

Factors Contributing Students Motivation Toward English Language Learning

Ahmad Anwari

English Literature and Language Department

Education Faculty of Kandahar University

Kandahar, Afghanistan

E-mail: ahmad.anwari1198@gmail.com

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to identify those factors that students are motivated toward English language learning. Furthermore, the study applied quantitative approach and the instrument was questionnaire to collect the data, and the questionnaire have been adopted, the software for analyzing the data were SPSS and calculated the percentage for the findings. Moreover, the major findings revealed as follow; first, English helps/will help me meet foreigners, second, English will be helpful for my career, third; English helps/will help me in my travel overseas and fourth; Studying English can be important for me because it will help me to further my studies.

Keywords: Factors of Motivation, English Language Learning, At High School, Kandahar City

1. Introduction

English is a West Germanic language that was first spoken in early medieval England and eventually became a global lingua franca. Through the worldwide influence of the British Empire, and later the United States, Modern English has been spreading around the world since the 17th century. English may not be the most spoken language in the world, but it is the official language of 53 countries and spoken by around 400 million people across the globe. Being able to speak English is not just about being able to communicate with native English speakers; it is the most common second language in the world. If you want to speak to someone from another country, then the chances are that you will both be speaking English to do this. English is the dominant business language and it has become almost a necessity for people to speak English if they are to enter a global workforce (Sneddon, 2003).

Research from all over the world shows that cross-border business communication is most often conducted in English and many international companies expect employees to be fluent in English. Many of the world's top films, books and music are published and produced in English. Therefore, by learning English you will have access to a great wealth of entertainment and will be able to have a greater cultural understanding. (ELC, 2013). According to a

report by Education First, English is the language of the internet. An estimated 565 million people use the internet every day, and an estimated 52 percent of the world's most visited websites are displayed in the English language. Learning English is important as it gives you access to over half the content on the internet. Knowing how to read English will allow you access to billions of pages of information which may not be otherwise available (ELC, 2013). According to the MOE language policies, English language education is emphasized in secondary school, but there is some support given to key primary schools which are mainly in urban areas (Cheng, 1999).

The Online Oxford Dictionaries define motivation as “a reason or reasons for acting or behaving in a particular way with interest or enthusiasm” (Online Oxford Dictionary, 2013). Motivation is one of the main determining factors of success in developing a second or foreign language. Motivation is an internal process that makes a person move toward a goal. Motivation, like intelligence, can't be directly observed. Instead, motivation can only be inferred by noting a person's behavior. Gardner and Lambert (1972) argued that motivation to learn a second language distinguishes itself from motivation to learn other subjects. They reasoned that a second language learner not only learns new knowledge such as grammar and vocabulary, this learner needs also show willingness to be integrated with the community speaking this second language.

Researchers have proposed theories that try to explain human motivation. However, motivation is a complex phenomenon and the more its constructs are understood the better we are able to understand the extent to which we can influence it. Teachers can cultivate student motivation to varying degrees and play a central role in activating and sustaining it. Motivation is internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in people to do something with interest. Motivation is very important in learning special in language learning (Business Dictionary, 2019). Motivation's definition by stating that integrative motivation refers to “positive attitudes and feelings toward the target language group”. Furthermore, the author stated motivation is rather a “process whereby a certain amount of instigation arises, initiates action, and persists as long as no other force comes into play to weaken it and thereby terminate action, or until the planned outcome has been reached” (Dörnyei, 2007). English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has no particular communicative function nor has it “any special status or use over any foreign language” (Bhaskaran n.d).

As most teachers of a foreign language can attest to, the level of a student's motivation plays a central role in their foreign or second language learning and acquisition. Although there is no empirical evidence to prove that motivation leads to a successful outcome, it is accepted that motivation is one of the main determining factors of success in developing a second or foreign language. The difficulty for educators and researchers is in trying to capture the construct of motivation for clearly it is a complex phenomenon (Scheidecker and Freeman 1999). That being said, the more these constructs are understood, the better we, as teachers, are able to see the extent to which we can exert influence and be in a better position to improve motivation in our students.

1.1 Problem statement

Motivation in English language is one of the effective factor for learning, which students could learn with interest and enjoys, the problem for this study conform that students are not motivated as well as possible and the author want to find the level of motivation for learning English language. Magid (2011) has argued the same problem among Chinese learners.

1.2 Significance of the study

This research will help all the teachers and students of high schools and higher educations to know about the level and the factors that students are motivated toward English language learning, and to use different strategies for improving motivation toward language learning.

1.3 Purpose statement

The major aim for this research is to identify the factors that students are motivated toward English language learning

1.4 Objective

To figure out the major factors that students are motivated toward English language learning.

1.5 Research question

What are the factors that students ate motivated toward English language learning?

2. Literature review

In this part of the study the author wants to describe all those factors that students are motivated toward English language learning in other scholars' views. A study that has conducted by Lamb (2004) argued is his study that the respondents have responded that majority of them are motivated toward English language learning because of the follow factors: they thought that English will help their careers in the future, it's a pleasure to study, can help me meet foreigners & learn about foreign counties, my parents encourage me to learn it and It's an important school subject.

Recently, Liu (2007) conducted a study on the motivation of university students in China toward learning English and the result shows that most of the respondents agree with that they can learn about foreign cultures and countries and English will help them to connect the foreign people and English help them to travel on every side of the world. The survey conducted by Matsukawa and Tachibana (1996) Most of the Chinese participants had a strong interest in

English, were involved in their English studies, and exhibited positive attitudes toward learning English. The main finding was that the most important reason why the Chinese participants studied English was because they believed that being fluent in English would be beneficial for their future. Tachibana et al. (1996) conducted a survey with 442 senior middle school students from China who were given a similar questionnaire to the one that was used in the survey carried out by Matsukawa and Tachibana (1996). The results from both surveys were quite similar.

According to Gao (2004) his doctoral dissertation on the motivation of Chinese learners of English is an example of a study employing a broader framework and identified the following five motivational dimensions of Chinese learners of English: integrativeness, appraisal of English class, linguistic self-confidence, instrumentality, direct contact with foreigners. According to the study of Magid, (2011) has conducted a study on students' motivation toward English language learning at Chain's schools and argued that follow factors: to learn English is interesting, like to have foreign friends, English fluency is good for the future.

According to the study of Ngo (2015) and figured out in the result of his study the follow factors that students are motivated toward that: to learn English because of interest, to learn English due to being required to do so or to learn English to avoid negative feelings such as guilt, these t major findings of the above research that students are motivated toward English language learning. A study that has conducted by Lin and Detaramani (1998) about the factors that students are motivated toward English language learning and claimed that respondents have responded that they are learning English because they think that English will broaden my future option. A study that has conducted by Gardner (2001) claimed that most of pupil are motivated toward English language learning for the follow integrative motivational factors: I learn English to know more about the world, I learn English to communicate with others and English helps me in my travel overseas, and defined them as major factors in his study. Another study has shown that students are motivated for learning English language because they are trying to communicate with non-native speakers of English language in an international environment (Crystal,2003). A big body of literature has conducted by Sifakis (2004) even argued in his study that English is an international language, which students are motivated toward it because of this reason that English is an international communication language.

Yashima (2002) has conducted a study about motivational learning of English language and claimed that students are motivated for learning an international language in which includes the students feel that they can work or study,

readiness to interact with global. The lack of identification with native speakers of English as a significant motivating factor was demonstrated in a number of studies in a variety of settings (Lamb, 2004; Warden & Lin, 2000). Ngo (2015) has claimed in his thesis that the relationships of lectures are positively affected learners' motivation toward learning of English language, which the factors for relationships have numbered as follow; feel related/close to lecturers, feel competent and autonomous in their learning, feel safe in the learning and be open and welcome students' feedback and/or criticisms.

A study that has conducted by Kitjaroonchai (2013) and the participants have answered that they motivated in learning English language because they of the follow factors: Studying English can be important for me because other people will respect me more, Studying English can be important for me because it will help me to get an ideal job in, studying English can be important for me because it will help me to further my studies, Studying English is important to me because it will help me when I travel abroad, studying English can be important for me because it will make me a more knowledgeable person. In Dubai, Qashoa (2006) examined students' integrative and instrumental motivation for learning English in UAE state secondary school, and the findings showed that the students have a higher degree of instrumental motivation than integrative one. These students indicated that they learn English because they want to obtain a better job since the labor market offers higher-paying job for those who are competent in English. In Thailand, Choosri and Intharaksa (2011) investigated the vocational students on the relationship between motivation and their language learning achievement and they indicated that English is necessary for their future study as well as career opportunity.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

As the present study tried to identify the factors that students are motivated toward English language learning at Kandahar city schools. The study is descriptive in nature in which a quantitative questionnaire has been used to collect data. Descriptive quantitative approach examines the phenomenon by collecting the data numerically. Moreover, "Survey research designs are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population" (Creswell, 2012).

3.2 Population & Sampling

The participants of the study were 100 students (Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth) form High school, which has been selected based on (Morgan) through simple random sampling. According to Creswell (2012) in simple random sampling, the researcher selects participants for the sample so that any individual had an equal probability of being selected from the population. The intent of simple random sampling is to choose the individual to be sampled who will be the representative of the population.

3.3 Instrument

This study adopted a questionnaire on motivation toward English language learning Scale designed by Véronique Saheb (2014). The questionnaire comprised of 10 items. In addition, the first part of the questionnaire comprised of demographic information of the participants and the second part comprised of items based on five-point Likert-Scale, which were the factors for motivation of English language learning.

3.4 Validity and reliability of the Questionnaire

Before the dividing of the instrument (questionnaire) among learners, for the establishment of the questionnaire's validity, the researcher consulted with supervisor and instructor lecturer for creative feedback and comments. The lecturer advised for the structure, statements and Likert scales of the questionnaire and the adjustments with objectives. After entering the data to SPSS, the consistency of the questionnaire items was 0.69 Cronbach's alpha. It seems that the questionnaire was reliable.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

Prior to data collection, the researcher sought consent from the head of the faculty. Students were also informed of the nature of the study and they were assured that their participation is voluntary and their names would not be revealed in the publication of this research. After seeking the consent of the research participants, the questionnaire was distributed among them and they were directed to fill up the questionnaire in the presence of the researcher. All the research participants were assured that they would be given access to this study once it is completed. All the participants responded to the questionnaire and handed over to the researcher.

3.6 Data Analysis procedures

In order to answer the first and second research questions, data were performed in SPSS (version, 24) in which researcher calculated percentage to determine the causes of English the factors that students are motivated toward English language learning among the participants.

4. Findings

The follow table 1 shows the demographic information of participant in the categories of gender, age, native language and classes of participants.

Table 1

The following tables revealed the result for the research question which aimed to determine the factors the students are motivated toward English language learning.

	Characteristics	No of Participations	Percentage
Gender	Male	100	100%
Age of participants	15-20	80	80%
	21-25	17	17%
	26-30	2	2%
	upper30	0	0%
Native language	Pashto	96	96%
	Dari	4	4%
	Other	0	0%
Classes of participants	Ninth	25	25%
	Tenth	25	25%
	Eleventh	25	25%
	Twelfth	25	25%

Table 2:

Shows the finding of the research question with Mean and Standard Division.

the above table shows the factors that students are motivated toward English language learning, the first and highest

Statmetnts	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
English helps/will help me meet foreigners	98	1.5000	.78975
English will be helpful for my career	99	1.5051	.61235
English helps/will help me in my travel overseas	99	1.7576	.88168
Studying English can be important for me because it will help me to further my studies	99	1.7677	.98797
English helps/will help me learn about other cultures, values and thoughts	97	1.7938	.99936
I need to know English to enter university	98	1.8163	.98804
My family/friends encourage me to learn English	97	1.8454	.91674
I study English because I like it	100	1.9500	1.02863
Learning English is easy	97	2.4845	1.27568
Outside the class, I watch films, listen to songs or read in English	98	3.0612	1.33792

factor is that when meet foreigners, it encourages them to learn this language (M=1.5000, SD=0.78975), the second finding is that English will help them to improve their careers and jobs (M=1.5051, SD=0.61235) and the third finding is that students are motivated to travel over the world and could speak as well by English (M=1.7576, SD=0.88168).

5. Discussion

In this part of the study the researcher is going to discuss the major findings that students have shown their agreement toward them and they are motivated toward the learning of English language learning: first, students

motivated toward English language learning for meeting foreigners, it means that students encouraged toward the learning of English language learning to meet those people who speak English as a native speaker and they like to speak with them, because here in Afghanistan when American soldiers attacked on the Regime of Taliban most of afghans' motivated toward learning of English language and wanted to become a Translator with Americans. the finding is in the line with Saheb (2015). Second: the second major find for the research question is that students are motivated toward the learning of English language be its helpful for their careers and jobs that they want to apply for in the future, it means that English language is very necessary for Appling for job, now a day if some don't know English he/she couldn't work as an educator, so that is the reason that students are motivated toward English language learning. The finding is in the line with Jenkins & Nelson (2005). Third; the third highest result for the research question, which students are motivated toward English language learning is that English will help them to travel everywhere without need to a translator, it means the facilities of travels and journeys encouraged students to learn English. Similarly, the finding is in the line with the findings of Tantip Kitjaroonchai (2012). fourth; the fourth major result for research question is that are motivated toward English learning because it's important for their further studies, it means that students are motivated to improve their further studies. The finding is in the line with the finding of Kyriacou, & Kobori, (1998).

6. Conclusion

English language is an international language, which everyone need to learn for more generalization, furthermore, motivation is one beneficial strategy for learning this language. Moreover, quantitative method approach has applied in the study and instrument was questionnaire to collect the data from participants. The major findings revealed such as: students are learning English to meet foreigners, English is helpful for their career and jobs, help them to travel over the world and English is benefit for their further studies.

7. Recommendation

The following solutions could be addressed by this study in order to solve the problems of learners' motivation toward English language learning:

- The government should prepare motivational seminars to aware the parents to encourage their children for learning English language.

- Parents have the responsibility to support students economically and spiritually.
- Qualified teachers should be aware of different types of motivation.
- Further study may be conducted to explore other factors that students are motivated toward English language learning.

References

- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. Print.
- Bhaskaran Nayar. "ESL/EFL Dichotomy Today: Language Politics or Pragmatics?". *TESOL Quarterly*. Vol. 31, No 1. Spring 1997. PDF file.
- Lamb, M. (2004). Integrative motivation in a globalizing world. *System*, 32(1), 3-19.
- Cheng, X. (1999). On the English teaching quality and continuity in primary school. *Foreign Languages Teaching in Secondary School and Primary School*, 7, 11-14
- Liu, M. (2007). Chinese students' motivation to learn English at the tertiary level. *Asian EFL Journal*, 9(1), 126-146.
- Magid, M. (2011). A validation and application of the L2 motivational self-system among Chinese learners of English (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nottingham).
- Gao, X. (2004). Motivation to learn English in China: Coursebooks, school types and learning outcomes. Doctoral dissertation, University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK.
- Ngo, T. H. (2015). An investigation into students' motivation to learn English in higher education in Vietnam (Doctoral dissertation, Queensland University of Technology).
- Lin, A., & Detaramani, C. (1998). By carrot and by rod: Extrinsic motivation and English attainment of tertiary students in Hong Kong. *Language in Hong Kong at century's end*, 285-301.
- Sneddon, J. N. (2003). *The Indonesian Language, Its History and Role in Modern Society*. Sydney: NSW Press.
- Kitjaroonchai, N. (2013). Motivation Toward English Language Learning of Students in Secondary and High Schools in Education Service Area Office 4, Saraburi Province, Thailand. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 2013, 1(1): 22-33.

- Choosri, C. & Intharaksa, U. (2011). Relationship between motivation and students' English learning achievement: A study of the second year vocational certificate level Hatyai Technical College students.
- Qashoa, S. H. (2006). Motivation among learners of English in the secondary school in the Eastern Coast of the UAE.
- Tantip Kitjaroonchai, N. K. (2012). Motivation toward English language learning of Thai students majoring in English at Asia-Pacific International University. *CATALYST, Journal of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies*, 7(1), 21-40.
- Kyriacou, C., & Kobori, M. (1998). Motivation to learn and teach English in Slovenia. *Educational studies*, 24(3), 345-351.
- Jenkins, E. W., & Nelson, N. W. (2005). Important but not for me: Students' attitudes towards secondary school science in England. *Research in Science & Technological Education*, 23(1), 41-57.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).