

INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION FOR IMPROVING ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

Students in higher education and of course any level of education need English language to achieve academic success both inside and outside the classroom. English language is the language of instruction to all students. With the recognition of English as a global language, it is essential for English language lecturers to support students to achieve academic success and prepare them for the future. Learning English language is important to all students. However, it is natural to assume that students in higher education have maturity and intelligence to cope with English language learning at this level. The assumption that students are taught in English from primary to secondary school and are expected to automatically succeed at higher level of education is a misconception. Accordingly, English language lecturers in higher education expect more from students and are at times deeply disappointed when students

show lack of interest or perform low in English. Motivation is necessary for English language lecturers at higher education. Given the importance of English language to all students in higher education, there is need to provide support for them to improve on their English language learning. This paper therefore explored literature to understand how intrinsic and extrinsic motivation enhances English language teaching and learning in higher education. The paper stresses the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in higher education and concludes with a number of recommendations to help improve English language teaching and learning in higher education.

Key Words: Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation, English language Learning, Higher Education, Students, Lecturers

Introduction

The language of communication in higher education is English. At the same time, English language teaching and learning occur in higher education. English is a language used widely for communication between lecturers and students. Apart from its role in higher education as a language of instruction, English is widely spoken around the world. As globalization continues to spread, effective communication in English is increasingly important for career opportunities. Students need to adequately prepare for future employment and career progression. Considering the significant role of English in the world, students need to be well equipped for real communication in the future. For lecturers—teachers at higher level (Cottrell, 2019), it is essential to support students to achieve academic success and prepare for communication in the real world. Although some students understand the challenges of higher education learning, thus thrive to excel, others need support and motivation. Motivation is the mainspring in any situation that leads to action. Besides, to help students achieve academic success and become better individuals in the

future, it is worth noting that students cannot do it alone, they need the support of lecturers to provide great opportunities that will encourage them to progressively develop as they prepare for the future.

Interestingly, the increasing importance of higher education cannot be overemphasized as it offers continuous training to improving an individual's quality of life. Nieuwoudt and Pedler (2023) put forth the idea that students' choice of staying at university is to achieve personal and career goals. The aim is to obtain a bachelor's degree or its equivalent. That is to say, students in higher education come with different learning experiences and expectations. Higher education refers to all post-secondary education; this includes universities, polytechnics and colleges of education and technology (National Policy on education, 2004 as cited in Ogunode & Musa, 2020). English is not only taught as a subject in higher education, it is also the language of instruction at all levels of education. Therefore, whether students are studying English as a degree course or learning it as General Studies (GNS, GST) course alongside their other courses, motivation is pivotal in the learning process. Of course, with the relevance of English in Higher education, it will be difficult for students to cope with learning process at higher level without it. Higher level study is different from other levels of education. As mentioned earlier, learning at this level requires active participation and individual responsibility, and according to Cottrell, is expected to be challenging. With

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the recognition of English language as a global language (Crystal, 2005), and its importance as an instrument of global communication (Muhammed, Ya'u, Aliyu, & Hassan, 2018), it is crucial for lecturers and students to know what will work best to support English language teaching and learning at higher level. English language lecturers need motivation to effectively encourage and support their students for greater academic achievement. This paper therefore explored literature to understand how intrinsic and extrinsic motivation enhances English language teaching and learning in higher education.

Literature Review

Motivation is considered a key tool in English language learning. As a critical tool in the process of second or foreign language teaching and learning, various definitions of motivation have been proposed over the course of decades of research by scholars (Aydoğan, 2016; Ushioda, 2011; Harmer, 2012; Brown, 2000; Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Richards, Platt and Platt, 1992, as cited in Javid, Al-Asmari & Farooq, 2012). Aydoğan (2016) sees motivation as "someone's will and intention to do a particular task or an activity" (57). In other words, motivation is derived from an individual's determination and purpose to perform any given task or activity. According to Ushioda (2011), motivation is a natural process, evolving from a string of inter-connections and communication, which main focus is on the individual rather than the group. Harmer, (2012), puts it this way, "...we have to want something to succeed at it" p.98). He added that motivation is a kind of determination which drives individuals to perform tasks in order to achieve a goal.

Similarly, Brown (2000) defined motivation as the level to which an individual makes choices about goals he/she has set and the effort dedicated to pursue the goals. Crookes and Schmidt (1991), believe that motivation is learner's orientation regarding second language learning. Richards, Platt and Platt (1992, as cited in Al-Asmari and Farooq, 2012), defined motivation as "...the factors that determine a person's desire to do something..." (238). In language learning, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are the most widely cited dimensions (Thohir, 2017). As far as the concept of motivation is concerned, Reiss (2012), divided motivation into two types which are intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. In addition, Scrivener (2011) classified motivation into internal and external. Whether intrinsic or extrinsic, the two types of motivation may go hand in hand.

From the various definitions above, one can add that motivation is the conscious effort which an individual

takes to achieve a certain goal. Furthermore, motivation in English language learning can be defined here as the focus and determination which students need to efficiently perform tasks or activities. Students need motivation which will enable them achieve success in English language learning. Hence, there is need to help students progress and achieve their best in the English language learning process. Students need the possible best support and a helpful learning environment to achieve academic success. They need to know that they are valued and that they are improving on their English language learning.

Challenges of teaching and learning English in higher education

English language teaching and learning are important in higher education. However, lecturers and students are faced with some challenges that impede teaching and learning English language. These challenges include, lack of adequate foundation, negative attitudes towards learning, lack of reading culture, overpopulated classrooms, inability to cope with learning new content different from their first language, difficulty with language learning, their mother tongue is not English, lack of training for lecturers, irrelevant text books/ syllabus, out-dated teaching method, unconducive classrooms, lack of language proficiency of student and lecturers, addition of new teaching domains, limited higher education environment, lack of regular English speakers around the students, it is learn as a second language, excessive use of native language, dependence on the lecturer, learners' perspective, lecturers' attitude, lack of repetition and frequent practice, challenges in learning the four language abilities—listening, speaking, reading, writing, lack of student's concentration, language differences, language transfer, lack of students interest, disunity and insecurity, teaching in a traditional way, lack of preparation in effective teaching methods in digital environment (Westerlund, Chugai & Petrenko, 2023; Ismeti, 2022; Salaxiddinovna, 2021; Muhammed et al., 2018; Okon, Agbo & Gbande, 2019; Obiegbu, 2016). Apparently, these challenges are peculiar to both lecturers and students in higher education.

English language learning for majority of students in higher education is somewhat different from the secondary level. In some cases, many students have had limited exposure to English prior to gaining admission into higher education. The language is not widely used in their communities or school environment. Thus, they may have had little to no opportunity to practice their English language skills outside of the classroom. Often students may have a general understanding that English is the

language of instruction at the tertiary level, but they may lack confidence to communicate effectively in the classroom or school environment. As a result, it can be very difficult for students to engage with academic materials and participate fully in any academic discourse. Naturally, higher education learning depends on high quality of lecturers to realize its effectiveness. Unfortunately, in many ESL higher levels, there are shortages of qualified English language lecturers. Again, some lecturers still use the traditional way of teaching in their classes. As mentioned earlier, these are some of the challenges faced by English lecturers in tertiary institutions. For example, majority of lecturers fail to integrate technology in their language teaching. These challenges can hinder lecturers from providing students with unique opportunities to collaborate with others and use real language inside and outside the classroom.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation in Higher Education

Studies by Hussain and Farid (2020), Lucas et al. (2010); Oletić and Ilic (2014); Ng and Ng (2015); Ouda and Ena, (2019), have reported on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in higher education. In a study conducted by Lucas, Polilo, Miraflores, Tracay, and Lao (2010), the researchers examined 240 first year students in universities and colleges in Metro Manila to determine whether students are intrinsically motivated to learn speaking and reading skills. The findings show that intrinsic motivation helps them to achieve their learning goals. It seems that the students had goals and ambitions before enrolling to university. Research by Javid, Al-Asmari and Farooq (2012) found that Saudi Arabia undergraduate students show higher level of extrinsic motivation in English language learning, but low in intrinsic motivation. In terms of gender, the authors added that there exists significant difference in extrinsic motivation. The male students were more positive towards intrinsic and extrinsic motivation than the female students.

In a study conducted by Hussain, Salama and Farid (2020), they analysed adult learners' motivation in learning English from two diametrically different paradigms, English as a Foreign Language (EFL from Saudi Arabia and English as a Second Language (ESL) from Pakistan. A total of 200 participants participated in the study. It was reported that both ESL and EFL student were intrinsically motivated to learn English language. They added that both EFL and ESL students had little extrinsic motivation to learn due to lack of conducive English language learning environment, motivated and trained teachers, well-equipped classrooms and financial

rewards.

Oletić and Ilic (2014) study attempted to understand whether high school and university students are intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to learn English. They found low level of intrinsic motivation among all students. On the other hand, Ng and Ng (2015) believe that intrinsic motivation which comes from second language learners and extrinsic motivation which comes from teachers are considered crucial factors for all ESL learners. Clearly, with intrinsic motivation, students tend to have positive attitude towards English language learning and extrinsic motivation from lecturers may build students' confidence and interest inside and outside the language classroom. Students are motivated in different ways, therefore, English language teachers need to recognize the importance of English and aspire to motivate all students in higher education (Ibrahim, Yana & Yinusa, 2018). Omar, Azim, Nawi and Zaini (2020) and Yardimci and Saricoban (2020) indicated in their findings that English language lecturers need to be motivated for effective language teaching. When lecturers are motivated, they will be more organized, and also pay more attention to improving students' English language learning. It is critical for lecturers to focus on teaching methods that are appropriate for their students in order to make learning enjoyable.

Ouda and Ena, (2019) used a semi-structured interview with nine English education graduate students' batch 18 to identify intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The researchers reported that graduate students of English education master program batch 2018 of a private university in Yogyakarta were intrinsically motivated as their main goal of attending college was on a higher level. They also contend that extrinsic motivation in terms of the role of supportive peers was higher than other characteristics. Furthermore, the authors concluded that graduate students are more intrinsically motivated and less extrinsically motivated.

By and large, the various empirical studies have shown that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are pivotal in English language teaching and learning in higher education. There can never be a disconnection between students and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. An increasing important role of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in English language learning contributes significantly to students' success in academic achievement inside the classroom and beyond. Some factors of intrinsic motivation are, students' goal oriented and purpose, students' personal needs for achievement, students' personal value, students' personal mastery goals, collaboration with other students. Factors of extrinsic motivation are, the way parents interact with

their children, the way lecturers teach, delivery of course material, interaction with students in the learning process, clarity of the materials, peer acceptance, lecturing method/activity, other learning materials, environment, reward and punishment.

Considered to be highly essential for all learners, intrinsic motivation is key to success in higher education. Although sometimes when students advanced in grade, intrinsic motivation may become weaker as a result of social demands and roles, nevertheless it is crucial for students to prioritize their learning and be positive towards English language learning. Because English language is significant in higher education, given its relevance to the success of all students, English language lecturers need to provide necessary support to make students become optimistic about the future and focus on achieving the learning goals. In addition, it is common for lecturers to assume that students attending higher education have maturity and intelligence to cope with English language learning at this level. This, of course is due to the fact that students are taught in English from primary to secondary school level. Unfortunately, lecturers are sometimes disappointed when students show lack of interest or perform low in English. Although this may be the case, nevertheless it is important for lecturers to understand learner diversity in order to help all students achieve academic success inside the classroom and prepare to converse in English in real world situation.

Importance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in higher education

The importance of motivation in language teaching and learning cannot be overemphasized. Students need motivation to efficiently and effectively achieve their learning goals. Lecturers need motivation to effectively teach their students. No doubt, the recognition of goals and ambitions, as well as deeper understanding of the importance of English language in the global world is very necessary. Intrinsic motivation comes from students while extrinsic motivation comes from lecturers and other factors in the school environment. Indeed, both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation contributes significantly to English language learning in higher education (Hussain, Salama & Farid, 2020; Ouda & Ena, 2019). When students are intrinsically and extrinsically motivated, they will be ready to face all challenges that pertain to English language learning in higher education. In fact, when students see themselves advancing towards their learning goals or improving on their English language learning, it signifies that their efforts are paying off, this can be deeply satisfying and motivating. Much

effort is expected from students at the higher level.

Importantly, English language lecturers in higher education have the ability to help students succeed to become world citizens. It is worthy of note that without the support of lecturers, students tend to see English as a difficult course. The benefits of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are enormous, some of the benefits are, enjoyment of lessons, persistence, psychological well-being, goal setting, autonomy and confidence, critical thinking skills, ability to become creative, effective interaction with lecturers and course mates, focus and determination, career development. Overall, the sense of moving forward and achieving milestones in English language teaching and learning not only help lecturers and students to have a desire for continuous learning, but also promote active opportunities for development and improvement.

Conclusion

English language plays a pivotal role in higher education. All students in higher education need English language to achieve academic success in the classroom and beyond. Accordingly, English language is considered a global language, hence the need to allow a greater and more effective learning process in the classroom to prepare students for communication in the real world. Understandably, coping with learning English at higher level can be challenging for students. At higher level, students are expected to be active participants in the learning process. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are key tools for students to succeed inside the classroom and beyond. Students can play a significant role in their English language learning. Prioritizing their English language learning and being optimistic about the future is pivotal. Lecturers in higher education need motivation to effectively teach students. Motivated lecturers can encourage, motivate and assure students of the possibility of achieving the goals of English language learning at this level.

Recommendations

It is recommended that all students in higher education should develop interest and have positive attitudes towards English language learning. Students should be active participants in the learning process. For students to optimize opportunities of higher education learning, English language lecturers should create motivating activities and a conducive classroom environment for all students to achieve the goal of learning. Higher education institutions should encourage lecturers to engage in continues profession development.

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