Impact of Motivation on Language Proficiency of Vocational Education Trainees in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract: *This article explores the impact of motivation on the English language proficiency of oil industry trainees in Saudi Arabia, with a focus on vocational and technical education contexts. Recognizing English as a critical tool for communication, safety, and technical operations in the oil sector, the study examines how various motivational constructs influence language learning outcomes through answering this research question: How motivational strategies can be used to enhance the language proficiency of oil industry trainees in Saudi Arabia? Drawing on key theories including Gardner's Socio-Educational Model, Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System, and Self-Determination Theory, the article analyzes different types of motivation (integrative, instrumental, intrinsic, and extrinsic) and their relevance to the vocational education settings. Scheidecker and Freeman (cited in Dornyei, 2001:1) point out that 'motivation is, without question, the most complex and challenging issue facing teachers today.' Accordingly, this study presents some pedagogical implications, emphasizing the importance of aligning instructional strategies with learners' motivational orientations to enhance engagement and proficiency. Through a synthesis of theoretical perspectives and practical insights, the article highlights how motivation shapes language learning success and offers recommendations for improving English language instruction for vocational education trainees in Saudi   Arabia.*
Keywords: intrinsic/extrinsic motivation- vocational training - psychological/educational approach- instrumentality- integrativeness

INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized economy, English language proficiency is a cornerstone of vocational competence, particularly in specialized sectors such as the oil and gas industry. In Saudi Arabia, where the oil sector remains a central pillar of national development, equipping vocational trainees with strong English language skills is essential. However, language proficiency among trainees does not depend solely on instructional quality or curriculum design. One of the most influential factors in second language (L2) learning outcomes is motivation—a complex and dynamic psychological construct that plays a decisive role in shaping learners' engagement, persistence, and overall success.

As per ESL/EFL researchers, motivation in L2 learning has been extensively theorized in applied linguistics, drawing from cognitive, sociocultural, and educational psychology. Gardner's (cited in Razak et al. 2022) Socio-Educational Model (1985), for example, emphasizes the role of integrative motivation—where learners are driven by a desire to integrate with the L2 culture—and instrumental motivation, which relates to practical goals like career advancement. Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005) further develops this understanding by framing motivation in terms of the learner's vision of their future career, the learner's beliefs about learning, and the learning environment. Additionally, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) distinguishes between intrinsic motivation (doing something for inherent satisfaction) and extrinsic motivation (doing it for external rewards), offering key pedagogic insights into how learners can be encouraged to take ownership of their learning.

In the specific context of vocational training for oil industry trainees, types of motivation—such as task-based, career-oriented, or socially driven—interact with the trainees perceived needs and aspirations. For instance, many Saudi trainees may be instrumentally motivated to learn English for job-related communication, compliance with safety standards, or participation in international operations. Others may exhibit integrative or intrinsic motivation, especially when they value personal development or global interaction.

These motivational orientations have direct pedagogic implications. For this reason, understanding trainees' motivational profiles can help instructors and curriculum designers tailor instructional methods, choose appropriate learning materials, and create a more supportive learning environment. A focus on motivational strategies such as goal-setting, constructive feedback, and autonomy support, can significantly enhance engagement and improve language outcomes. In short, linking theoretical frameworks with empirical insights from vocational education settings in order to enhance both policy and practice in English for specific purposes instruction in technical training institutions.

Motivation Interpretations

A great number of researchers and motivational psychologists have managed to find out what motivation term refers to explicitly. I totally agree with Dornyei's (2001:1) definition that '*motivation is an abstract, hypothetical concept that we use to explain why people think and behave as they do.*' In addition to this, he points out that:

> *Motivation is best seen as a broad umbrella term that covers a variety of meanings… For example, when we say that a certain student is `motivated', most teachers and parents can well imagine what we mean -to be a keen, committed and enthusiastic learner who has good reasons for learning, who studies with vigour and intensity, and who demonstrates perseverance.*

Furthermore, I totally agree with Dornyei's (2001:6) perspective that "*the term `motivation' is a convenient way of talking about a concept which is generally seen as a very important human characteristic but which is also immensely complex.*" Further, Dornyei (2001) adds that motivation is responsible for showing two main dimensions, "*direction and magnitude*", of human behavior. In the words of Dornyei (2001:7) "motivation *explains why people decide to do something, how hard they are going to pursue it and how long they are willing to sustain the activity.*" I totally agree with this norm, Dornyei's perspective, that motivation controls human language behavior and it is the secret power behind his/her success or failure in L2 learning. Another important definition by Csizér and Dörnyei (2005:19) that "*motivation is a concept that explains why people behave as they do rather than how successful their behavior will be.*"

Nevertheless, motivational psychologists in the past couldn't have a comprehensive motivation theory due to the fact, (Dornyei, 2001) that human behavior is '*complex*' and there are various interior and external factors- I will explain them later in this section- affecting one's behavior. Accordingly, I agree with Covington's (cited in Dornyei 2001:7) assumption that "`*Motivation, like the concept of gravity, is easier to describe (in terms of its outward, observable effects) than it is to define.*"

Motivation Approaches of L2 Learning

Dornyei (2001) points out that the scope of L2 motivation approaches could be shown in four main approaches: Psychological, socio-cultural, educational and process-oriented, and these aspects will be explained in the following sections.

Psychological Approach

This approach will be discussed through elaborating the different changes in understanding or explaining humans' behavior throughout the 20th century in terms of two main areas of theories including traditional and contemporary aspects:

Traditional Theories in Psychology
Dornyei (2001) confirms that there are some historical changes in understanding motivation through the 20th century. At the first half, language psychologists agreed with Sigmund Freud's perspective that motivation is determined by the "*basic human instincts and drives*" I think this perspective refers to the basic elements of human motivation. However, in the middle of the 20th century, they (psychologists) did much research focusing on the interaction between '*stimuli and responses*' in learning; for instance, the impact of '*punishment and praise*' on L2 learners' behavior. In my opinion, this assumption pinpoints the external power that helps humans behave positively or negatively; in case of praise, of course, they do some improvement in their behavior, or negative change in their attitude towards learning in case of punishment.

Furthermore, in 1960s, there was a dramatic change in understanding motivation, Rogers and Maslow (cited in Dornyei, 2001) state that '*self-actualizing tendency*' is the main motivating power in humans' learning attitudes. For example, their tendency to achieve personal progress or improve their inherited talents and capabilities are very important to generate their motivation. I think this conclusion leads to internalize the influence of interior power that sustains the feeling of being motivated in learning.

Contemporary Motivation Theories in Psychology

Meanwhile, recent motivation perspectives are based on the cognitive view which encompasses new areas of motivation understanding as Dornyei (2001:8) states that:

> *The individual is a purposeful, goal-directed actor, who is in a constant mental balancing act to coordinate a range of personal desires and goals in the light of his/her perceived possibilities, that is his/her perceived competence and environmental support.*

Also, Dornyei and Skehan (cited in Brown, 2007) pinpoint the importance of examining personality factors in constructing SLA theories, so what is the affective domain? Brown (2007:166) believes that it refers to *"the emotional side of human behavior, and it may be juxtaposed to the cognitive*

side… involves a variety of personality factors, feelings both about ourselves and about others with whom we come into contact."

I agree with Brown's assumption that self-esteem analysis plays a great role in understanding individual's motivation to language learning. According to Brown (2007), it refers to the '*degree of self-confidence, knowledge of our self, and self-efficacy'* Also, Coopersmith (cited in Brown 2007:167) confirms that *"self-esteem is a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that individuals hold toward themselves."* Furthermore, Brown (2007:168) shows three general levels of self-esteem:

- **General or global self-esteem** refers to the general assessment language learners make of their worthiness over time and across a number of learning situations.
- **Situational or specific self-esteem** refers to L2 learners' achievements in particular life situations, such as social interaction, work, education, home, or on certain
   defined traits, such as intelligence, communicative ability, athletic ability, or personality traits like gregariousness, empathy, and flexibility.
- **Task self-esteem** refers to L2 learner's self-evaluation of a particular skill such as speaking or writing, or even a special kind of classroom activity.

Increasingly, I totally agree with the recent behavioral perspectives (in table 1below), outlined by Dornyei (2001) summarizing most of the recent motivation theories in psychology. With regard to '*attribution theory'* the psychologist Weiner (cited in Brown, 2007:169) claims that it *"focuses on how people explain the causes of their own successes and failures…in terms of four explanations for success and/or failure in achieving a personal objective: ability, effort, perceived difficulty of a task, and luck."*

Table 1: Summary of the most well-known contemporary motivation theories in psychology, Dornyei (2001:10-11).

	GOOD SUMMARIES	MAIN MOTIVATIONAL COMPONENTS	MAIN MOTIVATIONAL TENETS AND PRINCIPLES
Expectancy-value theories	Brophy (1999), Eccles and Wigfield (1995)	Expectancy of success; the value attached to success on task	Motivation to perform various tasks is the product of two key factors the individual's *expectancy of success* in a given task and the *value* the individual attaches to success on that task. The greater the perceived likelihood of success and the greater the incentive value of the goal, the higher the degree of the individual's positive motivation (see also pp. 57–58).
Achievement motivation theory	Atkinson and Raynor (1974)	Expectancy of success; incentive values; need for achievement; fear of failure	Achievement motivation is determined by conflicting approach and avoidance tendencies. The positive influences are the *expectancy* (or perceived probability) of success, the incentive *value* of successful task fulfilment and *need for achievement*. The negative influences involve *fear of failure*, the incentive to *avoid* failure and the *probability* of failure.
Self-efficacy theory	Bandura (1997)	Perceived self-efficacy	*Self-efficacy* refers to people's judgement of their capabilities to carry out certain specific tasks, and, accordingly, their sense of efficacy will determine their choice of the activities attempted, the amount of effort exerted and the persistence displayed (see also pp. 86–87).
Attribution theory	Weiner (1992)	Attributions about past successes and failures	The individual's explanations (or 'causal attributions') of why past successes and failures have occurred have consequences on the person's motivation to initiate future action. In school contexts ability and effort have been identified as the most dominant perceived causes, and it is has been shown that past failure that is ascribed by the learner to low ability hinders future achievement behaviour more than failure that is ascribed to insufficient effort (see also pp. 118–122).
Self-worth theory	Covington (1998)	Perceived self-worth	People are highly motivated to behave in ways that enhance their sense of *personal value and worth*. When these perceptions are threatened, they struggle desperately to protect them, which results in a number of unique patterns of face-saving behaviours in school settings. (see also p. 88).
Goal setting theory	Locke and Latham (1990)	Goal properties: specificity, difficulty and commitment	Human action is caused by purpose, and for action to take place, *goals* have to be set and pursued by choice. Goals that are both specific and difficult (within reason) lead to the highest performance provided the individual shows goal commitment. (see also pp. 81–85).
Goal orientation theory	Ames (1992)	Mastery goals and performance goals	*Mastery goals* (focusing on learning the content) are superior to *performance goals* (focusing on demonstrating ability and getting good grades) in that they are associated with a preference for challenging work, an intrinsic interest in learning activities, and positive attitudes towards learning.
Self-determination theory	Deci and Ryan (1985), Vallerand (1997)	Intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation	*Intrinsic motivation* concerns behaviour performed for its own sake in order to experience pleasure and satisfaction such as the joy of doing a particular activity or satisfying one's curiosity. *Extrinsic motivation* involves performing a behaviour as a means to an end, that is, to receive some extrinsic reward (e.g. good grades) or to avoid punishment. Human motives can be placed on a continuum between self-determined (intrinsic) and controlled (extrinsic) forms of motivation.
Social motiv-ation theory	Weiner (1994), Wentzel (1999)	Environmental influences	A great deal of human motivation stems from the sociocultural context rather than from the individual.
Theory of planned behaviour	Ajzen (1988), Eagly and Chaiken (1993)	Attitudes; subjective norms; perceived behavioural control	*Attitudes* exert a directive influence on behaviour, because someone's attitude towards a target influences the overall pattern of the person's responses to the target. Their impact is modified by the person's *subjective norms* (perceived social pressures) and *perceived behavioural control* (perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour).

Accordingly, I can say that previous L2 learners' successes or failures greatly affect their motivation degree in doing future actions. I think in both situations; being successful or unsuccessful, have positive impact on individual's language learning attitude as I have seen in my learning contexts in Saudi Arabia; a great number of low-achiever students got bad results in progress test 1(PT1), but their failure completely changed to be a wonderful success in progress test 2 (PT2). I assume this change stems from the bad experience which helps the learners to identify their points of weakness and become more motivated to improve their first bad results in PT1. Meanwhile, in the other successful situation, I have noticed that those high achiever trainees in PT1 did their best to keep up the good work, and also, they became more motivated due to their self-satisfaction and feeling of success. In sum, I think these recent behavioral motivation theories (in table 1) deal with applicable and authentic characteristics in humans' behavior, but they are not compatible as argued by Dornyei (2001:12) saying that "*all the different theories make a lot of sense, the only problem with them is that they are largely ignore each other and very often do not even try to achieve a synthesis.*"

Educational Approach Framework

Dornyei (2007:18) declares that "*my 1994 model is a good example of the 'educational approach', as it specially focused on motivation from a classroom perspective.*" Dornyei's 1994 framework of L2 motivation is based on three levels: the language level, the learner level and the learning situation level as shown in table 2 below.

I think the last level (learning situation level) is the most comprehensive as it refers to three key elements of motivational components: course-specific, teacher-specific and group-specific and these three elements conceptualize external factors of L2 motivation. Also, I can see that the components of the three levels are interrelated and compatible to depict L2 motivation components briefly.

Table 2: Dornyei's 1994 framework of L2 motivation, Dornyei (2007:18).

LANGUAGE LEVEL	Integrative motivational subsystem Instrumental motivational subsystem
LEARNER LEVEL	Need for achievement Self-confidence * Language use anxiety * Perceived L2 competence * Causal attributions * Self-efficacy
LEARNING SITUATION LEVEL	
Course-specific motivational components	Interest (in the course) Relevance (of the course to one's needs) Expectancy (of success) Satisfaction (one has in the outcome)
Teacher-specific motivational components	Affiliative motive (to please the teacher) Authority type (controlling vs. autonomy-supporting) Direct socialisation of motivation * Modelling * Task presentation * Feedback
Group-specific motivational Components	Goal-orientedness Norm and reward system Group cohesiveness Classroom goal structure (cooperative, competitive or individualistic)

Socio-cultural Approach

Williams and Burden (cited in Dorynei, 2001:20) illustrate some socio-cultural aspects including the internal and external factors that influence L2 motivation including more motivation subcomponents from Dorynei's 1994 framework.

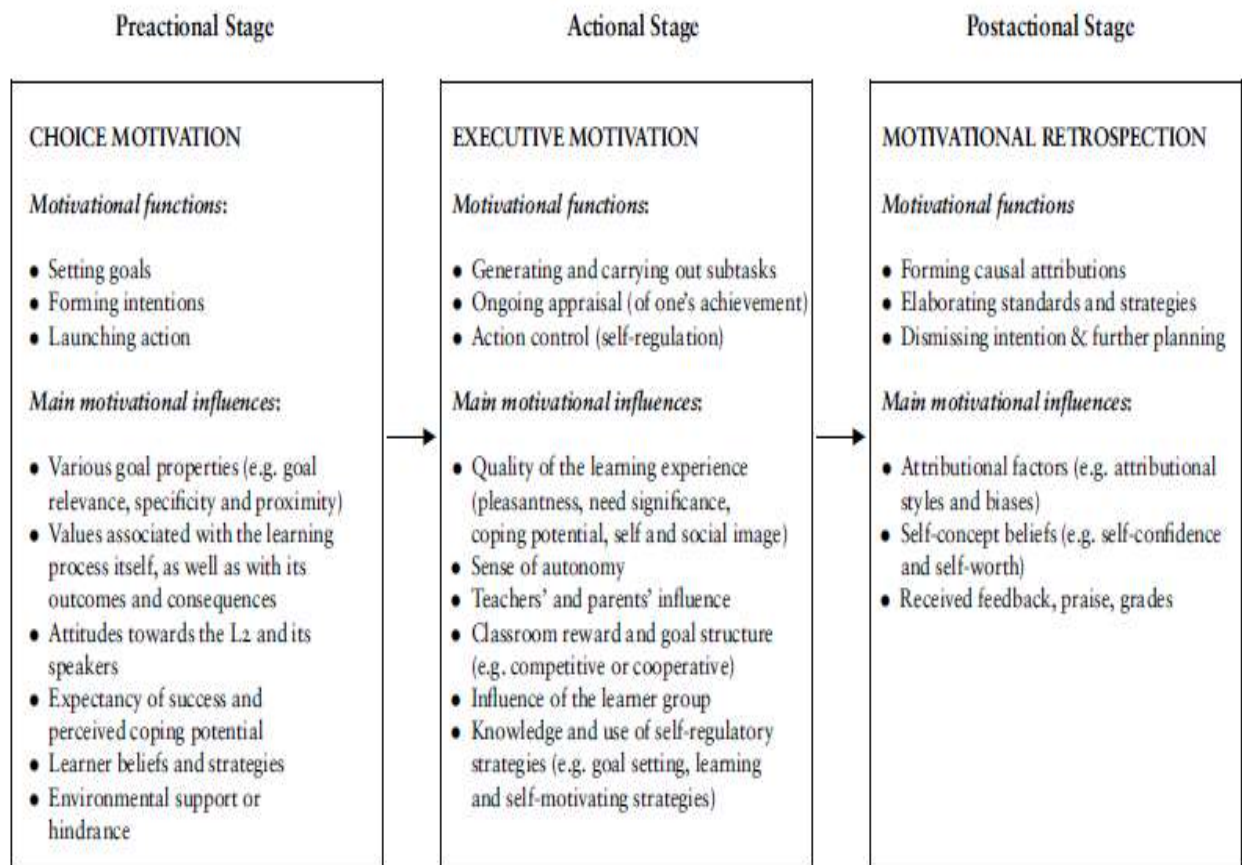Table 3: Williams and Burden's (1997) framework of L2 motivation, Dornyei (2001:20).

INTERNAL FACTORS	EXTERNAL FACTORS
Intrinsic interest of activity • arousal of curiosity • optimal degree of challenge Perceived value of activity • personal relevance • anticipated value of outcomes • intrinsic value attributed to the activity Sense of agency • locus of causality • locus of control re: process and outcomes • ability to set appropriate goals Mastery • feelings of competence • awareness of developing skills and mastery in a chosen area • self-efficacy Self-concept • realistic awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses in skills required • personal definitions and judgements of success and failure • self-worth concern • learned helplessness Attitudes • to language learning in general • to the target language • to the target language community and culture Other affective states • confidence • anxiety, fear Developmental age and stage Gender	Significant others • parents • teachers • peers The nature of interaction with significant others • mediated learning experiences • the nature and amount of feedback • rewards • the nature and amount of appropriate praise • punishments, sanctions The learning environment • comfort • resources • time of day, week, year • size of class and school • class and school ethos The broader context • wider family networks • the local education system • conflicting interests • cultural norms • societal expectations and attitudes

I totally agree with Williams and Burden's conclusion that L2 motivation is "a *complex and multi-dimensional construct*" and it is my belief that the internal factors components may not be interrelated or compatible.

Process-oriented language learning

This process-oriented approach shows the dynamic change in motivation over time. I strongly agree with Dorynei's (2001:19) assumption that "*motivation cannot be viewed as a stable attribute of learning that remains constant for several months or years.*" As a matter of fact, I have noticed that the flow of my Saudi context students' motivation fluctuates due to different variables, as shown in table 4 below, in terms of the motivation cycle or '*phases of motivation*': choice motivation, executive motivation and motivational retrospection.

Table 4: A process model of learning motivation in the L2 classroom, Dornyei (2001:22).

Preactional Stage	Actional Stage	Postactional Stage
CHOICE MOTIVATION *Motivational functions:* • Setting goals • Forming intentions • Launching action *Main motivational influences:* • Various goal properties (e.g. goal relevance, specificity and proximity) • Values associated with the learning process itself, as well as with its outcomes and consequences • Attitudes towards the L2 and its speakers • Expectancy of success and perceived coping potential • Learner beliefs and strategies • Environmental support or hindrance	**EXECUTIVE MOTIVATION** *Motivational functions:* • Generating and carrying out subtasks • Ongoing appraisal (of one's achievement) • Action control (self-regulation) *Main motivational influences:* • Quality of the learning experience (pleasantness, need significance, coping potential, self and social image) • Sense of autonomy • Teachers' and parents' influence • Classroom reward and goal structure (e.g. competitive or cooperative) • Influence of the learner group • Knowledge and use of self-regulatory strategies (e.g. goal setting, learning and self-motivating strategies)	**MOTIVATIONAL RETROSPECTION** *Motivational functions* • Forming causal attributions • Elaborating standards and strategies • Dismissing intention & further planning *Main motivational influences:* • Attributional factors (e.g. attributional styles and biases) • Self-concept beliefs (e.g. self-confidence and self-worth) • Received feedback, praise, grades

As shown in table 4, the first phase starts with the generated motivation results in the choice of a goal or a topic to be pursued. The second phase entails the required power or support to maintain the action or choice against any distractions that individual might face during the course. After completing the action, the learners need a retrospective evaluation of their past experiences to determine the kind of future actions.

This process-oriented approach is considered a great model for my Saudi context where I deliver language courses for adults. To illustrate, joining to an oil-industry training course is motivated by 'choice motivation' and the day-to-day coursework activities are fueled with 'executive motivation', but some of those trainees dropped out or left the program due to insufficient source of executive motivation. However, some of them may forget this bad experience- leaving the course- and deliberating of studying L2 again is energized by 'choice motivation' again, but they cannot go on because they are in retrospect –motivational retrospection- of their past experience and they come to the fact that they are not eligible for this course. This is in agreement with Dorynei's (2001:23) conclusion that:

> *during the third phase of motivational cycle – 'motivational retrospection'- most such learners will sooner or later draw the necessary conclusion that even though they value knowing an L2, for various reasons they cannot cope with the actual demands of attending a course.*

This can be used as an explanation for why certain actions happen or do not happen due to human behavior which encompasses two main dimensions" as mentioned by Dornyei's (2001:7) that "`*motivation' is a general way of referring to the antecedents (i.e. the causes and origins) of action.*"

Motivation Theories

According to Brown (2007), there are three different perspectives of motivation as shown in table 5 below:

Table 5: a schematic representation of views of motivation, Brown (2007:170).

Behavioristic	**Cognitive**	**Constructivist**

Anticipation of reward
Desire to receive
    positive reinforcement
External, individual
    forces in control
	Driven by basic human needs
	    (exploration, manipulation, etc.)
	Degree of effort expended
	Internal, individual forces
	    in control
		Social context
		Community
		Social status
		Security of group
		Internal, interactive
		    forces in control

In terms of behavioristic view, I agree with Brown's (2007:181) conclusion that learners' performance in doing activities and the degree of their motivation to do them are 'at *the mercy of external forces such as parents, teachers, educational requirements and job specifications*'. Meanwhile, in terms of cognitive perspective, Ausubel (cited in Brown, 2007:169) identifies six different motives behind individual's decision to do something and theses needs conceptualize the construct of motivation. Individuals need for: *'exploration, manipulation, activity, stimulation, knowledge and ego enhancement.'* I strongly believe that these six needs entail the basic requirements to initiate learning process and they could sustain learner's motivation. Finally, motivation, in terms of constructivist perspective, stems from individual's connections with others as well as from *'self-determination'*.

Motivation Types

As per Brown (2001), there are four types of motivation: instrumental/integrative and intrinsic/extrinsic as will be explained in the following parts.

Instrumentality and Integrativeness

According to Gardner and Lambert (cited in Lightbown and Spada (2013:87), the type of motivation stems from the individual's purpose behind language learning. In the instrumental   motivation, "*language learning is for immediate practical goals."* Whereas, in the integrative motivation, *"language learning is for personal growth and cultural enrichment through contact with speakers of the other language."* Furthermore, Csizér and Dörnyei (2005:4), indicate that integrativeness "*reflects a positive outlook on the L2 and its culture, to the extent that learners scoring high on this factor may want to integrate themselves into the L2 culture and   become similar to the L2 speakers."*
On the other hand, Matsuzaki (2005:40) demonstrates that instrumentality "*refers to the potential utilitarian gains of L2 proficiency, such as getting a better job or higher salary."* Finally, Gardner and Lambert (cited in Csizér and Dörnyei (2005:18) define integrativeness as "*the willingness to be like valued members of the language community''*

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Pintrich and Schunk (cited in Matsuzaki, 2005:40) point out that intrinsic motivation is "*to engage in an activity for its own sake.*" While, extrinsic motivation is "*to engage in an activity as a means to an end"* In addition, Deci (cited in Brown, 2007:172) illustrates that "i*ntrinsically motivated behaviors are aimed at bringing about certain internally rewarding consequences, namely, feelings of competence and self-determination."*

On the other hand, Brown (2007) makes clear that people, in extrinsic motivation, are fueled or have power to increase their performance via external sources of rewards such as earning extra money, prizes, grades, avoiding punishment and positive feedback. Furthermore, according to Brown's (cited in Matsuzaki, 2005:40) perspective that "*intrinsic and extrinsic factors can be easily identified in foreign language classrooms regardless of the differences between the cultural beliefs and the attitudes of learners and teachers.'*

In agreement with Maslow's perspective (cited in Brown, 2007), I believe that "*intrinsic motivation is clearly superior to extrinsic."* I think the internal motives may be sustained and maintained because they stem from learner's self-esteem, strong determination and commitment or self-actualization. Nevertheless, Bruner (cited in Brown 2007:174) draws attention that '*autonomy of self-reward'* is the best policy emphasizing that "*one of the most effective ways to help both children and adults think and learn is to free them from the control of rewards and punishments."* I strongly disagree with Bruner's assumption, as per my own observation and experience in different learning contexts in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, I can assume that motivation plays a key role to have a successful language learning experience with both adult and young learners, particularly, if L2 learning is quite difficult for adult learners as in my current Saudi context.

Motivational Dichotomies

In agreement with Matsuzaki's (2005:40) assumption, I strongly believe that "*The relationships between intrinsic/extrinsic and integrative/instrumental motivation in SLA are therefore naturally ambiguous"* Increasingly, Svanes thinks that "*the types of motivation were related to the background of the students.*" For instance, at university in   Norway, if the students come from Europe and America, they are considered integratively motivated, whereas students coming from Middle East countries, Africa and Asia, are considered instrumentally motivated. Also, according to Brown's (2007) conclusion in terms of the relationship between the two dichotomies of motivation, I totally agree that while many intrinsic motives could turn out to be integrative, some may not. For instance, an individual could improve or learn his L2 so that he/she can get promotion in a career or find a well-paid job. Likewise, one could get admiration of the speakers of L2 due to   extrinsic motives such as L2 teacher's positive feedback or a parental reinforcement.

In sum, Bailey (cited in Brown 2007:175) demonstrates interrelationship between the two motivational dichotomies in Table 6 below
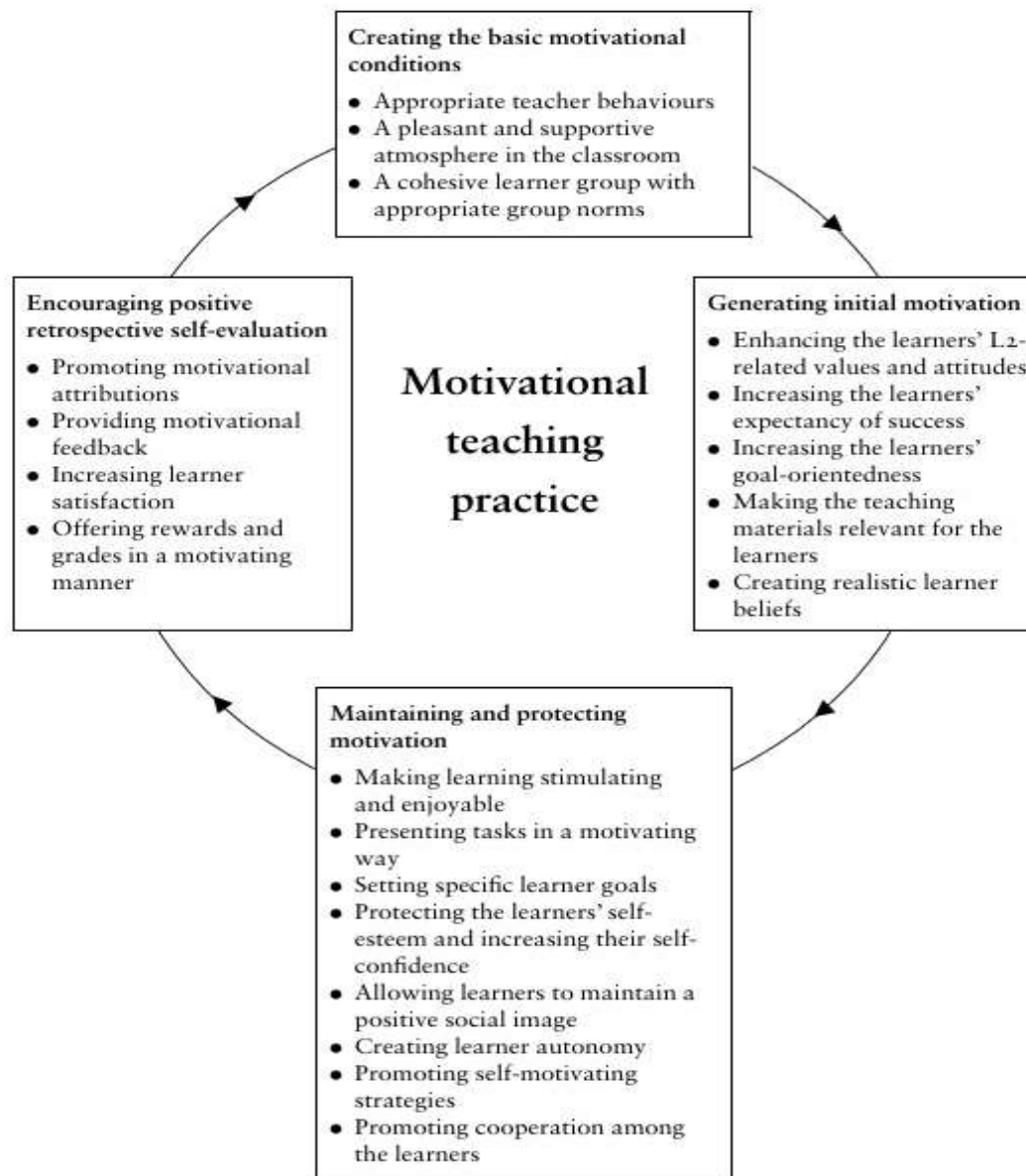
Table 6: Motivational dichotomies, *Brown (2007:175)*.

	Intrinsic	Extrinsic
Integrative	L2 learner wishes to integrate with the L2 culture (e.g., for immigration or marriage)	Someone else wishes the L2 learner to know the L2 for integrative reasons (e.g., Japanese parents send kids to Japanese language school)
Instrumental	L2 learner wishes to achieve goals utilizing L2 (e.g., for a career)	External power wants L2 learner to learn L2 (e.g., corporation sends Japanese businessman to U.S. for language training)

Pedagogic Implications- Motivational Strategies

 I agree with Dornyei's (2001:28) definition that "*motivational strategies are techniques that promote the individual's goal-related behavior.*" Also, Brown (2007) acknowledges that motivational strategies are used to maintain and generate L2 learners' motivation during the language lesson. I think that there are so many '*applications and   implications'* as shown in table 7 below to be used in L2 classroom that it is quite difficult to know where to start. Thus, in this section, I will focus on elaborating the motivational implications that conceptualize the intrinsic motivation in a language classroom.

Table 7: The components of motivational teaching practice in the L2 classroom, Dornyei (2001:29).

Creating the basic motivational conditions
- Appropriate teacher behaviours
- A pleasant and supportive atmosphere in the classroom
- A cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms

Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation
- Promoting motivational attributions
- Providing motivational feedback
- Increasing learner satisfaction
- Offering rewards and grades in a motivating manner

Motivational teaching practice

Generating initial motivation
- Enhancing the learners' L2-related values and attitudes
- Increasing the learners' expectancy of success
- Increasing the learners' goal-orientedness
- Making the teaching materials relevant for the learners
- Creating realistic learner beliefs

Maintaining and protecting motivation
- Making learning stimulating and enjoyable
- Presenting tasks in a motivating way
- Setting specific learner goals
- Protecting the learners' self-esteem and increasing their self-confidence
- Allowing learners to maintain a positive social image
- Creating learner autonomy
- Promoting self-motivating strategies
- Promoting cooperation among the learners

Key Principles for Applying Intrinsic Motivation in the L2 Classroom

- Encourage learner autonomy – by giving learners opportunities to generate their own ideas and materials.
- Promote strategy use – by teaching learners how to apply reading and writing strategies independently.
- Foster personal relevance – by using topics and tasks that connect to learners' interests and real-life needs that are personally meaningful.
- Create authentic tasks – by designing authentic tasks, such as peer-focused writing or listening to subject-related lectures, to make learning purposeful.
- Support communicative goals – by focusing on practical language use that helps learners achieve real-life functions.
- Balance explanation with autonomy –by using grammar explanations strategically, showing learners how grammar supports independence and self-expression.

A Checklist of Intrinsically Motivating Techniques

It is worthy to consider these ten guidelines which are based on the best knowledge and practice of ESL/EFL teachers. I highly recommend applying the following checklist, adapted by Brown (2000), to help educators determine whether something they're doing in the classroom is contributing to their students' intrinsic drives:

- Does the technique appeal to the genuine interests of students? Is it relevant to their lives?
- Does teacher present the technique in a positive, enthusiastic manner?
- Are students clearly aware of the purpose of the technique?
- Do students have some choice in
  a. choosing some aspect of the technique?
  b. determining how they go about fulfilling the goals of the technique?
- Does the technique encourage students to discover for themselves certain principles or rules (rather than simply being "told")?
- Does it encourage students in some way to develop or use effective strategies of learning and communication?
- Does it contribute—at least to some extent—to students' ultimate autonomy and independence (from teacher)?
- Does it foster cooperative negotiation with other students in the class? Is it truly interactive?

- Does the technique present a "reasonable challenge"?
- Do students receive sufficient feedback on their performance (from each other or from teacher)?

According to Dornyei and Csizer (1998, cited in Brown, 2000:81), teachers should apply the following 10 commandments in order to stimulate/enhance their learners' intrinsic motivation:

- Set a personal example with your own behavior.
- Create a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom.
- Present the tasks properly.
- Develop a good relationship with the learners.
- Increase the learners' linguistic self-confidence.
- Make the language classes interesting.
- Promote learner autonomy.
- Personalize the learning process.
- Increase the learners' goal-orientedness.
- Familiarize learners with the target language culture.

Increasingly, Brown (2000:82) suggests the following general guidelines for infusing ESL /EFL classroom with some intrinsically motivating dynamics:

- Teachers are enablers, not rewarders. Therefore, they should focus less on how to administer immediate or tangible rewards and more on how to get students to tune in to their potential and to be challenged by self-determined goals.

- Learners need to develop autonomy, not dependence. Therefore, teachers should be careful not to let learners become dependent on their daily praise and other feedback. Rather, administer praise selectively and judiciously, helping students to recognize their own self-satisfaction in having done something well.

- Help learners to take charge of their own learning through setting some personal goals and utilizing learning strategies.

- Learner-centered, cooperative teaching is intrinsically motivating. Therefore, teachers are advised to give students opportunities to make choices in activities, topics, discussions, etc. Sometimes a simple either/or choice, for example, "Okay, class, for the

next ten minutes we can either do this little cloze test or review for the test. Which do you want to do?") helps students to develop their intrinsic motives. They feel less like puppets on a string if you can involve them in various aspects of looking at their needs and self-diagnosing, of planning lessons and objectives, of deciding in which direction a lesson might go, and of evaluating their learning.

- Content-based activities and courses are intrinsically motivating. Therefore, instructors might strive to focus their students on interesting, relevant subject-matter content that gets them more linguistically involved with meanings and purposes and less with verbs and prepositions.

- Tests, with some special attention from the teacher, can be intrinsically motivating. Allowing some student input to the test, giving well-thought-out classroom tests that are face-valid in the eyes of students.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that motivation is a complex, multifaceted, and dynamic construct that exerts a decisive influence on English language learning outcomes among oil industry trainees in Saudi Arabia.

Drawing on established theoretical frameworks, especially Gardner's Socio-Educational Model, Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System, and Self-Determination Theory, both the type and source of motivation play a decisive role in shaping learners' engagement, persistence, and success. The interplay between instrumental motives, for instance, career advancement and safety compliance, and integrative or intrinsic motives, such as personal growth and cultural enrichment, creates a diverse motivational landscape that must be understood by instructors and curriculum designers.

Furthermore, the study has shown that motivation is not static; it fluctuates over time, requiring continuous reinforcement through supportive teaching practices and relevant, job-oriented learning activities influenced by learners' experiences, performance feedback, and self-perceptions. This makes the process-oriented view of motivation especially relevant in technical training contexts where fluctuations in learners' engagement are common.

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings underline the importance of tailoring instruction to trainees' motivational profiles. Strategies such as promoting learner autonomy, encouraging goal-setting, incorporating authentic and job-related tasks, and providing constructive feedback not only enhance classroom engagement, but also build a sustainable motivation that extends beyond immediate vocational needs.

In conclusion, by aligning motivational theory with classroom practice, vocational education institutions in Saudi Arabia can significantly improve the English language proficiency of oil industry trainees, preparing them more effectively for the linguistic, professional, and intercultural demands of the global energy sector

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