



## **MOTIVATION: A CUDGEL TO FACE THE CHALLENGES IN THE SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSROOM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*A second language classroom is heterogeneous as all the students have different levels of competence; they can be beginners, intermediate or advanced level learners, belonging to different age groups; can have different purposes while learning, which makes teaching such a mixed group all the more difficult. There are some other differences also that need to be taken into account by the teacher, as: preferred learning style, personality, interests, and cultural backgrounds because of which the teacher needs to change his strategy of teaching. So it is important to study the main problems and search for principles and practical ideas that can lead to effective solutions. In such a situation, motivation plays a very vital role because a motivated learner is one who is willing to progress by investing his effort in learning activities. This makes learning and teaching easier and more productive. But the question is whether motivation is more important than aptitude; another question is which motivation type of motivation is stronger and; are there some stages of motivation in learning? All these factors have to be taken into account while teaching in a second language classroom. The present paper aims to highlight different factors of motivation along with their importance in teaching English as a second language. It tries to provide the solution for the problems faced by the second language teacher through some SLA games and activities.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Motivation as per the *Oxford Online Dictionary* is defined as the “desire or willingness to do something” (Motivation, 2014). The *Psychology Dictionary Online* on the other hand defines motivation as: “(1) the driving force setting a direction to the behavior of humans and

**DR. ABHILASA KAUSHIK**

1P a g e



animals at a conscious and unconscious level, and (2) the willingness of a person to achieve a goal at a physical or mental level". Thus, in simple words, motivation is the zeal within someone through internal or external sources to do something with interest and full spirit. The study of motivation becomes the primary concern of an English language teacher because it is the vital force which enables the learners to learn fast or slowly.

While taking in account motivation as a prime factor of English language teaching, it becomes mandatory that to mention the different periods of motivation study along with different types of it. Motivation has been studied from the learner's perspective by different scholars.

### **Historical Periods of Study**

The study of motivation has taken turns through the following trends:

#### **The Social Psychological Period**

This period focused on L2 learning motivation emphasizing the role of the individuals' social context and social interactions. This period in L2 motivation research flourished in the bilingual context of Canada from 1959 through 1990 (Dörnyei, 2005; Ushioda, 2012). During this period, Gardner developed the socio-educational model while Clément and colleagues explored the theory of linguistic self-confidence.

#### **The Cognitive-situated Period**

The focus of this period is on how the learners' mental processes influence their motivation. During the late 1980s and 1990s, emphasis in the language learning motivation field shifted towards cognitive models, reflecting the "cognitive revolution" taking place in psychology at the time. Cognitive psychologists emphasized one's abilities, possibilities, potentials, limitations, and past performances as major influences on motivation. This period shifted the emphasis from socio-psychological factors to the individual cognitive factors. The noteworthy contributors of this period are Noels and colleagues through a self-determination theory-based model of language learning motivation, Ushioda through attribution theory, as well as Williams and Burden with their social constructivist model.

#### **The Process-oriented Period**

While focusing on the cognitive approaches to L2 learning motivation, researchers began to focus on the dynamic character of motivation. This led them to the models of the process-oriented period which explored the short-term and long-term changes in the individuals' motivation as they learn L2. This approach viewed motivation as a dynamic factor which fluctuates according to class and group of learners and the duration of learning etc. Models from this period include the process model and the motivational self-system.



## **Types of Motivation**

There are different 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 is the one in which the intention of learning the language is participating in the culture by its people. The intention of the instrumental motivation on the other hand is that of relating to occupation or further useful motive. The procedure and outcome of learning is very much affected by these two types of motivation. 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 On the basis of rationales, causes, or targets which encourage a deed or an achievement this theory suggests two types of motivation i.e. intrinsic and extrinsic wherein intrinsic motivation stands for the eagerness and interest to do and take part in some certain activities which encourage the individual. 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 promoted and encouraged by the reasons which do not link to the activity for example the anticipation of reward or punishment, like being successful in the exam, getting a good marks etc (Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Deci, 2006). Thus intrinsic motivation is due to the aptitude of doing or learning while the in the extrinsic one the interest is due to some external forces or reasons because extrinsically motivated people 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).

In this way there are different types of motivations that work in SLA. The paper is an effort to find out which motivation suits a particular set of learners and also which type supports SLA in Indian conditions because initially some students might have a different level of motivation which can be increased by the teacher observing the psychology, habit, aptitude, academic and social background and the level of interest in the learner.

### **Factors and Suitable Strategy of Motivation in ESL classroom**

Motivation plays a pivotal role in ESL classroom as the teacher if succeeds in creating an intrinsic motivation and thus by inculcating aptitude to learn the language through the use of appropriate pedagogy by diagnosing the tentative problems of the learner because of various factors. According to Cooper and McIntyre (1998), if it is accepted that learning is claimed to be dependent on certain types of interpersonal and social interaction, it follows that circumstances that make these forms of interaction desirable or at least congenial become a necessary prerequisite of effective learning. The teacher is like the doctor for the learner who faces certain psychological, social and language related problems in the ESL classroom. Thus the importance of the teacher factor in having a high level of motivation in second language acquisition underlined by Cooper and McIntyre (*ibid*) cannot be neglected. The choice of teaching strategy on motivation has been emphasized by Reece and Walker (1997) as it has an effect upon the motivation and interest of the student. The teacher can be a Midas stone who can encourage the learner to learn with interest by introducing different SLA games and activities and by following certain strategies. The strategy has to be decided as per different factors as follows:

#### **➤ Psychology and Aptitude of the Learner**

Actually it is safe to say that positive psychological quality, stable mood, strong will and self-control power will influence a learner's choice of learning strategies, hence affecting his efficiency and result. Students lacking in self-confidence usually cannot express their ideas fluently or do well in language communication, nor can they control their own feelings or have negative emotional strategies. On the contrary, a confident student has natural expression, light mood and courage to take risks. Therefore, such a student will try to seize every opportunity to practice and relieve his depression, hence achieving better efficiency and result.

Personality of the learner influences the choice of language learning strategies, during which an excellent learner is able to choose the strategies fit for him. There are students who are afraid to learn in the company of the students who are better than them. For such type of students the teacher has to make the peer group in which they can work with the learner who

**DR. ABHILASA KAUSHIK**

4P a g e



is inferior to them this encourages their aptitude of learning; while there are some other students who are challenge seeking and would like to have a group with those who are better than them thus by competing with such students they can show their superiority. The language teacher can make the group as per the aptitude of the learner which will help motivating them.

## ➤ **Interrelationship of Language and Culture**

In our efforts to teach students English, we also cannot ignore the value of their primary/home language and culture. A few paragraphs in the New Mexico State Department of Education's technical assistance manual, *Recommended* 141

*Procedures for Language Assessment* (1989), express this relationship between language and culture very eloquently. Language is the most overt expression of culture, and most of the learning process, both in school and in the home, is carried out through language. The child must relate and accommodate what has been learned in the home to the language and culture of the school. For the child whose language and culture does not match that of the school, this can be, in itself, a challenge (Collier: 1989; Cummins: 1981) When we recognize that our success in life depends on our educational experiences to a high degree, we realize that we must use the home language and culture of the child as tools for cognitive development in the curriculum so as not to deprive these populations of full participation in the educational process.

Culture and language are bound together so tightly that learning a new language requires learning a new culture and thus a new way of viewing the world. Thus culture is obviously an important factor that affects SLA as it causes the learners to misunderstand a linguistic concept if it does not exist in their own tongue and it helps to make them understand certain aspects easily which are similar in their mother tongue.

For example in Hindi we use plural forms of verbs and pronouns to show respect which causes the learners construct the sentences like 'Gandhiji was a great man. They are respected by all'. Cultural variations cause problems in SLA in terms of vocabulary also, for example in English we have only one word 'brother in law' for *devar*, *jeth*, *saala* in Hindi; *bhabhi*, *nanad*, *jethani*, *devrani*, *saali* for 'sister in law'; *mama*, *chacha*, *tau*, *mausa*, *phupha* for 'uncle'. The English words do not convey the same feeling as they do in Hindi and it causes problems because the learners do not find the equivalents in the second language. As a result they forcibly coin words like 'cousin brother' and 'cousin sister'. The teacher thus will have to introduce such activities and games in the class which have the cultural touch for example the teaching of idioms through some parallels in Indian culture. The idiomatic expressions are also the result of language built from the sociocultural regulation. But as the two languages





i.e. L1 and L2 have different cultural and historical contexts, certain idioms appear very unacceptable to the students. Some idioms that appear very much similar are as follows:

- At one's finger tips- *Anguliyon par hona*
- At dagger's drawn- *Talvaren Tan jana*
- Add fuel to the flame- *Aag me ghee dalna*
- Blow one's trumpet- *Apna raag alaapna*
- Build castles in the air- *Aasman me kile banana/ Khayali pulav pakaana*
- Breathe one's last- *Aakhiri saans lena*
- Bolt from the blue- *Bijli girna/ Gaaz girna*

The teacher can create interest in the learners and motivate the students to make usage of such characteristics expressions in his/her teaching and motivate the students to use such idioms in their real life as well.

## ➤ **Home Environment and Parents' Role**

Home is the place from where a child starts his first learning. So the atmosphere of the home, relations of family members with children and time spent with them are crucial factors which can help in motivating the students. . All these things build and nourish habits, character and attitude of a child towards things. These are also dependent on parents 'education, profession and system of society. The amount and quality of time that parents spend with their children, the emotional health of parents, the level of stimulation, the physical environment at home (Report to Australian Government by Department of Education and Training:2005), and the affection and warmth provided in the parent-child relationship are factors that also affect considerably. In creating home environment for learning, parents 'education plays a major role (Aturupane, Glewwe and Winswnieski: 2009).

This stimulation is in different form; reward on performance, enquiring about study progress, provision of educational requirements and facilities without any delay and hesitation, kind words, passionate behavior etc help to motivate children to learn and build their confidence. Parents are the centre of all activities and a source of inspiration for their children. It all depends upon parents as to what kind of learning atmosphere they are providing their children but in the country like India where maximum parents are not educated even this cannot be expected from them. Thus the teacher will have to decide the strategy taking care of this factor that at home environment cannot be much expected.

## ➤ **Academic Background of the Learner**

**DR. ABHILASA KAUSHIK**

6P a g e



Academic background plays important role in motivating the learner to learn a second language. The students who have been taught through grammar translation method are in the habit of translating everything and cramming. They are keener to go accurate from the very beginning and thus not store courage enough to speak being afraid of inaccuracy. While the students who have been taught through direct or situational method try speaking or presenting themselves without the hesitation.

### ➤ Preferred Study Conditions

There are certain study conditions which encourage motivation in the ESL learners. Teenagers tend to be heavily influenced by their peer groups. In second language learning, peer pressure often undermines the goals set by parents and teachers. It often reduces the desire of the student to work towards attaining a near native pronunciation. They are constantly under fear of being labeled and mocked at by their peers. In working with secondary school students, it is important to keep these peer influences in mind and to foster a positive image for proficiency in the second language.

Students need to have positive and realistic role models who demonstrate the value of being proficient in more than one language. It is also helpful for students to read about the personal experiences of people from diverse language backgrounds. Through discussions of the challenges experienced by others, they can develop a better understanding of their own challenges.

Support from home is very important for successful second language learning. Some educators believe that English speaking parents should speak only in English at home. In fact parents should value both the native language and English, communicate with their children in whichever language they are most comfortable in, and show support for and interest in their children's progress.

### ➤ Use of Media for Learning English

Media is the major factor of motivation these days as the students more tend to use mobile phones and social media etc. Use of these media has encouraged the learners to learn English and use it. Television is one of the most popular media at home that is being used for the purpose of amusement and it influences kids' life considerably (Canadian Teachers' Federation in 2004) but it depends on the time spent watching TV, whether they watch it alone or with adults, or whether their parents talk to them about what they watch on television. To minimize the negative effects of television, it is important to understand its use in a positive way. Parents should pay attention to what their children see and use it for learning purpose. For example English that is frequently being used in all the programmes can be helpful in enriching their vocabulary. According to Allan, Peter and Katherine (2000) new technologies have created demands for educating students in new skills and new media

**DR. ABHILASA KAUSHIK**

7P a g e

supports the teaching of these skills better than traditional instructional methods. The language teacher can include the use of audio, video clips and such media to encourage the students in learning English.

#### ➤ **Differences between L1 and L2**

Those aspects of L2 which are entirely different from L1 are difficult for the second language learner to handle. For example in Hindi the sentence structure is SOV but in English it is SVO that can cause confusion in the students. Similarly some sounds are entirely different from Hindi like: /, /æ/, /w/, //, /θ/ etc and it becomes difficult for the learner to pronounce them.

In tenses also constructions like 'I am studying from last two hours' by ESL learners are common because adding the time phrase does not change the tense in Hindi. Thus the teacher will have to introduce such games and activities which reduces their difficulty level for such linguistic problems.

#### **Problems faced by the ESL teacher due to lack of Motivation**

Because of the above mentioned factors there are different types of problems which a language teacher faces while teaching the ESL learners. Few of them are as follows:

- The habit of following rules delays speaking and makes them hesitant.
- The students are hesitant and lack confidence.
- They do not understand the pronunciation of the teacher in classroom.
- They have regional influence in pronunciation.
- They do not even have the required vocabulary.
- They go in for translation into and out of L1 all the time.
- They use contracted forms and symbols.
- They have regional influence in their pronunciation.

#### **Strategies to Resolve the Problems**

Here are some strategies which can be taken care of while dealing with the above mentioned problems. Following guidelines while planning the class can be observed:

- Giving them subject matter as per their level
- Beginning with bilingual method





- Conducting extra classes and giving special attention and care
- Using Task Based Learning
- Giving separate assignments to them as per their level
- Asking them the problems they face and suggesting solutions to them
- Making them speak short sentences
- Suggesting them books that may prove helpful
- Peer tutoring
- Giving some common sentences to speak
- Providing remedial classes
- Applying 'Each one teach one' method
- Giving them simple tasks like picture description, surrounding observation etc

### **SLA Games to Encourage Motivation**

#### **Sound Round:**

This game helps the students to learn various aspects of phonetics viz. pronunciation, stress, intonation etc. In it there are different rounds moving from easy to tough using different software like, Speech Solution, Vision net, Globe-arena, Rosseta Stone etc. are used.

In the first round students are made to listen to pronunciation of words team-wise (two participants in each) and they have to spell that word. Here words like paper, pepper, man, men, get, gate, gait, pen, pan, pain, refuse, refuge, reason, region, say, says, said, sad, advice, advise, etc are given which are easy to spell provided the students know the exact way to pronounce the words as they sound to be quite similar in. So through this round the students come to know the discrimination between similar sounds which enables them to learn the correct pronunciation.



In its second round they are made to listen to a word which has a certain stress pattern in it along with a description of why that particular syllable is to be stressed. Based on this, they have to pronounce similar words like they are described that in the words which are noun to verb as in 'present' (noun) and present (verb). If a word ends the suffix -logy then the preceding syllable has to be stressed as in 'technology'.

After describing this they will be given a list of words viz. conduct (noun), conduct(noun), conduct (verb), object (noun), object (verb), biology, psychology, zoology, apology etc where they have to pronounce those words with correct stress. This round proves helpful in making them learn the stress pattern.

In the third round they are given a quiz to practice intonation, where they are given sentences which they have to pronounce following suitable rising or falling tone as per the meaning, viz.

A: What is your name?

B: My name is Tarun.

A: Where do you come from?

B (angrily): From Mansarovar.

A: Are you a student?

B: No. I'm a teacher.

In its fourth round they are given some difficult words like pedagogue, pedagogy, cavalry, chivalry, champagne, Champaign etc. and they have to pronounce it correctly. Through this they learn many new words their pronunciation and spelling.

This game attracts the students because it is played with the help of software and helps them in learning pronunciation through different rounds where curiosity and interest are maintained throughout.

#### ➤ **Mirror the Error**

In this game the students are made to sit in groups and are given some erroneous sentences. The group members have to spot the error and correct it. A member can avail the chance twice (overall), where for the first time the team will get 2 points whereas the second time if the same person answers, then, the team will be given one point only. If the team cannot answer, then it is passed to the next team and they get bonus point for this.



This game is helpful in making the students aware of common errors. Through this they come to know the common trends that are to be avoided. The structures here will be like:

Does she knows you?

He was charged by murder.

Both the wife and husband love one another.

He is superior than me.

One of his cousins are doctor.

His second novel is not as good as his first one was.

This game makes them rack their mind to check and revise different syntactic aspects learned by them. When they answer incorrectly they are explained the correct answers with similar or contrast structures that can help them derive the exact usage. This game is liked and given importance by the learners as these types of questions are often asked in competitive exams. Thus this game also proves helpful in keeping the class vibrant.

Using such games and strategies while teaching an ESL class, the language teacher can do wonders in inculcating intrinsic motivation gradually which can definitely led to a successful ESL classroom.

### Conclusion

Thus it can be said that the heterogeneity of linguistic competence, learning styles, strategies, and degree of social investment of language learners calls for greater research efforts into pedagogical methodologies that depart from the prescriptive syllabus and encourage the reflective and intuitive capacity of teachers. Motivation is the factor which can definitely bridge the gap between the differences caused by this heterogeneity of linguistic, social and psychological factors in the ESL classroom.

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**DR. ABHILASA KAUSHIK**

11P a g e



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