

IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVATION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING.

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ABSTRACT:

This article aims to analyze the role of motivation in foreign language learning. Motivation is one of the key factor to increase foreign language proficiency. In this study, we explore different definitions for the term motivation, types of motivation, review of previous studies on importance of motivation and teachers' role in improving motivation in language acquisition.

KEYWORDS: motivation, language acquisition, comprehension, language competence, interactive, feedback, learning process.

INTRODUCTION:

Motivation is inner desire or driving force to achieve goal in language learning. Motivation plays crucial role in language acquisition. This is because success and failure depend on motivation. Motivation provides learners with aim and increases their determination towards learning language. Students' learning may be improved because of their innate desires or with the influence of other factors. Gardner states that motivation as "the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (Gardner, 1985). [1] Therefore teachers should increase learners' motivation to acquire foreign language. Because highly motivated students have strong desire to learn and and they enjoy learning process. As Gardner confirmed that "An integratively oriented learner would likely have a stronger desire to learn the language, have more positive attitudes towards the learning situation, and be more likely to expend more effort in learning the language". [1] (Gardner, 1985)

MAIN BODY

Scientists have various views about the definition of motivation and its types. For instance, Ellis (as cited in Mahadi and Jafari, 2012) [2] considers motivation as the attempt which learners make for learning a second language because of their need or desire to learn it. Crookes and Schmidt (1991) define motivation as the learner's orientation regarding the goal of learning a second language. [3] According to Elliot and Covington (2001), motivation gives the reasons for people's actions, desires, and

needs. [4] Oxford and Shearin (1994) defined motivation as a desire to gain an objective, combined with the energy to work towards that objective. [5] Narayanan (2006) said that motivation is the reason or reasons behind one's actions or behaviors. [6]

When it comes to types of motivation, scientists hold two different direction or model. First one is, there are two types of motivation according to Gardner and Brown. They distinguished integrative and instrumental motivation. In their opinion, integrative motivation is learning language for personal development and cultural enrichment. In other words, learner acquire knowledge to become proficient in the target language. They defined instrumental motivation as functional and external reasons. This motivation includes different rewards, recognition, praise, promotions and other factors. If a person learns a language for particular purpose like job or fulfilling an academic requirement, she or he is affected by instrumental motivation. Second types of motivation are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Dörnyei (1998) differentiate intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. [7] Intrinsic motivation is a motivation that can engage learners in activity because it is interesting and enjoyable for them. This motivation refers internal force or desire to learn without the need of external causes. Learners acquire knowledge for sense of purpose and also personal growth. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation means the actions which is performed with the influence of external incentives such as reward, money, promotion, passing the exam, studying abroad, avoiding punishments and other factors like instrumental motivation. But there is relationship between these two models of motivation. Brown indicates that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is relevant to integrative and instrumental motivation in language acquisition. (Brown 2000) [8]

Many researchers confirmed the importance of motivation in learning language process. Lack of motivation can cause difficulties for the learners in FL. Because learning something is hard without desire. As Huitt (2001) stated that paying attention to the importance of language will help learners improve their motivation to learn even if they do not have enough intrinsic motivation. [9] Thus, teachers should be aware of significance of motivation and try to increase their motivation towards FL by giving positive feedback, directed self- evaluation and mastery of desired goals. According to Guthrie (1997), intrinsic motivation has a significant impact not only on reading comprehension but on the other aspects of reading such as reading breadth. [10] According to Dital (2012), learners were highly motivated with positive attitudes towards learning English. They were both instrumentally and integratively motivated. [11] Al-Otaibi (2004) stated that motivated learners spend much of their time to gain aims in learning foreign language and motivated learners can also learn language more effectively than unmotivated ones. [12]

Teachers plays crucial role in creating supporting environment to encourage

students to learn a language. Because teachers are able to analyze their students interest, level and needs. Connecting to the personal world of students is a good way to increase their motivation to learn languages according to Thoonen's opinion. [13] Because if students feel the relevance between tasks with their life and experiences learning process will be easy and interesting for them. Also, building positive relationship with students can influence to generate their motivation. Creating trust with students is not easy for teachers as it takes time from them. In order to make positive and friendly relationship, teachers should share their own stories of success, struggles, failures and achievement. (Bain, 2004) [14] Moreover teachers can urge students to learn by providing positive feedback. Because when feedback is given, learners feel having a control over their own learning process and abilities. With the help of teacher's feedback students can correct their mistakes and definitely this promotes to learn better for improving their competence. There a several common strategies in language teaching that can improve students' competence include written and verbal praise, correcting few errors, recognizing student's strength and focusing more on positive sides of their work (Bain, 2004). [14] This is because, students will be motivated and eager to learn when they know about their skills and capabilities. Furthermore, teachers' interest and enthusiasm also one factor which can affect towards their learning process and motivation. If the teachers are passionate and enthusiastic about their subject they are teaching, students can become more engaged and interested to the lesson. Because, teacher's enthusiasm can provide a positive learning environment. When learners see that their teacher is interested and energetic about tasks and materials in the lesson, they can feel themselves free and comfortable asking questions during the lesson. This is very important factor for teachers for conducting interactive learning process. In other words, teachers' attitudes and interest about subject can play vital role in enhancing students' motivation and forming positive attitudes towards learning process.

CONCLUSION

The main goal from teaching foreign language to students is developing communicative competence and critical thinking. Definitely, achieving success in learning and teaching foreign language depends on several factors. Motivation is important one that cannot be denied. This paper analyzed the importance of motivation in language acquisition through reviewing previous researches in this sphere. In addition to this, this study identified that motivated learners spend more time and effort to better language acquisition compared to unmotivated learners. Also, they are open to risk taking and making mistakes which is really important for foreign language learners. Teachers play crucial role in motivating learners to learning foreign language. Even students have innate desire to learn, there is dependance on the teachers' attempt and involvement. Because in some cases, learners' interest towards language may be

lowered as there is not external support. Therefore, any EFL teachers try to increase students' intrinsic motivation in association with extrinsic motivation. By improving students' motivation and their understanding in the significance of motivation teachers can create effective learning environment which is productive and enjoyable for all types of learners.

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