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# **The Motivational Strategies As A Tool For Effective Teaching Of English As A Second Language Secondary Schools**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Motivation in second language education depends on the teacher-students relationship. This relationship is riddled with power and status. For many, power plays a large part in the relationship. The rights and duties of teachers and learners are related to power. The basis of coercive power is punishment. Some individuals or institutions have the authority to punish others. The basis of the second type of power is reward. Some individuals or institutions have the power to reward what they deem appropriate behaviour. Therefore, this paper looks into motivation, motivational dimensions, motivational strategies, motivational strategies in teaching English as a second language and finally the paper recommends that education managers should organize workshops and seminars for teachers in order to improve their capacity in the English language teaching strategies.

**Keywords:** Motivation, Motivational strategies

## **INTRODUCTION**

Motivation has been widely accepted by both teachers and researchers as one of the key factors that influence the rate and success of second/foreign language (L2) learning. It provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and serves as a driving force for sustaining the long and often tedious learning process. Indeed, all the other factors involved in L2 acquisition presuppose motivation to some extents. Without sufficient motivation, even individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals, and neither are appropriate curricula and good teaching enough on their own to ensure students' achievement. On the other hand, high motivation can make up a considerable difference both in one's language aptitude and learning conditions. Dornyei (2009) emphasizes that, although language aptitude accounts for a considerable proportion of individual variability in language learning achievement, motivational factors can override the aptitude effects. In certain language environments, as Dornyei pointed out, where the social setting demands it (e.g. when the LI is a local vernacular and the L2 is the national language), many people seem to master an L2 regardless of differences in their aptitudes.

English language occupies an enviable place in all levels of the educational sector. It is the medium of instruction at the upper primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of educational system. It is a core subject and the key to the learning and mastery of other subjects as the contents of most of subjects are expressed in English language. This can be clearly understood where the senior secondary school curriculum is an extension of junior secondary school curriculum. It builds on the language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing already introduced significantly at the JSS level. In the current Nigerian Educational Policy, no student can proceed to the tertiary level without a credit in English

language. In addition, the subject is the medium of instruction at all levels of education as well as the language of government and wider communication. Consequently, English language is among the core subjects in the Senior Secondary School Curriculum.

The revised curriculum strives to equip the students with an adequate range of words, sentences and sentence types, to enable them communicate effectively in the school and outside it. The way the school curriculum is designed is to ensure that the students can listen effectively to any speech or lecture, speak fluently and intelligibly, read materials of varying lengths and difficulty at all levels effectively, and write logically with grammatically correct sentences. The current national curriculum stated the objectives of senior secondary schools (SS) English language as follows:

- i. Building upon the English language skills developed at the upper basic education classes;
- ii. Developing skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing to enable students undertake higher education without problems;
- iii. Equipping secondary school leavers with a satisfactory level of proficiency in the language for use in their work places;
- iv. Stimulating in them the love for reading as a pleasurable activity; and
- v. Promoting and enhancing the various language skills and competence for effective national and international communication. (Senior Secondary Education Curriculum, 2007).

Teaching and learning a foreign language is dependent upon positive motivation. Dornyei (2009) argues that second language learners' feelings about foreign language and its cultural values and living styles (attitude) and their individual reasons for learning the language (motivation) are related to the overall learning success and achievement of learning the foreign language. They found that the pragmatic purpose for learning a second language was derived from a personal desire to know the native speakers of the target language.

### **Motivation**

Motive is a factor or circumstance that induces a person press to act, inspire, influence, or energise in a particular way. Motivate simply means to supply a motive to, be the motive of, cause (a person) to act in a particular way, or stimulate the interest (of a person in an activity). Motivation can be conceived as an impetus to create and sustain intentions and goal-seeking acts (Xiao, 2013). The psychologists that concerned with learning and education use the word motivation to describe those processes that can (a) arouses and instigate behaviour, (b) give direction or purpose to behaviour, (c) continue to allow behaviour to persist, and (d) lead to choosing or preferring a particular behaviour (Xiao, 2013). This conception of motivation can be understood as the process of combining effort and desire to achieve a target goal.

Motivation is a factor that determines the extent of people's desire to perform an activity. The term, motivation, is used quite broadly in the field of education. This is because it is considered to be one of the most influential factors in learning and academic achievement. A number of researchers from diverse field of education studies have tried to define, analyze and conceptualize this term (Brophy, 1987). Brophy (1987) stated that motivation is an abstract and theoretical construct specifically refers to the initiation, direction, intensity, persistence and quality of behaviour, especially goal-directed behaviour. This conception sees motivation as a force directing performance. That may be why, Hosseini and Salehi (2008) concludes that motivation consists of the choices that people make as to what experiences or goals they will approach or avoid and the degree of effort they exert in that respect.

Gardner (2001) posits that motivation drives an individual to put in effort to achieve a goal by making the individual persistent and attentive. He states that a highly motivated individual enjoys striving force for a goal and makes use of strategies in reaching that goal. Motivation to learn anything is often triggered when that thing is seen as valuable to the learner in view of the amount of effort that will be required to be put into learning it. Therefore a motivated individual is an inspired one who is ever ready to accomplish a particular task in order to achieve his predefined goals.

The conception of motivation lead to the three dimensions which are very vital to the improvement of the students' English communicative ability. These dimensions are cognitive dimensions, affective dimensions and social dimensions. These can be broken down below:

**i. Cognitive Dimension**

1. Progression from known to the unknown
2. Classroom summary at the end of the lesson
3. Formative assessment by the teacher
4. Stating instructional objectives in the classroom
5. Employing dynamic formative assessment

**ii. Affective Motivational Strategies**

- a. Students-centred teaching style
- b. Jolly classroom activities for the students
- c. Employing realia and audiovisual materials
- d. Using the variety of learning tasks
- e. Verbal reinforcement

**iii. Social Strategies**

- a. Emphasizing cooperative learning
- b. Interpersonal relations
- c. Supporting healthy competition
- d. Role-plays and instructional games
- e. Creating friendly social interaction

**Motivational strategies**

Having discussed motivation and second language, it is important to identify some motivational strategies that can be used by language teachers in the classroom for better performance of their students. Motivation in the classroom is called achievement motivation (Xiao, 2013). Therefore, for the teacher to improve his students' achievement, it is necessary for him to follow some strategies. Although not fixed and necessarily practical for all cases, these motivational strategies are so much helpful to motivate the students (Xiao, 2013).

Various literatures identified the importance of taking care into cognizance individual differences in motivational influence, and in the ways in which each student demonstrate motivation. This is because motivational strategies have different variables called cognitive, affective, and social (Xiao, 2013). Some students are motivated by a desire to know (cognitive drive). For these students, learning is a goal in and of itself. No additional incentives are needed. They seek to understand and to acquire new information simply because it is there. Other students are motivated by means of enhancing their self-concepts (ego enhancement). Thus, they strive to do well. Alternatively, ego-deflating failure is avoided just as vigorously. Other students are motivated by social factors (social affiliation). They are trying to please their parents, they are responding to peer groups' standards, as this is important to their social standing in the class, or they are working to attain a certain power status in the group. Students with different types of academic motivation respond in predictable ways to classes and teachers with different orientations (Xiao, 2013).

The motivational strategies were clearly identified by different researchers like Dornyei (1999). His main types of motivational strategies that can be used in teaching English are *generating initial motivation, maintaining and protecting motivation, and rounding off the learning experience by encouraging positive self-evaluation*. Generating initial motivation has been discussed by Dornyei (1999) as a process of creating the basic motivational conditions that comprises the adoption of appropriate teacher behaviour and establishing good rapport with the students, creating a pleasant and safe classroom atmosphere for learning, creating a cohesive learner group. On the part of students, it deals with enhancing the learners language-related values and attitudes that focus on 'integrativeness', on the anticipated intrinsic pleasure of learning, and on instrumental incentives. And making the curriculum relevant for the learners and increasing the learners' expectancy of success in their learning experiences.

### **Relationship Between Teaching Strategies, Learners' Motivation and Learners' Academic Performances,**

Since motivation is acknowledged as a key factor in determining success in foreign or second language learning academic attainment, strategies that maintain language learners' motivation are of interest to educators. A number of studies have been conducted by educational researchers in order to gain a better understanding of how language learners' motivation can be positively affected during the language learning process (Bernaus & Gardner, 2008). Nakata (2006) states that unlike aptitude, which cannot be changed since it is innate, motivation can fluctuate factor over time. Brophy (2010) contends that the fluctuation of motivation, academic achievement and the amount of the effort exerted may be affected by two main factors; internal and external factors (teachers, parents, peers, and community). This means motivation of students is something a teacher can influence.

As described earlier, motivation can be developed by interactions between the learner and external factors, including teachers, parents, and peers (Brophy, 2010). Among those external factors that influence students' motivation in learning a foreign language, the teachers' teaching strategies and practices play a more significant role than the rest (Cheng & Dornyei, 2007). These studies highlight the fact that "the teacher's level of enthusiasm and commitment is one of the most important factors that affect the learners' motivation" (Dornyei, 1998, p. 130) and teachers' choices of strategies in the classroom affect students' motivation to learn. Student participant in Trang and Baldaufs (2007) study of demotivation in English language learning in a Vietnamese context came to conclusion that the participants were in agreement that teachers' contributed to their motivation to learn English. Amongst the four demotivating categories related to language teachers, teaching methods were considered the primary source of students' demotivation. This explicitly indicated that teachers and their use of teaching methods had a strong impact on students' demotivation or motivation to learn.

A subsequent review of studies examining beginning teachers' perceptions of problems they often face in the classroom found that motivating pupils was the second most serious problem that the teachers encountered (Dornyei, 2001). Thus, the teachers' role in the language learning process should not be underestimated.

Students' levels of foreign language proficiency are influenced by attitudes, motivation, teachers and classroom experiences. Nikolov (1999) found that students' motivation and proficiency in the development of their foreign language skills were strongly related to experiences they gained in the classroom. Being a significant part of the classroom environment, teachers obviously affect both students' motivation in learning and their academic attainment. Students may be motivated to learn if the teacher provides the students with the appropriate conditions in the classroom and utilizes motivational teaching strategies (Dornyei, 2001).

### **Motivational Strategies in Teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language**

How to engage and motivate students through motivational teaching strategies has engaged second/foreign language researchers due to its significant contribution to academic performance and achievement in learning a second/foreign language. Dornyei states that "motivational strategies refer to those motivational influences that are consciously exerted to achieve some systematic and enduring positive effects" (2001, p. 28). In addition, Guilloteaux and Dornyei define motivational strategies as "instructional interventions applied by the teacher to elicit and stimulate students' motivation" (2008, p.56). Dornyei further contends that "they are techniques that promote the individual's goal-related behaviour" (2001, 28). Motivational teaching strategies are thus steps or techniques employed by teachers in their teaching practices to facilitate students' motivation in learning a second/foreign language.

The motivational strategies in teaching a second/foreign language are usually "grounded in sound theoretical considerations" (Guilloteaux & Dornyei, 2008, 56). While effective and motivational teaching strategies have been proposed by scholars in education and educational psychology areas, few were specifically contributed by second/foreign language scholars. The most notable framework

in the area of second/foreign language that can accommodate diverse teaching strategies was established by Dornyei (2001, 29). His model for motivational second/foreign language teaching practice comprising four main dimensions as:

- i. Creating basic motivational conditions- Laying the foundations of motivation through establishing a good teacher-student rapport, creating a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere, and generating a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms.
- ii. Generating initial motivation, that is, "whetting the students' appetite", by enhancing the learners' language-related values and attitudes, increasing the learners' goal-orientedness, making the teaching materials relevant for the learners, and creating realistic learners beliefs.
- iii. Maintaining and protecting motivation by making learning stimulating, presenting tasks in a motivating way, setting specific learners' goal, protecting the learners' self-esteem and increasing their self-confidence, allowing learners to maintain a positive social image, promoting cooperation among the learners, creating learner autonomy and promoting self-motivating learner strategies.

### **Strategies of Teaching English as a Second Language**

The English language teaching practice depends largely on the kinds of strategies of language teaching. Within the communicative approach to language teaching, English language teachers have been viewed as the ultimate “producers of environments that allow students to learn as much as possible” (Ounis and Ounis, 2017). In this respect, teachers are compelled to make use of a wide variety of teaching methods that appeal to every individual learner and increase their curiosity and motivation to discover their language learning. The teachers are encouraged to be careful in the selection, development and implementation of motivational strategies (Brown, 2001) in order to teach the language effectively.

The instruction in English language classrooms is in English language and learning to listen, speak, read and write is the goal. Therefore, the use of teaching strategies is mandatory in any English language classroom. The demonstration strategy, for example, is the use of real objects, performing action, using gestures, and facial expressions in the teaching process. It is used in presenting vocabulary. It can also be used in for sentence patterns that stand for concrete ideas. The teaching strategy here includes teacher doing the demonstration and students practicing with feedback from the teacher (Piller & Skillings, 2005). The choral drill strategy involves chanting together following along as the teacher or any other leading agent leads the class activity. It is a form of teaching strategy by following from the leading agent. This technique differs from the choral reading in that it is for oral language development and print is not connected to activity (Piller & Skillings, 2005). In addition, look and say teaching strategy is another form of teaching strategy whereby students listen to the teacher and look at the object or print, then repeat a word or a sentence after the teacher. The students either repeat as the teacher points at the picture or watch to the object the teacher shows.

### **CONCLUSION**

Motivation being on the individual cognitive, affective, or social factors is one of the effective elements influencing language proficiency as well as learning outcomes. Therefore, the knowledge of the strategies which promote motivation can help teachers to have a better understanding of the role of motivation in learning a foreign language. Again, knowledge of how these strategies could lead to higher or lower English language achievement was of prime importance to the language teacher especially in Sokoto state. This frequency difference in the use of different motivational strategies would be due to different factors which include the teachers' skills, the learners' conditions and the educational circumstances and facilities. Teachers should be equipped with appropriate strategies and also include motivational factors in their teaching methodology in order to motivate their students.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings of this research, the following are the recommendations:

1. The Play-way strategy is adequate for the teachers of English to maintain in the language classroom. And also, Teachers need to establish a link between the student's previous knowledge and the current instruction.
2. Workshops and seminars should be organized for teachers in order to improve their capacity in the English language teaching strategies.
3. Motivational strategies can determine the simplicity in lesson presentation by making their students to organize and process their knowledge. And English language teachers in secondary schools should be empowered with modern technology equipments i.e. projectors, Televisions, DVDs etc, as to support the teaching of English with substitution of voice in the teaching of sounds and listening skills.

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