

Types of Motivation among Sudanese Learners

Dr. Mona Elamin Elnour Ali

Assistant Professor

Neelain University

Faculty of Arts, English Department

&

Shagraa University, Afif College of Education

Saudi Arabia

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to investigate the kinds of motivation Sudanese EFL learners in Neelain university graduate students (fourth year) have. The sample selected were (40) out of (81) students (20) male and (20) female students enrolling in English Department. The tool of the study contains only one question which was asked naturally while they talk freely about their English language learning, which gave freedom in getting information from the interviewees.

The analysis of the answers showed that the majority of male EFL students (80%) studied English, so they can change their lives and immigrate to European countries, to be a part of these communities. So they practiced integrative motivation.

Majority of female EFL students (60%) studied English Language to be able to enroll in higher studies to get Master degree in English Language, and find opportunities in teaching in the Gulf area. So they practiced instrumental motivation.

Introduction

Learning a language seems to be a long complex task. A person has to reach beyond the limits of his first language, and enters in the domain of a new concept, new way of thinking and feeling, so it is not an easy step; many variables are involved in this acquisition process. Students behavior in acquiring another language vary a lot, some students loose their passion to learn a language, some of them skip classes of language, and others are physically present at classroom, but they are mentally absent they fail to experience learning. Others do not participate in the production stage by answering questions orally or written. Many students pretend to answer questions, but in fact they only write the questions waiting for the girls or the teacher to provide them with the right answer.

Teaching a language successfully in the classroom, can lead some students to achieve fluency in a foreign language in classroom teaching, the major task is to nurture students curiosity as a motivation for learning. This is important because curiosity is motivation that is intrinsic to learning it is an internal drive that directs behavior towards some end. So the teaching learning process, should be something that propels students minds or dangle in front to make them more active and vibrant, it is a very important factor in the teaching learning process.

Brown (2007:168) states that motivation is a star player in the cast of characters assigned to second language learning scenarios around the world Motivation means the psychological catalyst to earn or learn, its result includes the satisfaction about things that person has done and the enhancement to maintain doing it forever. Functionally reinforcement known through its consequences on the behavior, if the behavior's appurtenances lead to increase the likelihood of behavior in the future these appurtenances will be enhanced and what happened will be as motivated. It is wrong to say, for example: I have used reinforcement but failed to strengthen behavior, because motivation is to strengthen behavior. If it did not lead to the strengthening of behavior, it is not reinforcement.

Statement of the problem:

The present researcher observes that many Sudanese EFL learners seem to be more motivated to learn languages, although they are weak in English Language, but they got much desire to the participate or discuss or ask questions through course of learning in English classes. Students become cheerful and active outside the classroom, and inside the classroom, moreover their performance in reading or writing is improving, but they find it difficult to speak this research paper tries to shed lights on this phenomenon, to study the causes, and discuss the reasons

Objectives:

The research paper aims:

- 1 – To see the factors behind Sudanese EFL learners motivation.
- 2 – To see the kind of motivation Sudanese foreign language learners have.
- 2 – To analyze the reasons behind this phenomenon.

Review of Literature:

Motivation in general is defined by Wikipedia as theoretical construct used to explain behavior, or what causes a person to want to repeat a behavior or vice versa. A motive is what prompts the person to act in a certain way, or at least develop an inclination for specific behavior. It is important to focus on the efforts of pioneers and their studies in the field of language acquisition as (Skinner, Gardener, Cummins, and Krashen). The second language acquisition theories studied the way in which the individual becomes able to learn another language or more other than his first language. An individual who is skilled in learning two languages and can speak spontaneously is considered bilingual. The studies on the subject of language acquisition can be divided into two sections: The first section related to study mother tongue Language (L1) and the second section on second language (L2) ‘target language’. Cummins (1979, 1984, 1991) stated that the relationship between mother tongue and second language was great, many studies which have been conducted in this regard have shown the importance of cognitive development in mother tongue (L1) and their impact on learning a second language (L2). The results of Anton and Di Camilla study (1998) referred to first language and how it is useful in teaching and learning second language.

Skinner’s theory (1968) discussed the relationship between motivation and simulation as primary factors in language acquisition. The behaviorists regarded learning a foreign language (EFL) as a simulation of learners to what they hear, and then develop their habits in the foreign language during a repetitive routine. According to the theory, learners also try to link what they know in their first language with what they want to know of the second language.

Some researchers believe that the language teaching which is based on these principles of the simulation and reinforcement does not provide a comprehensive explanation for language acquisition, although it has a role to play in helping the children learn the target language especially in the early stages of learning. The principle of reinforcement may lose its value in many situations because the children learn and acquire language regardless of reinforcement. Skinner’s theory has been criticized by more scientists, one of them was Chomsky (1970), he said that Skinner was vague and imprecise in his dealing with subjects such as language, so that no can talk about the exciting and response in the analysis of the complex grammatical structures.

Skinner was trying to propose reasonable benefit of the conditional concepts for language acquisition; it is possible to keep away beyond the laboratory observation and present facts. The school of Skinner has used the strategy of offering external incentives and rewards to increase learner’s motivation to learn.

This has succeeded to limit extent, but with the advancement of science these days, there have been significant developments with regard to the brain and nerves which should encourage new studies. The term motivation in second language learning context is seen according to Gardner (1985, 10) as “the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity; more specifically, motivation is conceptualized to subsume three components, motivational intensity, desire to learn the language and the satisfaction experienced in this activity.” Thus according to Gardener’s theory, motivation indicates a kind of central mental engine that subsumes efforts, want/ will ‘ cognition’ and task-enjoyment ‘affect’.

Crookes & Schmidt (1991) identifies motivation as the learner's orientation with regard to the goal of learning a second language. It means that learner's positive attitude towards the target language group and the desire to integrate into the target language community, instrumental motivation that Hudson (2000) characterized as the desire to obtain something practical or concrete from the study of a second language.

Instrumental motivation underlies the goal to gain some social or economic reward through L2 achievement. Another kind of motivation is when the learner feels motivated by the engagement in the activity itself, especially if it is at the exact level of difficulty they feel that they can cope with. Psychologically it is defined as the process that initiates, guides and maintains goal-oriented behaviors. Motivation is what causes us to act, whether getting a glass of water to reduce thirst or reading a book to gain knowledge. Psychologists have proposed a number of different theories of motivation, including drive theory, instinct theory and humanistic theory. Dornyei and Otto (1998, 65) define motivation in second language learning as "the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, priorities, operationalised and successfully or unsuccessfully acted out."

"Motivation also goes in both directions. High motivation is one factor that causes successful learning; in reverse, successful learning causes high motivation. The process of creating successful learning which can spur high motivation may be under the teacher's control, if not the original motivation. The choice teaching materials and the information content of the lesson, for example, should correspond to the motivation of the students." (Cook, 2008, 139). Also Cook referred in his book that there are personality differences which affect the motivation to learn the second language as "Social person learns a second language better than a reserved, shy person. Again the connection is not usually straightforward. Some researchers have investigated the familiar division between extrovert and introvert personalities. In Jungian psychology the distinction applies to two tendencies in the way that people interact with the world. Some people relate to the objects outside them, some to the interior world." (p. 152). For motivation and teaching, Cook (2008, 138) stated in his book that: "Students will find it difficult to learn a second language in the classroom if they have neither instrumental or integrative motivation, as is probably often the case in school language teaching or if they feel negatively about bilingualism or are too attached monolingualism." According to (Dornyei, 2001) "making learning an enjoyable experience is crucial to maintaining learners' motivation".

Teachers should be able to determine their assumptions for good teaching and they can develop their own ideas regarding the individual differences between the students and their motivation to speak the second language. For the characteristics for the motivated students, Gardner mentioned in his study some of them as "the individual motivated is goal directed, expends efforts, is persistent, is attentive, has desires (wants), exhibits positive affect, is aroused, has expectancies, demonstrates self-confidence (self-efficacy) and has reasons (Motives)" (p 2). Finally, both teachers and researchers regard motivation as one of the key factors that affect the achievement and success of second language learning.

Methodology of the study:

The analytic descriptive qualitative approach was used, the tool of the research was an interview, contains only one question, which is asked naturally while they talk about their English language study this gives freedom in getting information from the interviewees. The students were asked what they are going to do after graduation. The subjects were chosen randomly from Neelain University, (fourth year). They were forty students, twenty males and twenty females. The results were analyzed, then interpreted and reported as a consequence.

Results:

This study was based on learning English as a foreign language in Sudan, particularly in Neelain University. The study aims to focus on the two types of motivation; instrumental and integrative and their effect on speaking English.

Finding:

Male students:

The study finds that (70%) of them were answering during the course of the interview fluently, in a brave and initiative way, but (30%) of them were shy and unmotivated. On the other hand female students (60%) were motivated, fluent and courageous, (40%) were unmotivated, shy and hesitant. The answers of the participants were diverse. Male student's answers were:

80% of the students want to immigrate to European countries to be a part of the western communities and they are improving their speaking skills with different methods so their accent will be closer to the native speaker. This group had an integrative motivation. 20% of the students want to work in oil or telecommunication companies. So this group has an instrumental motivation.

Female students answers were: 60% of the students said they want to enroll in higher studies, so they can find better jobs as teaching staff in Gulf universities with excellent salary. So they have instrumental motivation. 20% of the students, want to work in language institutes and schools in Sudan, they also have instrumental motivation. 20% of the students have different answers, some of them said they want to marry and stay home to raise children, some do not want to work or study further, because they study English language against their will.

From the findings it appears that the majority (80%) of Sudanese EFL male learners study languages , specially English , so as to find their future and dreams in immigrating to the first world countries and settle their . So they can escape their miserable life in their country, where they suffer economically and socially. More over they think to find comfortable delightful life in the West. On the other hand , female learners (60%) also study languages especially English hoping to change the financial circumstances they practice every day and to wipe away poverty and misery , they want to earn more money hoping to secure their family lives. To conclude, motivation with its two types integrative and instrumental plays a great role in directing learning in many Sudanese EFL students life.

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