks.2) Assisting students to perform a task that they cannot perform well on their own help them to gain confidence.3) Instructor should pave the way for students to control their own learning,

since they should know that learning is the result of their own efforts. 4) Satisfaction: Satisfaction can be increased in learners by celebrating success, since it provides reinforcement for them who receive the teacher acknowledgement. This motivates other learners to strive for this acknowledgement. So in a classroom setting it is important to find something to celebrate with all students.

At times in learning environments when a learner compares herself/ himself to others who have done well his/her satisfaction can be influenced.

Spitzer (1996) considers learning environment and the activity as a main factor in creating motivation. S/he refers to action, fun, choice, social interaction, error tolerance, measurement, feedback, challenge and recognition as the motivating context factors of any learning situation which are motivating for students from which action means learners actively involve in the learning process both mentally and physically. Fun helps energize students and provides opportunities for their involvement. Choice may be provided through choice of learning method, content, or instructional materials. Social interaction includes small group discussions, peer tutoring, problem-solving and decision-making. Error tolerance should be considered

as an opportunity by which learners learn from their mistakes and errors, of course, first they must feel comfortable to make mistakes.

Measurement is a motivating factor in a learning environment. It can beput into a facilitating force that includes focusing on formative evaluation and encouraging self-measurement. Feedback in learning is often discouraging. Useful feedback should be continued and point out the positive and focus on the better performance in the future. Challenges if the learners, by setting goal, respond to them, occurring recognition for minor and major achievements, and pointing out many positives to the learners all are constructive in increasing motivation.

In addition to the above, grades can be considered valuable evaluation of what they know in a specific subject, since they provide a competitive environment. But when they motivate studying just to get a good mark rather than studying for learning deeply result harmfully. So, according to Mckeachie (1994) when instructors use evaluation methods, it is important for them to emphasize the motivational techniques to a great extent.

Grades have positive effects on providing attention and satisfaction, but have no use on learning. In this regard there are two categories: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. This will be left here and continued on

"Different Kinds of Motivation" in the following parts.

Some of the instructors consider student motivation depends on the student. They do not address some concepts such as attitude and needs, since they are abstract. They must design instructions that are motivating. There are a number of motivational techniques which have a great effect on better learning:

1. *Curiosity:* One of the factors that should be paid attention to by the instructor is curiosity. People are naturally curious. They search for new experience, enjoy learning new things, feel satisfaction in solving problems, and perfecting skills in different areas and developing competence. So a main task in teaching is to foster learner curiosity and use it a motive for learning. In addition, providing appropriate stimuli stimulates curiosity, but presenting stimuli that are unfamiliar and foreign, create anxiety rather than curiosity. Likewise asking questions plays a main factor in increasing learner's interest and curiosity to learn more.

2. *Attitude:* Some instructors have confronted with learners who have a bad attitude toward learning. In educational settings the performance is called learning. A learner's attitude toward learning is an intrinsic characteristic that is not always evaluated

through behaviors, i.e., the behavior is contrary to the attitude.

But attitude is changeable. As Fleming and Levie (1993) say if a person is forced to do an act that is contrary to his or her own attitude, attitude change will result.

3. *Need:* Maslow classifies the human need as five level in a hierarchy:(1)Love and belongings(higher need), (2)Physiological(lower-level), (3)Safety(lower-level), (4)Esteem(higher need), (5)Self-Actualization(higher need).The importance of this to motivation is felt when the lower-level needs satisfied first before the higher needs. Learning does not occur when children are sent to school hungry, since their lower needs must be met first.

4. *Competence:* Another intrinsic motive for learning is competence. In order to learners feel a sense of efficacy instructors must provide situations where they succeed and opportunities to do challenging tasks to show to themselves that they can.

When learners develop a skill without any understanding, it has no use in promoting competence. Some factors including external support, respect and encouragement help learners to achieve competence which is the motivating factor.

5. *External Motivators:* Among external motivators stimulating environments can be

mentioned. Active participation provides a simulating environment. Strategies of learning should be flexible, and creative. Stimulating learning environments are various in terms of presentation style, methods of instruction and learning materials. Through providing motivators such as grades, job status, etc., learners learn in boring situations. Of course, grades are external motivators in learning.

Another type of external motivator is reinforcement. It is less valuable as a motivator by those who says if it is removed the behavior stops. Learners help themselves in better learning if they create reinforcement, for this they need confidence such as praise and encouragement.

McCombs (1996) believes that some external conditions support internal ones. They include; "control, choice, challenge, provisions for relevancy, responsibility, competence, personal connection, fun, and support from others in the form of caring, respect and guidance in skill development."

6. *Confidence:* Three strategies for developing confidence are suggested by Driscoll (1994): (1) when learners are told what is expected of them, a positive expectation for success will be developed.
(2)When they receive enough assistance to perform a task which they are not able to do on their own, they gain confidence, in this way successful opportunities have been provided for them.
(3)Learners should have a reasonable degree of control over their learning and they should recognize that learning is a direct consequence of their own efforts.

7. *Satisfaction:* It can be enhanced when a learner is acknowledged for his/her success. Acknowledgment provides reinforcement and motivates other learners to try more for this acknowledgment.

In educational environments when learners compare themselves to others who may have done better their satisfaction can be influenced.

Often, English language teachers appeal to different approaches, techniques, and activities to create a meaningful language input in class. By this, in fact they are going to sustain interest in learning English .But how do learners interest in language learning when English is not seen as an important tool during their life other than to pass the examinations? In this regard some of the instructors adopt various kinds of approaches that focus on form and accuracy of their output. Others found drilling the learners with language especially the grammatical exercises at the primary school level. Although drill and practice techniques possess some merits in teaching, but it does not help the learners to

learn the language in the long run. Often, there are learners who are good test-takers, and yet they are not able to speak and write acceptably when they graduate from high school. The burden of solving such problems is on the teachers to a considerable extent.

Factors influencing motivation

Most of the researchers agree on the effect of personality factors on motivation. Among these factors being dependent/independent, active/passive, extrovert /introvert can be mentioned as a few. Those who are unsuccessful being introvert or shy, and the affective filter among them is, up. But those who are extrovert and interested in learning are more successful. Having a flexible attitude towards learning, help learner to be more successful. In this regard teachers' skills and a relationship of mutual trust and respect are central to teaching effectiveness. Providing an enjoyable and supportive environment, inasmuch as in a safe climate their motivation increased, express themselves freely and do not have the fear of being ridiculed (Maclntyre,1999 and Young,1999 for further details). Presentation of interesting activities, using learners' mistakes and errors as a tool for teaching improvement and correcting errors with special techniques not having any negative effect on learning, encouraging learners to apply the learned points in

different situations have been considered vital. Interaction between teacher and learners and providing a friendly atmosphere in class should not be ignored, since it decreases the affective filter.

According to Ehrman and Dornyei(1998:142) cohesiveness among groups of learners like interaction and competition, and knowing about each other are of paramount importance.

But how motivation sustains? Hamer (2001) says it is up to the teacher and the emotional atmosphere. Teachers have to be careful about how to give feedback and correct students' mistakes. And the final area in this regard is "interesting classes." It refers to the subjects, activities, and exercises that students are presented with. More important than all is the way by which the material are taught. So, initiating and sustaining motivation, and keeping students engaged are crucial to their success.

Another motivating factor which is vital especially in competitive environments is grade. McKeachie (1994) says "Unfortunately, grades motivate studying to get a good grade rather than studying for learning that is retained and used." So, the motivation is aroused while evaluation methods are designed or getting a good mark is emphasized. But if learning the

interpersonal skills is of paramount importance this emphasis changes, inasmuch as here motivation to obtain this goal is deeper and meaningful.

CONCLUSION

Overcoming the obstacles of learning is the major step to be taken in the process of language learning. Teaching a target language requires creative and innovative teaching techniques on the part of well-determined teachers. They have to motivate their students and at the same time sustain their interest in the learning process by applying interesting approaches and methods. Motivation is vital in language learning. It makes language learners positive about their own learning.

They should be able to use a combination of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation especially when they are confronted with extremely low motivational learners.

Cook (1991) believes that for motivation and its teaching implications, teachers should pay attention to two points; first s/he should recognize various types of motives, second in writing or selecting the materials for a specific group of students considering their needs, interests, and motivation is vital.

It should be emphasized that motivation is not the sole factor arousing learners' interest. Other factors, such as learning strategies, aptitude, and attitude toward learning, also play crucial roles in foreign language learning.

From above it can be concluded that teachers should try their best to stimulate students' interest in learning a foreign language to improve teaching efficiency. In addition,a good teacher-learner relationship play an essential role in developing language learners' motivation.

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