Motivation, Its Types, and Its Impacts in Language Learning

Dr. Tengku Sepora Tengku Mahadi
Associate Professor
School of Languages, Literacies and Translation
Universiti Sains Malaysia
Malaysia

Sepideh Moghaddas Jafari, PhD Student
School of Languages, Literacies and Translation
Universiti Sains Malaysia
Malaysia

Abstract

Given the fact that teachers are now expected to be informed enough to be able to pilot their teaching towards the varying requirements of different classroom learners, this study is proposed to shed light on what it takes to have (establish and manage) an effective and successful language classroom in terms of learners motivation. This study is designed to investigate the impact of motivation in the context of language learning. To reach the aim of this study, some of the main subjects, topics, and points which can be related to the goal of article are introduced and explained. Afterwards, they are followed by a brief discussion and some beneficial implications and suggestions for the teachers and lecturers.

Introduction

In the recent period of education, concerning language teaching and learning a momentous transfer and change has occurred; in the sense that an enormous focus has gone towards learner and learning rather than teacher and teaching. Nowadays, indeed, it is an important target for the teachers to make their students less dependent on teachers and more autonomous on themselves   (Ö Malley and Chamot , 1995). In fact, learner self-sufficiency is corresponding to contemporary ideas about the active association and interest of learners, importance of learner-centered approaches, as well as sovereignty of learners from teachers (Littlewood, 1996). Moreover, one of the main and important factors in an autonomous approach in language learning and teaching is the learner's active cognitive processes which are called learning strategies (LSs) (Littlewood, 1999).

Concerning the mentioned issues, the researchers have been always trying to discover and find out the relationship between learning strategies and the success of language learners. In other words, it was a high concern for the researchers to realize and understand how learning strategies can manipulate and operate the success of language learners.

Thus, the teachers are now expected to be knowledgeable and conversant enough to be able to direct or conduct their teaching towards the varying requirements of different classroom learners. This paper aims to discover and scrutinize what it takes to have (establish and manage) an efficient and successful language classroom in terms of learners' motivation. This study, simultaneously, is designed to look into the impact of motivation in the context of language learning.

Language Learning Strategies

When someone hears the term "language learning strategy", this question may come to his/her mind that what this term means. In general, "a strategy consisted of a mental or behavioural activity related to some specific stage in the overall process of language acquisition or language use" (Ellis, 1994, p. 531).

As Oxford (1990) asserts, learning strategies, indeed, are particular "actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations" (p. 8). In other words, learning strategies comprise learning instruments for self-regulated learning (Oxford, 2002; Dornyei, 2005).

Children acquire their first language involuntarily, unconsciously, and reflexively but adults learn a second language by deliberately, consciously, and willfully taking on and assuming rules of language and learning strategies. (Krashen, 1985, cited in Cook, 2000)

Individual Differences

It should be mentioned that in a language learning classroom there are varieties of learners in terms of the individual differences. Concerning this matter, Skehan (1989) tells apart some techniques and manners that good students exploit and bring into play. He goes over the main points of them as below:

1) Initially, good learners are engaged and drawn in their works, duties, and missions.
2) Good learners promote and expand the knowledge of language as structure and arrangement and make implications and conclusions.
3) Good students identify and see language as a way to make assumptions and communicate with other people.
4) Good students look safer and more comfortable about the knowledge that they are acquainted with as well as their outlook and thoughts towards a foreign language.

As a final point, they all the time evaluate and assess the scheme of the foreign language they are learning while definite expressions appear into mind and the link and correlation between them.

Nunan (1989) judges that in a classroom there are four varieties of learners: Concrete learners, Analytical learners, Communicative learners, and Authoritative-oriented learners. He believes that the Concrete learners are interested in games, pictures, films, video, tapes, talking in pairs. In addition, they like to carry out and perform English outside the class.

The second type is Analytical learners. This type of learners, generally, likes to study. In other words, they like to study grammar, English books and also they like reading newspapers. Indeed, the way that they prefer to study is studying unaccompanied. Besides, they have a preference to discover their individual errors and mistakes and practice problems located and mentioned by the teacher.

The Third type is Communicative learners. These types of students like to be taught and are eager to gain knowledge by observing and listening to native speakers of language. They are eager to talk to their friends in English and watch television in English. Normally and in general, they like to communicate with English in the places out of classroom. Indeed, they learn new words through listening, discussion and exchange.

The fourth or the final type is Authoritative-oriented learners. These type of learners wish that the teacher make everything clear and explains about any detail. Additionally, they would like to have their personal textbooks, to write everything in notebook, to study grammar, learn by reading. Meanwhile, they prefer to learn new words by reading them.

There are also two other kinds of learners as introverted and extroverted learners. Regarding this classification, Skehan (ibid) believes that extroverted students have a tendency to utilize and exploit more English outside the classroom and, therefore, progress and move ahead faster in their language learning. They like to communicate with other people. There are also some other types of learners as anxious language learners. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1992) believe that anxiety is one of the language learning elements. That is, if the language learner is a little anxious, he will learn better. Nevertheless, if the anxiety is a lot, it will obstruct and prevent learning procedure and progression.

Motivation

Johnstone (1999, p. 146), considers motivation as a stimulant for achieving a specific target. ○similarly, according to Ryan & Deci (2000), To be motivated means to progress or to be in motion to do something.

Crump (1995) believes that excitement, interest, keenness, and enthusiasm towards learning are the main constituents of motivation.

The levels and kinds of motivation in any individual are different from others. In other words, not only levels and amounts of motivation in individuals are different, their kinds of motivation can be also different.

Cook (2000) comes across that language acquisition is not the same in learners. Moreover, it has been proposed and recommended that there are three main factors, which concern and influence the Second Language Acquisition; These three factors are age, personality, and motivation. He further claims that among the above three issues motivation is the most significant one in second language acquisition. Ellis (1994, p. 715) considers motivation as the attempt which learners make for learning a second language because of "their need or desire to learn it". Lightbrown and Spada (2001, p. 33) identifies motivation in second language acquisition as "a complex phenomenon which can be defined in terms of two factors: learners' communicative needs and their attitudes towards the second language community". They believe that when learners think that they need to speak the second language with the aim of being in touch with others or accomplishing and achieving specialized and dedicated desires and goals, they will be stimulated and inspired to obtain expertise and skill in it. Gardner and Lambert (1972) name the mentioned situation as integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Research has confirmed that the success or failure in second language learning depends very much on these two kinds of motivation (Lightbrown & Spada, 2001).

Types of Motivation

(1) Integrative & instrumental motivation
According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), there are two types of motivation: integrative and instrumental. The integrative motivation means learning the language with the intention of participating in the culture of its people. And instrumental motivation suggests and implies that a learner learns the language in support of a purpose relating to occupation or further useful motive. These two types of motivation can affect and control the procedure and outcome of learning. Cook (2000) further believes that the integrative and instrumental motivation suggested by Gardner and Lambert is useful and effective factor for second language learning.

Gardner (1985) and Ellis (1994) also introduce the mentioned types of motivation; The former occurs when the student likes to join or be a member of the certain crowd and the culture. The latter crops up when the learner anticipate numerous benefits that he proposes to have while learning some particular language. Comparing these two types of motivation with each other, Ellis (1994) believes that the best and the perfect motivation is the integrative motivation. He believes that integrative motivation is more competent and well-organized.

Students who don't have instrumental or integrative motivation, in fact, will face with problems and difficulties to learn and gain knowledge of a second language in the classroom and generally, learning the language would be difficult for them (Cook, 2000).

(2) Intrinsic & extrinsic motivation
There is also another concept in the field of motivation introduced by Ryan & Deci (2000) as Self-Determination Theory; Ryan & Deci (2000) say that Self-Determination Theory categorizes and tells apart diverse types of motivation in accordance with the different rationales, causes, or targets which strengthen a deed or an achievement. In proportion to this theory, the most fundamental difference is between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the eagerness and interest to do and take part in some certain activities because an individual feels that they are attractive and pleasant.

Students who have intrinsic motivation are inclined to stay with intricate and complicated problems and gain knowledge from their slips and mistakes (Walker, Greene, & Mansell, 2006). Besides, intrinsic motivation is essential and fundamental for the integration process through which elements of one's accessible internal awareness and knowledge is assimilated or mixed with new knowledge.

Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is the propensity to take part in activities because of the reasons which do not link to the activity. These reasons can be the anticipation of reward or punishment, like being successful in the exam or getting a good mark (Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Deci, 2006).

To come to the point, intrinsic motivation is a motivation to do an activity because of itself. In fact, the individuals who are intrinsically motivated do and practice the activities and works because they feel that those activities are enjoyable. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is motivation to do a work or an activity as a means or way to achieve a target. Those who are extrinsically motivated perform and do affairs as they think that their contribution will cause enviable results like a reward, teacher admiration, or evasion (prevention) of punishment (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996).

Motivation and Language Learning

Motivation is a basic and essential part of learning (Brewer & Burgess, 2005).

Gardner (1885), believes that with the intention of being motivated, the learner necessitates, requires, and needs to have something to anticipate, foresee, expect and long for, a reason, principle, or rationale having to do with aim or target. Concerning second/foreign language acquisition, this intention would be learning a foreign language. In fact, there must be something that the learner desires to achieve or do, being the target language the vehicle to attain it.

According to Cook (2000) the performance and presentation of a number of learners in the context of second or foreign language learning is improved and superior than others. The reason is that they are better motivated. Ellis (1994) sees the incident of learning by means of motivation and believes that the learning process simply occurs when a person is motivated. Relating to this matter, Ellis (1994, p. 508) says that "language teachers readily acknowledge the importance of learners´ motivation, not infrequently explaining their own sense of failure with reference to their students´ lack of motivation".

Cook (2000) states that acquisition of language is not the same among learners. He also believes that there are three main factors which influence the Second Language Acquisition. These three factors are: age, personality and motivation. Motivation is the most significant factor among the mentioned three factors that affect second language acquisition. Ellis (1994, p. 715) suggests that motivation is "the effort which learners put into learning an L2 as a result of their need or desire to learn it". Also, Lightbrown and Spada (2001, p. 33) identify motivation in SLA as an intricate incident which can be identified along with two factors: "learners' communicative needs and their attitudes towards the second language community". They believe that when learners think that they need to speak the second language with the aim of being in touch with others or accomplishing and achieving specialized desires and goals, they will be motivated to obtain expertise and skill in it. Gardner and Lambert (1972) name the mentioned situation as integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Research has proved that whether second language learning is successful or not directly and strongly concerns with these types of motivation (Lightbrown & Spada, 2001).

Discussion (Implications for Teachers)

Paying attention to the role of motivation in teaching process and developing, enforcing, and strengthening it, can be some effective and helpful factor in the process of learning language. In reality, teacher's awareness about learner's attitude and its relation with teaching process provides a framework by which language teacher can use more useful and more effective methods.

Briefly, motivation can be defined as a physical, psychological or social need which motivates the individual to reach or achieve his goal and fulfill his need and, finally, feel satisfied owing to achieving his aim. We can come to this idea that the amount, range, and type of motivation have important and determining role in the learning process. Moreover, the language teacher has a significant function and role in giving motivation to the learner for learning language.

Generally speaking, two kinds of motivation can be observed among learners; They are high attitude which has a positive, efficient, and useful effect, and the second one is low attitude which makes blocks and causes weakness for learning language.

As it was mentioned before, Motivation, indeed, involves two main classifications as below:

1. Intrinsic motivation
2. Extrinsic motivation

Relating to the previous discussion, briefly, intrinsic motivation is mental satisfaction which is achieved by others' praise, while, extrinsic motivation is an incentive activated by external factors such as good marks and getting reward.

It is, indeed, important the teacher knows that the two types of motivation which are intrinsic, and extrinsic, relate to each other and they are inter-relative. In addition, the personal, psychological, and social factors have effect on increasing or decreasing any mentioned type of motivation. In fact, it is essential and important for the teacher to know what the type of motivation is and how it is formed, captured, and, finally, displayed in the learner. Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations can have two subgroups that can activate the learners; The intrinsic motivation in an extroverted is in such a way that the learner takes advantage from and feels satisfy by communicating with others, while, in an introverted, the learner uses language for meditation and personal thinking in addition to personal activities and affairs. Indeed, rely on intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, and for creating and developing either of them, the teacher should make the classroom quiet and without any anxiety. Providing educational and academic advantages, encouraging students, and asking simple and easy questions at the beginning of class (before asking difficult questions) will increase motivation for learning. Besides, the mentioned issues will fulfill the need of progress for the learner.

On the other hand, sometimes, motivation is an instrument for the student. In this sense, the learner uses for example English language in order to fulfill his need. In fact, the teacher should know that English language as an instrument should have the worth of attempt for the learner. The aims of the class should be in such a way that motivate the learners who have instrumental motivation in order to become aware of and realize the value of the learner who thinks about English language as an instrument for reaching a particular goal such as achieving grades or passing examination. Also it should be also mentioned ,as a reality, that intrinsic motivation causes the learner to think that whether learning a specific issue (subject) is worth of effort and attempt or not. That is, if the learner in his judgment comes to the conclusion that learning a language is not worthy or does not have functional value, he becomes disappointed and gives up learning that language.

In order to make the learner have a positive view about his own effort, some rewards such as grade, degree, and any sort of educational, scholastic, and academic encouragement should be given to him. Accordingly, the designed encouragements for the classes play an important role for achieving a good or a positive learning outcome. The learner, indeed, should know that his efforts are valued by teacher. Therefore, the teachers should be aware of all their students' activities, even the minor and trivial ones. They should, subsequently, show positive responses (reactions) for the learners' good affairs or activities. Thus, giving proper and appropriate rewards on account of the language learners' behaviours is the significant and indispensable point. The teacher furthermore, should consider, pay attention, and, finally, strengthen the language learners' positive behaviours and admirable activities arising from intrinsic, extrinsic, as well as integrated and instrumental motivation(s). In effect, strengthening or reinforcing the expected and desirable behaviours in the language teaching process is accomplished and achieved by encouragement, stimulating the feeling of curiosity and inquisitiveness about the cultures of the other nations, presenting and showing movie, as well as giving chance to the students. Consequently, motivation directly influences and affects the language learner's learning methods, skills, and practices. That is, motivation has a high effect on learner's communication with foreigners, determining learning amount, in addition to developing the desired levels of language teaching such as reading, comprehension, speaking, and writing. Briefly, motivation has a direct effect on both quality and quantity of language learning.

Conclusion

The above discussion reveals that motivation is a very important and effective factor in the field of learning language. Thus, the language teachers and lecturers should discover, realize, and pay attention to the personality of their students. Moreover, they should be aware of motivation, its high importance, and its types. They should also realize and get familiar with the character as well as the personality of each student. Afterwards, according to that specific personality type, they should identify and recognize the form of motivation relating to that and perform it in their teaching process. In this case, they can have practical, useful, and effective langue classroom in addition to a positive outcome in their teaching context.

Implications and Suggestions

There can be other various factors which can have significant role in creating motivation for the language learners; That is, for instance, some of the main points that concerning this matter appear to the researcher's mind are as follows:

1- The language teacher is supposed to teach and instruct according to each learner's level. In the sense that, initially, the teacher should identify and realize each student's placement. Afterwards,

2- The language learner should not be reproached or blamed, or even scorned for not doing his homework, for making mistake in pronunciation, or for hesitating to answer question(s) and so on.

3- Teacher should identify, perceive, and understand the language learners' social, cultural, economic, and sentimental features and backgrounds in order to be able to help them and so that the language learners have a clear image from themselves and respect their own characters.

4- Teachers should be kind to their language learners and loving them while being friend with them. This matter is important and essential especially in the initial and primary levels of learning that the language learners are susceptible, vulnerable, and sensitive, and they need love and affection from their teacher

5- Teachers should admire, respect, and value the students' differences and they should never contrast the language learners with one another.

6- Teachers need to promote students´ alertness, knowledge, inquisitiveness, and curiosity in the language classes as well as trying to uphold and preserve their motivation.

7- Teachers should bear in mind that learning a second or a foreign language means that the learners should also exploit and take advantage of social proficiencies and not just learn grammar rules.

References

Brewer, E. W., & Burgess, D. N. (2005). "Professor's role in motivating students to attend class". *Journal of Industrial Teacher Education, 42*(3), 24.

Crump, C. A. (1995). "Motivating students: A teacher's challenge". *Sooner Communication Conference,* Norman, Oklahoma.

Cook, V. (2000). *Linguistics and second language acquisition*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press and Macmillan Publishers Ltd.

-----------. (2000). *Second language learning and language teaching.* Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press and Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd.

Dornyei, Z. (2005). *The Psychology of Language Learner*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, New Jersey, Mahwah.

ELLIS, Rod. (1994). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. -------------, *The study of second language acquisition*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press by Arrangement with Oxford University Press.

FREEMAN-LARSEN, Diane & Michael H. Long. (1992). *An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research*. London e New York, Longman.

GARDNER, R.C. (1985). Social *Psychology and Second Language Learning*. London BNM/.,MEdward Arnold.

Johnstone, K. (1999). Research on language learning and teaching: 1997-1998. *Language Learning*. London: Routledge.

Lightbrown, P. M. & Spada N. (2001). Factors affecting second language learning. In: Candlin, C.N. & Mercer, N. (Eds.), *English language teaching in its social context*. London: Routledge.

Littlewood, W. (1996). "Autonomy: an autonomy and a framework", in *System*, 24 (4), pp. 427-435

Littlewood, W. (1999), "Defining and Developing Autonomy in East Asia Contexts", In *Applied Linguistics*, 20(1), pp. 71-94.

NUNAN, David. 1989. *Understanding Language Classrooms*. New York: Prentice Hall.

Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know.* Boston: Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Oxford, R. L. (2002). "Language Learning Strategies in a Nutshell: Update and ESL Suggestions". In *Methodology in Language Teaching.* Richards J. C. and W. A. Renandya (eds . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ò Malley J . M. and Chamot, A. U. (1995). *Learning strategies in Second Language Acquisition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pintrich, P.L. & Schunk, D. H. 1996. *Motivation in education: Theory, research and applications.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). "Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions". *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 25*, pp. 54-67.

SKEHAN, Peter. 1989. *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Vansteenkiste, M., Lens, W., & Deci, E. L. (2006). "Intrinsic versus extrinsic goal contents in selfdetermination theory: Another look at the quality of academic motivation". *Educational Psychologist,41*(1), 19-31.

Walker, C., Greene, B., & Mansell, R. (2006). "Identificat ion with academics, intrinsic/extrinsic mot ivation, and self-efficacy as predictors of cognitive engagement". In *Learning and Individual Differences, 16*(1), pp. 1-12.