

Case-Study: The Impact of Motivation in The Learning Process

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Abstract

This paper aims to explore the role of motivation in second language acquisition. Motivation is an important factor for explaining the success or failure of any learning task. This paper will explain, the term motivation, explains different types of motivation, reviews previous studies about the role of motivation in language learning, mentions conditions of motivation, and finally states key factors of motivation. All of these points confirm the importance of motivation of learning a foreign language.

Introduction

Motivation is a key factor for explaining the success or failure of any difficult activity. It is undeniable that motivation is a controversial issue, in recent years, motivation has been considered in surveys in order to discover how it can assist learners to learn effectively. The findings of such surveys can be useful to the educational system followed in schools, institutions and universities.

Motivation is a kind of desire for learning. To teach a second language in a learning setting, the learners should have a desire to learn the language first. There are numbers of factors that influence second language learning. According to Dornyei (as cited in Kaboody, 2013) stated that motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the second language and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process. By giving sufficient motivation, learners with minimal abilities can achieve long-term goals.

Definitions of Motivation

There are many different definitions for the term motivation. Motivation is considered as a major part of achieving any goal. This is an important factor that has a positive influence in every educational learning process especially in second language learning. Gardner (as cited in Zareian and Jodaei, 2015)

considers effort and desire as the prerequisites to call an individual a motivated person. He proposes that in order to understand why learners are motivated, it is important to understand what the learner wants to achieve or the goals to learn a language. Salvin (as cited in Rehman et al., 2014) defined motivation as an internal process that activates, guides and maintains behavior over time. Liuoliene and Metiuniene (2006) stated that motivation is described as goal-directed; the learners' immediate goal is to learn the language. Motivation is not static, it changes depending on the context and it changes over time (Gass and Selinker, 2008). Motivation is the reasons underlying behavior (Guay et al., 2010). Narayanan (2006) said that motivation is the reason or reasons behind one's actions or behaviors. According to Elliot and Covington (2001), motivation gives the reasons for people's actions, desires, and needs. Motivation can also be defined as one's direction to behavior or what causes a person to want to repeat a behavior and vice versa.

Firstly, the term motivation has been defined in several studies. As Brown suggests, motivation is 'some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something' (As cited in Harmer, 2000). According to this definition motivation is considered as an internal demand that renders people determined to learn in order to achieve certain goals. If teachers know how to exploit their students' motivation, students will achieve excellent results. This encourages excitement in the learner and in the learning process, because the more motivated the learners is, the more successful the learning process will be.

William and Burden argue that motivation is a 'state of cognitive arousal' which provokes a 'decision to act' as a result of which there is 'sustained intellectual and physical effort' so that a person can achieve some 'previously set goal' (As cited in Harmer, 2001). In fact, this is one of the ways in which motivation begins as an idea. Then, it becomes the main drive that people want to obtain. William and Burden seem to agree with Brown stating that motivation is an internal desire that makes people eager

To achieve their aims. This confirms the concept that motivation starts as an idea until it becomes the goal that learners are looking to achieve.

Various Types of Motivation

Motivating Learners: Teachers have long been in the business of motivating their learners, using a range of rewards and punishments. The author's story reveals the ways that apparent intrinsic motivation such as a strong ambition to succeed may have roots in what is usually thought of as extrinsic motivation. According to Bernard (2010), several theories and categorizations contribute to an understanding of academic motivation generally and second-language motivation specifically. Second language learners are interested in learning native speakers of the language and understanding the main purpose of how to live in the target language. The motivation of the learners determines how ready and eager they are to get more information and to increase their ability to understand, write, and speak the second language (Engin, 2009)

Humans are profoundly social beings and even characteristics that are thought to be part of the personality of a person may have originated in the family or broader cultural environment. The author's story reveals both the power of Krashen's theory and its limitations from the point of view of classroom teachers. It is clear that his self-directed reading program was instrumental in his development of English. However, the source of his motivation can be found in the inspirational model his teacher provided and the ways that his identity as a successful English learner positioned him within his own family and community.

There are four types of motivation. Instrumental, integrative, intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation. The instrumental motivation refers to acquiring a language as a means for obtaining instrumental objectives such as furthering a career, reading technical materials, translation, and etc. (Gardner & Lambert as cited in Chalak and Kassaian, 2010). If a person learns a language primarily for a purpose like getting a job or fulfilling an academic requirement, she or he is affected by instrumental motivation. In other words, instrumental motivation refers to the motivation to acquire language as a means to an end such as promoting a career or job or reading technical texts whereas integrative motivation is concerned with the desire to be accepted by other communities.

This is also supported by Loewen and Reinders (as cited in Motivation, Second Language Acquisition (Ghamdi, 2014) explained that instrumental motivation refers to a need of fulfilment towards some objective or the motivation which derives from the perception of the tangible benefits that might result from learning a second language. Instrumental motivation includes a group of factors that associate with motivation arising from external goals, such as passing exams, financial rewards, good position or to accomplish a school requirement (Williams and Burden, 1997).

The integrative motivation describes learners who to integrate themselves into the culture of the second language group and become involved in social interchange in that group. People engage in the tasks for their own sake and not because they lead to an extrinsic reward. Intrinsic motivation is aimed at bringing about certain internally rewarding consequences like feelings of competence and self-determination. Extrinsically motivated behaviors are done in anticipation of a reward from outside and beyond the self.

Behaviors initiated to avoid punishment are also extrinsically motivated, even though many intrinsic advantages can result from those who view punishment avoidance as a challenge that can make their sense of proficiency and self-determination. Meanwhile, Horwitz (as cited in Engin, 2009) stated that integrative motivation begins with a personal effort and continues on with a desire to know the target language's native speakers. The purpose of student learning and activities is to learn something new.

Dörnyei (1998 as cited in Pourhosein Gilakjani, Leong, & Saburi, 2012) defined the terms intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to the motivation to engage in an activity because that activity is enjoyable to do. Extrinsic motivation refers to the actions that are performed to get some instrumental aims like earning a reward or stopping a punishment. Brown (2000) indicates the relationship between these two kinds of motivation. As extrinsic motivation may turn out to be integrative motivation if someone else wants the L2 learner to know the L2 for integrative purposes; extrinsic motivation may turn out to be instrumental motivation if an external power wishes the L2 learner to learn the L2 language. (Zareian and Jodaei, 2015)

Extrinsic motivation refers to pressure or rewards from the social environment for language learning. Extrinsically motivated students aim to gain better career opportunities, teacher praise or recognition or even to prove that someone is a good learner. Extrinsic motivation is motivation to do a work or an activity as a means or way to achieve a target. Those who are extrinsically motivated undertake and commit adultery because they think their contribution will lead to enviable outcomes such as respect, teacher admiration, or avoidance (prevention) of punishment (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996).

Conclusion

The success in second language learning depends on many factors. Motivation is one of the most important ones. This awareness can create a desire for the learners to learn one or more foreign languages. Teachers can play a significant role in motivating learners to the learning of a second or foreign language. This paper has discussed various definitions of motivation, its types, and explored some related studies in motivation.

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