

# THE IMPACT OF MOTIVATION ON SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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## ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the role of motivation in language learning, especially second language acquisition. It compares two different subjects who are learning English yet they have various background of family, language learning experience, and interests. They were provided pre-, post-tests to testify their knowledge; moreover, they were interviewed to know how they are encouraged to learn a language. The paper indicates the importance of intrinsic motivation for second language learners.

## INTRODUCTION

As the world has been found to become like a “global village”, English is likely to appear one of the domain languages. The majority of people can learn it as a second language. However, in the second language acquisition, it is irrefutable fact that learners may face several problems including language competence, influence of first language, lexical resource deficiency, even sometimes psychological and emotional attitudes of acquiring a second language yet there are various hypothesis and theories to tackle down these difficulties. So, this case study aims to investigate motivation as a key factor of language learning.

Looking in a little in more detail, in this case study, 2 objects, who are currently studying at the Uzbekistan State World Language University in the same course with different groups ( Russian, Uzbek) whereas own various social background and also language level, have been selected to indicate how motivation impacts on their present study and future plans for educational perspectives.

Main objectives of this case study are threefold:

- To analyze motivation as a main factor of learning language more effectively like strong self-study skills
- To find out motivation as a tool of language acquisition whether continuing a career or learning the culture of second language group
- To investigate why motivation might disappear ( demotivation, amotivation)

During the observation, subjects have been asked some tasks to do, given general questions, additionally, some research work, articles which are relevant for the case study have been learnt and collected to compare with the case study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Initially, the first time when a new language is introduced to a learner, first language may totally affect to comprehend some new rules. Moreover, some people start learning when they are old enough after critical period. Although aforementioned trouble or other problematic issues will be obstacle for language learning, some of the candidates reveal high language proficiency within different language skills. In fact, taking into count their language capacity, emotional status mostly something fosters them to be the best learners. It is exactly motivation. Initially, motivation has been found to be one of the most important factor in language acquisition showing motivation as the second strongest predictor of success in language learning after only aptitude ( Skehan, 1989 cited in Susan M 2008). It mostly leads to an exact goal, changes in behavior (a desire to make parents happy by personal achievements, various effective study habits) a strong willingness to accomplish the goal and other attitudes. Furthermore, Susan (2008) assumed motivation owns a function of time and success, precisely, motivation is not permanent, it doesn't stay the same that it was. Sometimes alterations happen till reaching success. As a result, it can include some stages such as *preactional stage* motivating generally to choose aim, *actional stage* staying encouraged despite trouble and *postactional stage* finalizing the attempts and observing the results and achievement. (Dornyei, 1998 cited in Susan)

However, succeeding in obtaining the goal easily or hard may influence lessening motivational arousal ( motivational excitement).

Another approval about motivation is provided by Belles- Fortuno that motivation is initially essential point of learning languages in comparison with other affective factors like age, culture, sex, identity and others. To prove this idea, it is selected two different group learners who were edified in secondary education in vocational training and higher education learners as subjects and compared with each other how they are fostered to study. In fact, they had compulsory English level in vocational training which made them study. They have been checked by giving multifarious questionnaires including “agree, disagree” – based questions, yes-no and wh-questions as well as some other questions depending written answers. All data and findings were collected and the total result revealed that university students became better learners due to their inner motivation rather than their opposite representators. Interesting fact that even a language and its culture or friendly atmosphere between a teacher and students, good marks can’t encourage students to learn a language as their internal desire -intrinsic motivation ( Belles- Fortuno,2015) .

Looking through different sources for the case study, the researcher has analyzed that the majority of researchers have used Dornyeni’s approvals in their research work due to the fact that he provides more and different data about what motivation is, its types and also he shows other linguists’ thoughts. To be more precise, motivation is shown as it has responsibility for identifying human behavior via directing or making it energetic. According to Dornyei (1998), motivation is general term of several factors; it doesn’t have specific, certain definition like whether it is affect, cognition, mental energy or response to stimuli, inner force. Unique part of this research is selecting motivation as a process demanding mental procedure! He says: “ motivation is defining it as a process whereby a certain amount of instigation force arises, initiates action, and as long as no other force comes into play to weaken it” (Dornyei,1998). In addition, it accounts for three main components, motivational intensity indicating motivated behavior, desire to learn language and attitude towards the act of learning. It has instrumental and integrative elements ( in Gardner’s it is called the orientations). The former is practical quality and the latter is social and cultural values. He also states that in learning situational

level, it has some components. For instance, they are course-specific, teacher-specific, and Group specific motivational components.

Another point of this research, gender is likely to distinguish in language learning motivation. Finally, He also suggests ten main instructions to motivate language learners.

Another research merely focused on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of people in language learning. “Motivation itself derives from the Latin verb “movera” which means ‘to move’. Motivation influences to perform action and make some choices. It is described with two terms: motivation and magnitude” (Dornyei and Ushioda, 2013 cited in Zaman, 2015). One is eager to learn a language just for fun or according to his interest yet another may learning it owing to having external desire which affects to learn it. Intrinsically motivated learners own their self-desire, self- study skills. Actually, intrinsic motivation firstly was found in animal behavior that they act curiously and playfully without any prize or response for their action. Likely, some people are also talented at learning a language naturally just for themselves yet others may study because of avoiding punishment or achieving good marks. These both motivation types are linked to each other. For example, internally encouraged people may be bored to sit under strict classroom rules but social approvals or good evaluation are supposed to make him motivated. He also defined integrative and instrumental types of motivation.

Finally, after looking through and analyzing some facts, the researcher is going to conduct her case study using Susan’s approvals about motivation and its types, how a factor of time may influence it.

## **PARTICIPANT PROFILE**

Initially, to analyze how motivation can impact on second language learning, two subjects were selected. They are studying at the World Language University, in the same faculty- “ Foreign language and its literature”, as 2<sup>nd</sup> course students. However, they have a huge difference in their social and cultural background, first language acquisition.

The first subject is A. Z. who was born in 1993. Between 2000 and 2009, he studied at secondary school and continued it in the college of Economy till 2012. Z started learning English in 2008 when he was an applicant. He failed twice in higher education and also stopped learning English for some years due to working in the market. After several years' attempt, he became a student in 2017. His first language is Uzbek, but he had a strong desire to continue his educational process even though in his family background, most of the members are just businessmen and there was no language learning atmosphere. They made him stop applying for the university yet he didn't give up. The most interesting fact is that he didn't know Russian as well, but now he is studying at Euro group whose first language is Russian and has been learning Russian language. After gaining enough experience in Russian, now he is preparing for IELTS exam course.

The second subject of this case study is T. S., 20-year- old girl. She started her secondary education in 2005 and continued in Economy College till 2017, entering the university. Her first language is Uzbek, but in her family Russian is a bit predominant so she applied for Russian group. A glance at her family background, her mother is an English teacher and also the other members of family are well-educated. Now, she is studying at intensive course of IELTS as well.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

Primarily, two subjects were observed during some days to analyze their habits, interests, hours spending learning a language and both have problems with different skills of English. For the beginning, they did pre-test to analyze what kind of knowledge level they have, and then they were provided opinion-based test materials to investigate their approvals about English. In the following, some example questions are given (the full questions and answers see in the Appendix):

1. Speaking in English is my\_\_\_\_\_. a) enthusiasm b) hobby  
c) challenge d) irritation e) others
2. While speaking in English I feel \_\_\_\_\_. a) confident b) embarrassed  
c) shy d) nervous e) others
3. I want to improve my English proficiency because:



- a) I want to get a better job
- b) I want to make a good impression about me among people
- c) I want to visit a foreign country where knowing English is a must
- d) It is mandatory for my educational institute e) any other

They chose the answers as their desire. In the next part, they were asked to write a mini essay on the theme of “Why is English important for me?” including the importance of a language and reasons of learning it ( it is also attached in Appendix). Finally, they were called for an interview to ask some questions about themselves and their learning habits. For instance, with the first subject, Z:

**R: Could you tell me any English course that you have found boring and explain why?**

Z: It was my phonetic course in my university. It was really boring. Tell the truth, I did not understand teacher’s explanation and the course book was a bit confused and tedious for me. The latter subject, S responded with another way:

**R: Could you tell me any English courses that you have found boring and explain why?**

S: When I started learning English 5 years ago I went to tutorial courses and my first lesson was very boring because I could not understand this language

## DATA COLLECTION AND FINDINGS

The most interesting part of the case study is gathering all data and comparing the results within two subjects. According to the all results, the first subject showed that he is intrinsically motivated then the latter.

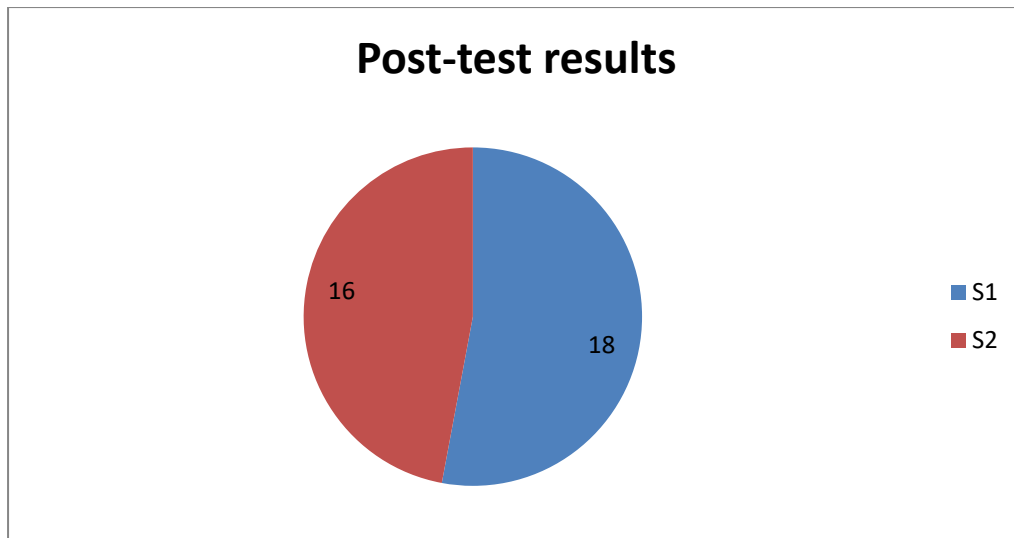
**Initial result of the pre- test :**

Name of the subject	Number of questions	Number of correct answer	Time management	Level
S1- Z	20	17	10 min	intermediate
S2-S	20	15	15min	Pre-intermediate

Firstly, while observing them, one can think that the girl has capacity of learning English the boy. There are several various reasons to prove it. Initially, family background of the female subject is totally opposite of the other. It indicates strong attention to up-bringing of a learner, supportive atmosphere to be educated well, and also the mother who always may help to understand and overcome language learning problems. Another issue is that her gender factor, precisely, she is a girl, she started learning from the early ages but she didn't have to work. Thirdly, the boy has had a gap that he stopped learning and restarted it due to other problems. Especially, the result of test showed their willingness to learn a language. For instance, when they asked why they wanted to improve their English language, the boy answered to visit a foreign country, but for the girl it is only for making good impression amid people. However, during the interview, according to the boy's answers, he has anxiety even he may be easily demotivated due to the teacher's punishment whereas this factor doesn't impact on the girl. Moreover, he is a risk taker when he doesn't know the rule or might face challenges yet it is hardship for the latter to take risks.

On the other hand, according to their essays, the boy has integrative motivation (orientation), he wants to learn a language as he is interested in other culture, communicating with others while S is learning it due to her mother's demand and working foreign countries or any international companies.

In their intensive course on IELTS, S is getting much more interested due to the instructor's attitude on her, maybe her group also has motivated her. After two-week observation, post-test was provided again and results showed S has had a slight increase in both timing and correct answers (S1-18-10min/ S2-16-12min respectively).



All in all, all things were observed and gathered, one can state that Z has higher English language proficiency and a strong desire exactly due to intrinsic motivation comparing to S. The reason is that she may lose her interest any period of language learning because of being encouraged external.

## CONCLUSION AND FURTHER IMPLICATIONS

In conclusion of the case study, Susan's research matches with observed subjects' learning. In reality, if a learner is motivated internally, it will be easy to ponder everything with inner desire. Learning obstacle, other impacts which may interfere the learner will be tackled down. However, sometimes motivation types may alter to one another revealing both in one learner like S2 (S)'s awareness of language. Multifarious interesting activities, any type of creative methods, friendly atmosphere in the classroom and supportive teacher and friends has made S2 learn the target language to improve her language skills rather than coming to the lesson under parental supervision or just avoiding punishment of a teacher. Conversely, S1 is continuing to be really encouraged and planning to learn Korean language after becoming advanced level on English language. He himself works on his lexical resource to expand, speak different topics. As for the further suggestions, S1 should keep improving and practicing in this pace whereas S2 may use different multimedia lessons in order not to be bored and also intensify her understanding in English. It is stated that even movies enable to influence language learning via improving learners' understanding, via subtitles they may boost reading skills and learn



some new daily words than academic versions. Additionally, both subjects have a capacity of taking benefits from movies to broaden their horizon on culture of the English- spoken countries later may enhance their interest of learning. Speaking skills, fluency and pronunciation also will be increased by imitating heroes, their appearance and way of speaking.

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