Factors Affecting Students' Motivation In Learning English

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Abstract — Teachers and researchers widely recognized motivation / demotivation as one of the most important elements in learning a foreign language. This study examined the role of motivation and factors affecting student motivation in teaching / learning English as a foreign language. Factors related to the attitude of parents, the environment and the teacher were examined. The participants were 40 first-year students studying at the department of teaching English. Participants were given a survey, which consisted of several statements related to these factors. Current research has shown that there are strategies and behaviors that motivate students but suppress a positive attitude towards learning English. The study also found that strengthening student beliefs also motivated students, and they were more motivated when working with their friends. In addition, the results of this study suggested many behaviors and strategies that motivate students.

Index Terms— motivation, demotivation, study of foreign languages, strategy, behavior, teaching English.

1. INTRODUCTION

Motivation plays a very important role in improving the effectiveness of teaching English to students. The influence of motivation is seen as the key to learning a second language and one of the most important factors affecting the success of language learners. It is widely recognized that the more motivated students, the more successfully they will learn a second / foreign language. Students who choose the subject of English as the main language and study it as a foreign language are concerned about motivational factors that play an important role in learning, developing skills and using English in everyday life. This study examined the motivational factors associated with the attitude of parents, the environment, and teachers among students, and helped to understand which strategies could improve ESL / EFL learning among these factors (8). In the section of factors related to the attitude of the teacher, the roles of teachers and their implementation of specific motivational strategies in the audience were studied. In the section on parental factors, the study examined what parents' behavior and their beliefs regarding their children's education in English affect the motivation to learn English more. In addition, environmental components that motivate ESL / FL students have been studied (2). Motivation is a term often used in both educational and other research contexts. In an educational context, motivation is what motivates us to act in order to learn English, learn to teach English or teach it (4).

According to teachers and researchers, motivation affects the speed and success of training. Moreover, motivation provides the main impulse to start learning, and then - the driving force to maintain a long and repeatedly annoying learning process; in fact, all other elements associated with the acquisition to some extent imply motivation. Without sufficient motivation, even adults with the most unusual skills cannot achieve long-term goals, and none of them is a suitable curriculum and good teaching sufficient to ensure student achievement (3). However, high motivation can make up for significant inadequacy both in language competence and in training conditions. According to Masgoret and Gardner (2003), a motivated student expands his efforts, takes responsibility, has goals, desires, and enjoys the process and learning. As Oxford and Shearin (1996) mentioned, motivation is a critical, vital aspect in which students are fully involved in the learning process (6.9).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW.

According to the data, students were aware of the environment in the learning process. They had enough knowledge to shape their learning environment and manage their motivation. In this questionnaire, they tried to find out their problems, concentrating on learning a foreign language, especially English (5). According to the survey, 70% of the participants (28/40) were more motivated because their parents felt that they should spend more time learning English, but 30% of the participants (5/40) do not agree with this statement. In addition, 78% of participants' motivation was positively affected when their parents encouraged them to practice English as much as possible. 45% of participants (18/40) were not more motivated when their parents helped them, when it was difficult for them to do their homework. Parents' knowledge of English was motivating for 33% of participants (13/40), but not motivating for 18% of them (7/40). More than half of the participants (68%, 27/40) were more motivated because their parents emphasized the importance of English. 33% of the participants (15/40) were more motivated, because their parents showed a significant interest in everything related to English classes. 23% of participants (9/40) strongly disagree with this statement. 75% of participants (30/40) fully agreed that their parents believe that they should continue to study English, because it was their motive. Only
5% of participants’ motivation was not affected by this parental behavior. Almost all participating students (88%) were more motivated when teachers give clear information about why they are involved in an activity and its purpose. In addition, 63% of students (25/40) strongly agreed that their motivation improved when the teacher created realistic student beliefs. The results also show that 83% of participants (33/40) generally agreed that the teacher’s maximum eye contact motivated them. Only 8% of participants (5/40) strongly disagree with this statement. The data also show that 78% of the participating students (30/40) were not motivated when the teacher dwelled on each individual error, when the students made a mistake. None of the students were motivated by this statement. When a teacher used realistic or authentic materials, 75% of participants (35/40) were more motivated. In addition, 85% of the participants (34/40) were more motivated when the teacher gave positive feedback when the students achieved something. Only 10% of participants (4/40) agreed that the motivation of teachers to punish for maintaining discipline is motivation. The remaining 36 participants (90%) did not agree with this statement.

3. METHODOLOGY

Most of the students’ motives were interrupted by their friends when they were talking. 60% of participants (24/40) agreed that they were interrupted by friends. 33% of students (13/40) wanted to work with their friends. 63% percent of participants (25/40) chose the completely consonant option. None of our participants chose a categorically disagreeing choice. These students thought that the paintings and other materials brought into the class were useful in order to learn better. 42% of students (17/40) believe that the brightness of classrooms affects their learning. 50% of students fully agreed that they were afraid to speak in front of others. This is one of the big problems that all teachers face in their learning environment. 38% of participants (20/40) fully agreed that they are afraid to speak in front of others, and 38% of students strongly disagree with working individually; they would like to study with their friends. In addition, 78% of participants (35/40) fully agreed that they can ask questions to their friends, and 78% of students (26/40) believe that they have no particular problems with heating and managing their motivation. In the open part of the questionnaire, participants were asked to write what behavior and strategies motivate or demotivate them for each factor. In the classroom, participants stated that they are motivated when students in the class are interested in learning English and want to learn it. In addition, they are motivated when their friends speak many English during the lesson. In addition, they are more motivated when there are many students who know English very well. Participants, on the other hand, claim to be demotivated by their friends’ jokes when they speak English during the lesson. In addition, they are adversely affected by low attendance rates in the classroom. In the “Teacher Attitude” section, participants stated that they are motivated if the teacher is a native English speaker and self-confident. The teacher’s knowledge of the English language and its culture also motivated the participants. Some of the participants stated that this is motivating if the teacher is well dressed. Conversely, participants were demotivated when the teacher was aggressive during the lesson. Another factor that made participants demotivated was the teacher’s shyness and uncertainty during the lesson. In addition, participants were demotivated when the teacher did not know something related to the topic when asked. The participants were also demotivated when the teacher is bored, does not give a break, puts a lot of pressure on the students and lacks pedagogical skills. As parental factors, participants stated that they would be more motivated if they could watch English films together with their parents. In addition, they would be more motivated if their parents liked to speak English and speak with them. On the other hand, the participants were demotivated when their parents put a lot of pressure on them when learning English. In addition, they were demotivated when their parents did not provide moral and material support. Discussion. The main objective of this study was to identify the reasons for the lack of motivation when learning a language. A lot of research has been done to find out these factors. This study has established a link between relevant studies of student motivation and parental factors. Previous studies have shown that students whose parents are fluent in English are more motivated and want to learn English than others. As for the teacher’s attitude factor, we realized that there is a wonderful relationship between student motivation and teacher strategy. The results of this study showed that there are key strategies, behaviors, and factors that directly affect student motivation. This study shows that parental factors play an important role in learning English, and almost all students are more motivated when their parents support and encourage them to learn English. Most students are more motivated when their parents emphasize the importance of English in their entire lives and provide moral and material support in learning English. Regarding teacher attitudes, approximately 90% of participating students recognized that they are more motivated when teachers create realistic student goals and provide clear information about why they are participating in the assignment and its purpose. The friendly behavior of teachers during the lessons is one of the best strategies to increase student motivation. In addition, attendance of all students in English classes is important to maintain student motivation at the highest level. On the other hand, with regard to factors in the classroom, most students seem more motivated when they work with their friends. Another important conclusion is that many participants are demotivated when the class is crowded, noisy and there are problems with heating. Current research has shown that there are strategies and behaviors that motivate students and improve their positive attitude towards learning English. The results will help teachers and parents by demonstrating good behavior and strategies that can increase student motivation.

5. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to find out what factors influenced the motivation of students in ELT and how much they influenced their language learning. The study also aimed at becoming candidates for teachers so that they can understand the personal or environmental problems of their students and help them create a more motivating environment. The results of the study provided some useful and specific information about some of the parental, environmental, and teacher issues that students
encountered in the learning environment. These problems lowered their motivation, and therefore they could not understand these instructions. The study showed that teacher attitudes also demotivated their concentration, because teachers are the main people who can give them clear information. That is why teachers must be clear and consistent during the conversation. In addition, in open questions on the questionnaire, participants said that if teachers cannot use technological materials during training, students would be motivated. They became easily bored; they lost attention and interest in the topic or new information (10). It was important to use different learning strategies for our students, because there were different types of students, and each had different abilities of understanding. Teachers should know the students well and use the most appropriate teaching methods for them. In addition to teacher attitudes, parenting issues play an important role in language learning for students. All students expected their parents to learn new information; therefore, their families should provide them with sufficient support to help them become motivated students. Their parents' point of view on learning a new language was that students, as a rule, learned a new language in a motivated environment. In addition, environmental issues also affect student learning. The learning environment, especially the classroom, should be bright, clean, and the materials students will use must be intact. According to our profile, students were afraid to speak with other friends in case they made mistakes. This was one of the most problematic situations faced by many students. Both teachers and other students should be careful in their statements about their friends, because even a small misunderstanding can cause life problems in the process of teaching their friends (3). Further research can contribute by discovering more related effects on student motivation. This study may also be useful for relevant research in this area. In addition, this study will provide guidance for new teachers to understand their students and the problems they encounter while learning a language. On the other hand, this study has limitations, because as it was implemented only for 40 students in the same department and college. Therefore, it cannot be argued that all of these conclusions are valid for each student. Finally, if this study is reproduced, it can provide more detailed information and results after it is applied to different students from different areas, and also if more subjects and statements are added that will be passed on to the participants.

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