

## Exploring the Roles of Motivation and Applications of Motivational Strategies in SLA

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### Abstract

The aims of the article are to investigate the influence of motivation and the ways of improving motivation. The essay starts with literature reviews that include theoretical discussion and empirical research and ends with proposed applications and strategies for promoting the motivation of English as a second language (ESL) learners. It shows that learning strategies; corrective feedback and speaking outcomes of these learners could be influenced by motivation. For the second part about ways of improving the motivation of learners, the framework of motivational strategies (Dörnyei, 2001) could be utilized to promote learners' motivation.

### Keywords

Otivation; Motivational strategies; Second language acquisition.

### 1. Introduction.

Motivation is critical throughout the learning process (Henry et al., 2018; Wang, 2008). It is worth noting that the early stage of learning a second language requires a great level of enthusiasm so that English as a second language (ESL) learners are active to express themselves in a foreign learning environment and learn more about the cultures of the target language (Ismayilzadeh, 2018). Numerous studies have explored the roles of motivation in learning development (Alghonaim, 2021; Dörnyei, 2001, 2020; Hussein & Al Bajalani, 2019; Ismayilzadeh, 2018). It is considered an essential part of achieving learning goals, which acts a crucial role in educational settings, particularly in learning a second language (Dörnyei, 2020). Theories related to motivation in second language acquisition (SLA) are shown. The roles of motivation in learning a second language (L2) are offered in light of three recent empirical studies. Additionally, proposed applications, strategies, implications, and evaluations for future teaching are presented.

### 2. Theories of Motivation

Motivation refers to mechanisms that originate and maintain goal-directed activity, which means that learners arise desires and continue to learn autonomously and actively (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). Motivation could be separated into two parts. The first kind of motivation is intrinsic and extrinsic, while the second type is integrative and instrumental motivation (Daskalovska et al., 2012). The assignment mainly focuses on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The former emerges from inside individuals (Kreps, 1997). However, the latter rises through incentives and rewards from outsides (Wang, 2008). According to Tokan & Imakulata (2019), motivation has positive effects on learning behaviors and achievements (Toka & Imakulata, 2019).

### 3. A framework of Motivation Strategies

A framework of motivational strategies can be realized through the application of long-term interconnected principles which aimed at reinforcing learners (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2013). Motivational strategies refer to planned educational mediation that aims to increase or maintain students' desires in learning by promoting learners' goal-oriented activities, such as the design of communicative tasks and assignments (Dörnyei, 2001). The forms of those could be designed in different ways, such as songs, games, and stories to promote the motivation of learners (Chou, 2014).

Dörnyei (2001) proposed four steps to promote and sustain the motivation of learners so that practical applications could be provided to teachers. First, it is an effective way to generate fundamental motivating conditions for learners. Those conditions include three parts (1) proper teacher behaviors (2) a classroom setting that is engaging and delightful (3) a united team with proper rules (Dörnyei, 2001). Khajavy et al. (2018) also indicated the importance of pleasant conditions in promoting the desire to learn in classrooms. A favorable classroom environment promotes willingness to communicate (WTC) and pleasure while decreasing the anxiety of the learners (Khajavy et al., 2018). The second step is generating initial motivation, which emphasizes three aspects (1) increasing the expectation of success (2) relevant learning materials (3) improved learning attitudes (Dörnyei, 2001). The third step is to maintain and protect motivation. Unexpected elements could be introduced to avoid routines and learners should be encouraged to participate in more group works to increase engagement and build up confidence (Dörnyei, 2001). The last step is encouraging positive self-evaluation that shows positive feedback can facilitate continued learning (Dörnyei, 2001). However, the learning of ESL learners can be impeded by discouraging (Zhuang et al., 2017).

### 4. Current Empirical Research

Regarding this assignment, three studies have been chosen for discussion because they are important for teaching. Those studies focused mainly on influences including learning processes and outcomes that motivation can bring to SLA. The first and third studies primarily focused on the effects of motivation in learning processes, including learning strategies and corrective feedback (CF). However, the second study generally concentrated on the influences of motivation on the outcomes of learning such as speaking production.

#### 4.1. Study One: Motivation and Learning Strategies: Student Motivation Affects Student Learning Strategies (Hasan et al., 2021).

In this study, Hasan et al. (2021) argued that motivation could be seen as a signal to anticipate the learning strategies of ESL learners, which suggests that there is a strong positive correlation between a high level of motivation and learning strategies (self-regulation and cognitive strategies).

Pintrich & Zusho (2002) proposed that motivation is constructed with efficacy-competence judgment, interest, beliefs, and goal orientations of learners. At the same time, they have also investigated motivation that could assist or inhibit the development of self-regulation (Pintrich & Zusho, 2002). It reveals that learners who have a strong desire to learn English are likely to develop their self-regulation skills. Self-regulation learning (SRL) is defined as a process of learning where learners determined learning goals actively and constructively to adjust motivation, perception, and conduction individually (Pintrich & Zusho, 2002).

Motivation can affect self-regulation strategies in two fundamental ways including altering goal structures and enhancing self-regulation processing (Hasan et al., 2021). However, motivation for self-regulation seems to be decreasing at a time when learners are cognitively more

competent in self-regulation (Eccles et al., 1998). It shows that the effects of motivation for learning strategies are dynamic, not static.

#### **4.2. Study Two: Intrinsic Motivation and Speech Production in Saudi EFL College Students (Alghonaim, 2021).**

Motivation is such a critical problem, especially in ESL contexts (Anjomshoa & Sadighi, 2015). It is the most important factor that affects speaking skills of learners (Kaid Mohammed Ali et al., 2019). The second study mainly focused on the influences of intrinsic motivation in speaking production. The type of motivation is associated with instructional interventions, classroom interaction, and engagement (Alghonaim, 2021). The study investigated the roles of intrinsic motivation in contributing to the classroom communication and speaking fluency of ESL learners (Alghonaim, 2021). It revealed that they have positive relationships.

Alghonaim (2021) proposed that intrinsic motivation predominantly has three beneficial effects on SLA. First, intrinsic motivation contributes to preparation before the class, which means highly motivated learners are likely to fully prepare lessons (Alghonaim, 2021). Second, intrinsic motivation plays a crucial role in interaction and production during lessons (Alghonaim, 2021). It demonstrates that students who are passionate about learning English are more willing to speak more and communicate with peers (Alghonaim, 2021). Third, motivation has a positive impact on speaking rate and fluency (Alghonaim, 2021). More importantly, intrinsic motivation is given precedence since it is more effective in fostering students' autonomy and competence and results in more positive outcomes than extrinsic motivation (Alghonaim, 2021). It should be mentioned that intrinsic motivation and autonomous learning are interrelated (Ryan, 1982). Intrinsic motivation of students is increased when they have a feeling of autonomy (Ryan, 1982).

#### **4.3. Study Three: High School EFL Students' Beliefs About Oral Corrective Feedback: The Role Of Gender, Motivation, And Extraversion (Ha Et Al., 2021).**

Several conditions can impede SLA, including lack of enthusiasm or desire to learn English, negative and incorrect feedback, and insufficient direction (Kaid Mohammed Ali et al., 2019). As a result, it is imperative that learners could obtain corrective feedback (CF) in educational settings. The study stressed that motivation can influence beliefs of CF about speaking, which could affect SLA. Insights and ideas have been provided for teachers to investigate in which situations students are eager to receive CF (Ha et al., 2021).

Empirical research compared different reasons for learning English, such as learning for a future career, communication, and others that can affect CF beliefs of CF in SLA. It illustrated that students who studied English for tests were the most optimistic about nonverbal CF (Ha et al., 2021). However, students who studied English for future professions were the most pessimistic about nonverbal CF (Ha et al., 2021). As a result, teachers should be encouraged to provide more nonverbal assessments to the learners who learning English aim to attend exams (Ha et al., 2021).

### **5. Proposed Application**

Educators face mainly three challenges when it comes to improving motivation. First, motivational steps are individual factors that result in various ends (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). Second, the effectiveness of motivational strategies varied from person to person. For example, certain motivating tactics have varying degrees of success depending on the English language level of learners (Sugita & Takeuchi, 2010). Lastly, in particular, significantly motivating events that transform learners' mindsets from one instant to the next are rare in classroom settings. Rather than that, it is often a sequence of subtleties that culminate in a long-

lasting influence (Dörnyei, 2001), so it is high time for teachers to find an effective way that can help ESL learners change those circumstances to gain a positive learning experience and long-term improving motivation.

Generally, there are several implications that three studies have brought about, respectively. The first study reveals if teachers have told the value of assignments and have known the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of students so that those learners might be highly motivated (Hasan et al., 2021). Consequently, learners would be improved by using positive learning strategies (Hasan et al., 2021). This is because they know that the tasks are helpful and useful for their second language learning (Hasan et al., 2021). Furthermore, teachers can try to regulate the motivation to scaffold the learners so that instructions could be provided (Pintrich & Zusho, 2002). Motivation may serve as a springboard for implementing strategies that help students become self-regulated learners (Hasan et al., 2021). Furthermore, implications may be utilized to develop a teacher training program on how to enhance students' motivational, metacognitive, and behavioral competence throughout the learning process (Hasan et al., 2021). As for the second study, the importance of intrinsic motivation in speaking production has been mentioned. It showed that intrinsic motivation can increase the chances of interaction among learners (Alghonaim, 2021). Therefore, instructors should pay attention to the roles of intrinsic motivation in interactive classroom activities (Alghonaim, 2021).

The third study demonstrated that students who studied English for tests were more acceptable to CF (Ha et al., 2021). However, learners who acquired English for communication reasons had a more pessimistic attitude toward being diagnosed with CF (Ha et al., 2021). It suggests that teachers should be concerned with the link between learning objectives and the motivation for CF. learners studying English for tests may desire a more frequent correction to enhance their fluency of speaking. Furthermore, it revealed the fact that it is supportive to use nonverbal hints to remind learners' mistakes. This is because nonverbal cues are less face-threatening, which may appeal to exam-oriented students who are sensitive to evaluation and grades from teachers.

Specifically, applications are shown in three stages including before, during, and after the lesson. In the future, a one-hour lesson should be taught. The lesson will consist of 25 students in the classroom in China. The levels of learners would be intermediate on average. The lesson aims to promote the motivation of learners by using stories. Before the lesson, materials and content related to the context of the learners (see Appendices A1-A4) should be fully prepared in advance. Furthermore, the characters, motivation, and learning strategies of the learners should be recognized separately (Hasan et al., 2021).

During the lesson, according to Dörnyei (2001), four steps would be carried out to generate and maintain the motivation of ESL learners. Firstly, a motivating atmosphere will be created through clear rules, a cheerful classroom environment, and appropriate behaviors of teachers (Dörnyei, 2001). Second, an original story (see Appendix4) should be presented to increase the expectation about learning English by feeling the power of the language, which shows that language has a function of educating people to protect our environments. The context is relevant to learners and challenging words that they have not learned before would be provided to help learners' production. Third, it is crucial to maintain the motivation of learners at a high level. If teachers use one activity in every lesson, learners will feel tedious (Dörnyei, 2001). There are two ways to change the situation. One of these is that different activities will be designed in the future lessons (Dörnyei, 2001). These tasks could be designed in various ways, such as songs, games, and stories to promote motivation (Chou, 2014). The other way is to encourage learners to participate in different groups to communicate so that learners can obtain various experiences from different teams (Dörnyei, 2001). Lastly, when learners are eager to learn English for exams, precise CF would be given to help them improve performance (Ha et al., 2021). However, if learners learn English only for communication, nonverbal signals

would be provided to build up their confidence (Ha et al., 2021). After the lesson, insightful reflection should be thought, which can assist teachers to grow up quickly and the recorded lesson should be reviewed multiple times by other observers to conclude suggestions for future lessons.

## 6. Benefits of the Teaching Practice

There are several main benefits that the lesson can bring. Motivation would be promoted and maintained through the framework of motivational strategies. It serves as imperative factors to foster learning success (Pelikan et al., 2021), which can be shown as three aspects. First, learners who are highly intrinsically motivated are likely to learn more in their free time (KALA & VESELA, 2021). KALA & VESELA (2021) indicated that students who had been genuinely driven by the inner heart before the beginning of the course worked more in their spare time and therefore learned the second language more quickly. Second, motivation has a positive effect on learning success. Learners who are highly intrinsically motivated are likely to develop autonomous learning (Hussein & Al Bajalani, 2019).

To be specific, with sufficient intrinsic motivation, oral proficiency in L2 learning could be improved and autonomous learning habits could be formed, even in foreign language classroom settings (Alghonaim, 2021). Furthermore, rewards would be established for learners who have made progress quickly and performed better so that extrinsic motivation would be improved. Waheed et al. (2016) showed that intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics motivate learning, which not only significantly affects the perceived learning effectiveness of learners, but also improves the academic performance of learning (Waheed et al., 2016).

Furthermore, in terms of competence, Tahriri (2015) highlighted the importance of stories in SLA, and it can hopefully be added to the curriculum of educational systems so that the motivation and performance of learners could be improved (Tahriri et al., 2015). Stories can develop the language skills of learners; acquire their reflection; facilitate their cultural tolerance. The students had positive attitudes towards the use of stories, which were not influenced by gender, age, and major (Abu Zahra & Farrah, 2016). It incorporates critical elements such as association, invention, imagination, and motivation. It is regarded as one of the most promising authentic learning methodologies and expands language teaching more than more conventional procedures (Psomos & Kordaki, 2012). This fascinating and astonishing technique has the potential to serve as a source of encouragements for students to be dubbed as 'digital natives' in today's classrooms (Robin, 2006). Meanwhile, teachers can use stories as dubbing games to increase vocabulary, motivation, and creativity of learners (Huang et al., 2017). Hwang et al (2016) used stories in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom to develop oral skills, which shows that the approach can be used to facilitate speaking and create a relevant context for EFL learners (Hwang et al., 2016).

## 7. Evaluation of the Practice

There are several tools to assess the lesson. Pretests and post-tests could be used to check the progress of learners. Some criteria could be used to assess the learners' speaking levels so that participants would be grouped into different classrooms. The criteria include pronunciation, fluency, lexical resources, grammatical range and accuracy, cohesion, and coherence, which is important to evaluate the lesson, as the level of student competence has been revealed to be an affecting component of their learning techniques and cooperation performances (Huang et al., 2017). Furthermore, learners would be reviewed by different observers (see Appendix B1 Observation Template). Additionally, self-evaluation could be achieved through self-recorded videos (SRV). Encalada and Sarmiento (2019) investigate the perspectives of ESL learners on the value of SRV to improve oral abilities. It provides more opportunities for teachers to

observe the performance of learners (Encalada & Sarmiento, 2019). The performances could be evaluated by language usage and creativity tests (see Appendix B Table 2)

## 8. Conclusions

The assignment mainly discussed the two issues. The first is the influence of motivation. It plays an important role in SLA. This is because it can affect learning strategies, their beliefs about CF, and speech production (Alghonaim, 2021; Ha et al., 2021; Hasan et al., 2021). The second issue is about how to promote motivation. According to Dörnyei (2001), the framework of motivational strategies has been provided to teachers to generate and maintain the motivation. It has been analyzed to obtain several implications and insights for utilizing motivational theories.

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