

A Study of Motivation in English Language Learning of the First and the Second Year Bachelor Students at Akaki Tsereteli State University

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Abstract

Introduction and aim: The research aims to show the significant role in language learning success. Motivated students are likely to learn more and learn more quickly than students who are less motivated. The study was carried out to determine the motivational level of the first and the second year bachelor students at ATSU Faculty of Philology to determine: 1. What is the level of students' motivation and if it is different among first and the second year students; 2. if students are more integratively or instrumentally motivated in English language learning.

Research methodology: We used holistic research approach. At the beginning quantitative study was conducted with the samples selected from the first and the second year bachelor students at ATSU, Faculty of Philology in the first semester, academic year 2016 to explore the dominant motivation in their English language learning. The data for this study was obtained through questionnaire administered to the total number of 30 students. Then we conducted qualitative study for identifying whether they are integratively or instrumentally motivated.

Results and implications: The study revealed that the level of motivation among the first and the second year bachelors is more or less similar, but respondents possessed a high level of instrumental motivation rather than integral. They are aware of the fact that being proficient in English can lead to more success and achievements in life.

Conclusion: As the motivation is one of the most important learning factors in English language mastering, the need to determine the actual motivational situations of any students group is worthwhile. This will be beneficial both for teacher and student. The study provides useful knowledge to stimulate the more motivating learning atmosphere. Students with adequate motivation will become efficient language learners with ultimate language proficiency.

Keywords: motivation, integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation

There are many reasons why some students are successful at language learning while others are not. If the reasons were clear the job of teaching and learning a language would be easy. We do not of course, but we can point to a number of factors that seem to have a strong effect on a student's success or failure. Harmer (1991) said that people involved in language teaching say that students who really want to learn

will succeed whatever the circumstance in which they study. All teachers can think of situation in which certain “ motivated ” students do significantly better than their peers; students frequently succeed in what appear to be unfavourable conditions; they succeed despite using methods which experts consider unsatisfactory (Harmer, 1991). In the face of such phenomena it seems reasonable to suggest that the motivation that students bring to class is the biggest single factor affecting their success (Harmer, 1991).

The research aims to show the significant role in language learning success. Motivated students are likely to learn more and learn more quickly than students who are less motivated. The study was carried out to determine the motivational level of the first and the second year bachelor students at ATSU Faculty of Philology to determine: 1. What is the level of students’ motivation and if it is different among first and the second year students; 2. if students are more integratively or instrumentally motivated in English language learning.

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The success of any action usually depends on the extent to which individuals strive to achieve their purpose, along with their desire to do so. In general, people have come to refer to this psychological factor – the impulse that generates the action – as motivation. As the term itself indicates, it is a “motive force”, something that prompts, incites or stimulates action. 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.” To think of motivation as belonging only to the initial stages of an action, - that is as concerned with arousing initial interest and turning it into a decision to engage in some activity – is only a limited understanding of the term. The need to maintain this state of arousal, to determine someone to make the necessary effort to complete an action is also of great importance. This idea is reflected in the definition given by Williams and Burden (1997) who 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”. Thus intellect and affect combine with volition and perseverance to result in what is known as motivated behaviour. The same idea is conveyed in different words by R.C. Gardner who seems to explain the term with the precision of mathematical demonstration: motivation is a combination of effort plus

desire to achieve a goal plus favourable attitudes towards the goal to be accomplished (Gardner, 1985).

Harmer uses the word 'goal' to categorize the motivation in second language learning into two types (Harmer, 1991):

1. Short-term goal means when students wish to succeed in doing something in the near future, for example, students who want to pass their examination or to get good grade or high scores.

2. Long-term goal refers to a wish of students or learners who want to get a better job in the future or to be able to communicate with people who use the language that they study or the target language.

Krashen mentioned the following factors which are rather related to motivation that will attempt to relate the second language ability to these two functions (Krashen 1988).

1. Integrative motivation, defined as the desire to be a part of recognized or important members of the community or that society that speak the second language. It is based on interest in learning the second language because of their need to learn about, associate or socialize with the people who use it or because of purpose or intention to participate or integrate in the second language using the same language in that community; but sometimes it involves emotion or affective factors a great deal.

2. Instrumental motivation involves the concepts of purely practical value in learning the second language in order to increase learners' careers or business opportunities, giving them more prestige and power, accessing scientific and technical information, or just passing a course of their study in school (Saville-Troike, 2006).

Furthermore, the motivation is further classified into two main categories as the following:

1. Extrinsic motivation refers to a desire to get a reward and avoid punishment. It emphasizes external need to persuade the learner to take part in learning activity (Arnold, 2000), such as homework, grade, or doing something to please teachers. Both integrative and instrumental motivations are also grouped under the branch of the extrinsic motivation (Harmer, 1991).

As extrinsic motivation is based on external outcomes such as rewards and punishment. This motivation could bring a negative impact to the students, because with extrinsic motivation, students do not learn with their strong intention or will but they study it because they are pushed by the interest in the rewards or the punishment. When a student is learning because he is promised rewards or because he wants the rewards, he will be highly motivated to come to classes and learn and achieve the goal that is set for him. But when these rewards are taken away, or sometimes even if they do not see any punishment, the student will not be interested in coming to class and learn the language any longer.

2. Intrinsic motivation refers to learning itself having its own reward. It means the learners are willingly and voluntarily (not compulsorily) try to learn what they think it is worth or important for them. When students have intrinsic motivation, they have the internal desire to learn and they do not have the need for external outcomes. There are no negative impacts in having intrinsic motivation. In addition, intrinsic motivation pushes the student to learn without rewards, because the need is innate or come from inside or depends on their own will.

In order to offer a clear image of the intrinsic-extrinsic dichotomy, Spolsky (1989) borrows Harter's model (1982) and represents it in the following way:

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

Following this model, it comes out clearly that the greater the value the individuals attach to the accomplishment of an activity, the more highly motivated they will be to engage in it and later to put sustained effort until they achieve their goal. This distinction also tells us that both internal and external factors have an important role to play in motivating learners.

In general, most people seem to agree that attitudes and motivation are closely related to success in language learning. This explains perhaps why some people have a much easier time of learning languages than others; in the same classroom setting, some students progress rapidly, while others just struggle along and never achieve command of a second language. Krashen has drawn attention to the fact that variables in second language acquisition derive both from the amount of comprehensible input the acquirer receives and understands and from the strength of the affective filter.

When the only reason for learning a second language is external pressure, internal motivation may be minimal and attitudes towards learning are likely to be negated. On the other hand, if students have favourable attitudes towards the foreign language and its speakers, towards the teacher and the course, they will probably be more attentive in the class, would take assessments more seriously and, willing to achieve more, would look for situations when they can obtain further practice in the foreign language.

Nowadays the role of the teacher is recognized as being highly significant in all the stages of the motivational process. Motivation is no longer thought of only as integrative or instrumental. It is also considered a key to learning something in many cases created, fostered and maintained by an enthusiastic and well-prepared classroom teacher. Because of the importance of the nature of the interactions that occur between learners and

teachers, many studies have been dedicated to the discussions of the influence of teachers in the process of foreign language learning.

I conducted a study to investigate the motivation of the first and the second year 30 Georgian students who are studying English at ATSU. The questionnaire was composed to gather information on participants' motivation. There are 20 questions in the questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of two main parts: integrative motivation (10 questions) and instrumental motivation (10 questions). The questionnaires were distributed to the 30 students during their normal class session during which time they were given clear instructions and explanation for filling out the questionnaire. The questionnaires were then collected upon completion.

The data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed and presented in percentage. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the level and type of subjects' learning motivation. Such scale was used in the questionnaire to specify the level of the agreement or disagreement based on the following criteria:

3.68 – 5.00	High degree of Motivation
2.34 – 3.67	Moderate degree of Motivation
1.00 – 2.33	Low degree of Motivation

These tables presents overall details of the study's results.

Table 1 Instrumental Motivation

Instrumental Motivation	Rating of Motivational Level
1. I mainly focus on using English for class assignment and the exams.	High
2. I simply quote the textbooks and do not really communicate myself when speaking or writing in class.	High
3. I am interested in reading only English textbooks for my university study, but not other English texts e.g newspapers, magazines.	High
4. I am more interested in earning a university degree and a good job than learning English language itself.	High
5. I am more interested in furthering my higher education than learning English language itself.	High
6. Learning English is important for travelling abroad.	High
7. Learning English is important for making me a knowledgeable and skillful person.	High
8. Learning English is important for making me an educated person.	High
9. Being proficient in English can lead to more success and achievements in life.	High
10. Being proficient in English makes other people respect me.	Moderate

Table 2 Integrative Motivation

Integrative Motivation	Rating of Motivational Level
1. Studying English enables me to understand English books, movies, pop music etc.	High
2. Studying English enables me to better understand and appreciate the ways of life of native English speakers.	Moderate
3. Studying English enables me to keep in touch with foreign acquaintances.	High
4. Studying English enables me to discuss interesting topics in English with the people from other national backgrounds.	Moderate
5. Studying English enables me to transfer my knowledge to other people e.g giving directions to tourists.	High
6. Studying English enables me to participate freely in academic, social, and professional activities among other cultural groups.	High
7. Studying English enables me to behave like native English speakers: e.g accent, using English expressions.	Moderate
8. Studying English enables me to appreciate English arts and literature.	Moderate
9. Studying English helps me to be an open-minded, and sociable person like English speaking people.	High
10. I am determined to study English as best as I can to achieve maximum proficiency.	High

The findings indicate that the most common reasons for studying English as a second language were for finding employment in a high profile career, communication with foreign people, processing international information, and understanding other cultures.

The study revealed that the level of motivation among the first and the second year bachelors is more or less similar, but respondents possessed a high level of instrumental motivation rather than integral. They are aware of the fact that being proficient in English can lead to more success and achievements in life.

As the motivation is one of the most important learning factors in English language mastering, the need to determine the actual motivational situations of any students group is worthwhile. This will be beneficial both for teacher and student. The study provides useful knowledge to stimulate the more motivating learning atmosphere. Students with adequate motivation will become efficient language learners with ultimate language proficiency.

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