Pakistani University Students’ challenges and motivation for Learning English

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Abstract

Second language learners’ motivation has been a widely researched topic since a decade. But for its diversity it is still a topic of interest for many researchers. English is a second language in Pakistan for most of the people and studying learners’ motivation towards learning English may help students, teachers, educationist and ELT authors and instructors. The study aims to unfold factors that shape English language learners’ motivation to learn it as a second language. The study involves a quantitative research approach and was carried out on 275 students who were asked to share their opinion through a questionnaire. The questionnaire contains 60 items encumbering significant variables that point out participants’ motivations and de-motivations towards learning English as a second language. A convenient sample approach was used in this study for the time and resources constraints. The important variables that have emerged are instrumental, knowledge, travel, integrative motivation and English use anxiety, attitude towards English and social orientation. The results also show that grammar, reading and writing skills tend to appear challenging for the participants and consequently are the causes for participants’ de-motivation towards learning English as second language learners. The Component Principal Analysis of the data unfolds three types of learners based on the motivations and de-motivations which correlate so well. The learners have been named as Intrinsical, practical, and sustainers based on the factors which motivate and de-motivate them.

1. Background of the study

English Language has been a dominant language in the academic realm in Pakistan. Besides much uproar over the issue of national language (Urdu) being ignored, English Language has not lost its controlling status in Pakistani educational institutions. Its domineering role is felt strongly when students step in the university. They meet pupils from the diverse educational background like A-level, intermediate from Government boards, and from Agha Khan board. They have to speak English in the class for it being a preferred medium of instruction in most of the reputed universities. They have to study books which are written in English by the foreign writers. Moreover, the students from other social economic background may have to interact with those who have sound English being from the elite schools. This may also throw another challenge for those who have never had English Speaking environment.

Pakistani education system at the higher school level is comprised of two streams, A level and Intermediate. Mostly students from the elite class opt to acquire IGCSE qualification as it costs a lucrative fee. On the other hand, Intermediate is an economical qualification and students from the lower middle and middle class families acquire this qualification. Pakistan is a country where English is mainly thought to be the second language but for many students it is the third language as their mother tongue is not the national language (Urdu). Such students encounter dual challenges. First of all they need motivation to talk in the national language. Secondly, they have to stimulate and sustain motivation to learn English which is their third language. Language learning is a tedious task and it requires an catalyst to keep learning.

In a nut shell, in Pakistani universities students, from the diverse educational, linguistic, and social economical background, come to study which may lead to some issues and one of them is learners’ motivation to learn English. Pakistan is a country where English is mainly thought
to be the second language but for many students it is the third language as their mother tongue is not the national language (Urdu). Such students encounter dual challenges. First of all they need motivation to talk in the national language. Secondly, they have to stimulate and sustain motivation to learn English which is their third language. Language learning is a tedious task and it requires a catalyst to keep learning. Therefore, exploring factors that motivate learners is the key to develop sound language teaching pedagogies.

2. Research questions

Q1. What factors motivate DHA Suffa University students to learn English?
Q2. What factors impact their motivation during the process of learning?
Q3. Is there any co relation between the factors that motivate them to learn English?
Q4. What factors impact learners’ motivation greatly?
Q5. Is there any correlation between learners’ motivation and their efforts?
Q6. Is there any difference in motivation for learning English in students from varied backgrounds?

3. Review of the Related Material

There have been numerous motivation theories over the decades which have tried to investigate role of motivation in language learning. To answer this many theoretical models have been presented and significant debate and disagreement emerged among the scholars, but it is still an abstract idea for its roots in human behavior. We can feel it and vaguely touch this notion but when it is to be defined, it is hard to arrive at the consensus. Despite the ascertain status of motivation to learn extra languages the consensus is not seen on the definite description of motivation (Oxford & Shearin, 1994).

Perhaps only thing that most experts may obtain consensus on is that it deals with the management and variations in human behavior. Motivation may be defined as a force behind human behavior for example the choice of a specific move, consistency it involves, and the labor it takes. (Zoltan Dornyei, Ema Ushioda; 2011: 03). In other words, motivation is a force that may point out the reason for individuals’ choice to do an action. It may also be the force that decides the duration for such an action, and it may direct us to uncover the efforts they put in to continue the action.

LLM researches have lately sprout (see Dornyei, 2001, 2005 and Dornyei & Schmidt, 2001 for excessive reviews). This has not been the case for the scarcity of theories to elaborate motivation; nevertheless, it is their profusion that has created problems. Dornyei (1996). The growth in motivational theories has been under the influence of studies in psychology and education like work of Deci and Ryan, 1085; Eccles and Wigfield, 1995.

Theories of motivation in early centuries emphasis on deep-rooted unconscious urges, emotions, inclination molding human behavior for example in the work of Freud (1996). On the other hand, a great span of 21st century has received motivation theories with the emphasis on conscious cognitive processes. Therefore, Motivational theories have been swinging between conscious and unconscious motivational processes. There have been few theories with the focus on combining cognition and affect. One of them is well known attribution theory developed by Weiner, 1986.

Cognitive perspectives on motivation have been dominant even today, but there had been revival of studies in the role of affect in motivational psychology. Ryan (2007) believes that this revival is the result of a number of co-extensive development in the field of psychology: evolutionary psychology and cross culture psychology which focus on human nature, significance of motives and emotions in general and culturally centered motives, emotion and values.
Ryan (2007) is of the view that cognitive perspectives in motivation still hold importance and now there is a need to develop theoretical frameworks that combines emotional and cognitive dimensions.

Researches in motivation have greatly focused on motivation process. Like expectancy-value frameworks, Wigfield and Eccles, (2000) covers initial motivation phase of selecting and involving in actions. Whereas, learned helplessness by Peterson et al, 1993 pays attention to effects of action and experiences on motivation. It has been debated by many researchers whether motivation is basically a ‘cause’ or an ‘effect’ of learning. However, most researchers now agree that it operates in a cyclical relationship with learning.

4. METHODOLOGY
The pioneers of motivation research – Wallace Lambert, Robert Gardner and their students and associates being social psychologists used quantitative research method. As a result, the primary research method used in the field has been survey research utilizing questionnaires.

Studies carried through surveys employed to elaborate the features/behaviors/views of inhabitants of a place by inspecting a fragment of that community, the sample, at a particular of time. Employing questionnaires is considered to be the principal method to gather the data and the outcomes are usually processed employing descriptive statistical analyses which supply frequencies, means, percentages, ranges. The methodology used in this study is in compliance with the trend set by the founders and this quantitative research method.

A questionnaire of almost 100 items is designed covering the items that are to be investigated to uncover the answers raised in the research questions.

5. Discussion and Analysis of the Results
To answer the last research questions an attempt was made to evolve a model based on different motivations to depict learners’ personality. Component principal Analysis was run to take out the components which correlate best and based on their correlation deductions were made to trace out learners motivational personality based on different motivations. The results show the correlation among 15 variables that motivate students to learn English. There is a range of correlation among the variable, form positive to negative or vice versa, can be observed. (see table below). The correlation matrix gives us a summarized picture of correlation among the variables. The KMO test is meritorious which allows us to carry out factor analysis to see which variable tied together the most. (see table 2) Most of the variables have high extraction value which means they may be used for the factor analysis. Based on Eigen values the SPSS has made three components (see the spree diagram and table). After running rotation on the components the SPSS gives the rotated component matrix which shows the correlation among Component 1 Component 2 Component 3. Component one includes instrumental motivation, knowledge motivation, travel motivation, friendship motivation, social and integrative motivation. Component 2 includes attitude towards English, achievement, motivational intensity, anxiety, and English use anxiety. Component three includes M-De-motivation in grammar, M-de-motivation in reading and M-de-motivation in writing. All the variables in each component correlate highly with each other.
### Component Transformation Matrix (Table 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.772</td>
<td>.488</td>
<td>-.407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.409</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>.906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-.486</td>
<td>.866</td>
<td>.116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows the correlation among three components. It is notable that component 3 correlate negatively with component 1 before and after rotation. This means M-DMG, M-DMR and M-DMW negatively correlate with the variable in component one like knowledge motivation, travel motivation, friendship motivation, social and integrative motivation. A casual relationship is difficult to establish here but somehow they appeared to be two opposite combinations. Read the following tables to scan the information.

### Correlation Matrix (Table 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>INS.M</th>
<th>Know.M</th>
<th>Travel.M</th>
<th>Friendship</th>
<th>Social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INS.M</strong></td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.707</td>
<td>.537</td>
<td>.461</td>
<td>.498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Know. M</strong></td>
<td>.707</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.568</td>
<td>.521</td>
<td>.590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel. M</strong></td>
<td>.537</td>
<td>.568</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.649</td>
<td>.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friendship</strong></td>
<td>.461</td>
<td>.521</td>
<td>.649</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social</strong></td>
<td>.498</td>
<td>.590</td>
<td>.500</td>
<td>.548</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integrative</strong></td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>.419</td>
<td>.461</td>
<td>.535</td>
<td>.521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitude. English</strong></td>
<td>.204</td>
<td>.186</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>.162</td>
<td>.166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achievement</strong></td>
<td>.150</td>
<td>.222</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.224</td>
<td>.211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anxiety</strong></td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.213</td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eng. Use. anxiety</strong></td>
<td>.155</td>
<td>.206</td>
<td>.206</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td>.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M- DMG</strong></td>
<td>-.016</td>
<td>-.034</td>
<td>-.126</td>
<td>-.061</td>
<td>-.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M- DMR</strong></td>
<td>-.086</td>
<td>-.027</td>
<td>-.194</td>
<td>-.188</td>
<td>-.148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M- DMW</strong></td>
<td>-.167</td>
<td>-.184</td>
<td>-.145</td>
<td>-.208</td>
<td>-.161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self- evaluation</strong></td>
<td>.160</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>.279</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ins. M** = Instrumental Motivation  
**Know.M** = Knowledge Motivation  
**Travel. M** = Travelling Motivation  
**Attitude.English** = Attitude towards English
Findings and Recommendations

Fig 2

Component Plot in Rotated Space

A new dimension in L2 Motivation towards Learning English can be inferred based on the results shown as a final analysis in the above diagram. Through an extensive statistical data analysis we have three components with 11 variables. Through a process of deduction it may be established that these motivational factors hint at three types of learners as follows:

5.1 Intrinsical Learners
These learners have achievement, motivational intensity, attitude towards English and English use anxiety. The combination of such motivations may range to strong to weak correlation but they may exist side by side. Now the question is why to name them intrinsical? The answer lies in few deductions. Firstly all the correlated variables in this component (2) hint at learners’ autonomy and interest. For example if a learner does have a high sense of achievement, he may be less reluctant to speak (English use anxiety) and consequently he or she may be more motivated developing better attitude towards English. A cautious casual relationship can be developed here as statically they correlate and have tendency to gather with each other.

5.2 Practical Learners
The learners who have motivations that fall under Component (1) one are instrumental motivation, knowledge motivation, travel motivation, friendship motivation, social culture and integrative motivation. An analysis based on deductions will also lead to establish a link among them. Many researchers used to believe that integrative and social motivation are different from instrumental and knowledge but now researches (see lit review) conducted have proved them to be the same for both engages utility of English Language. Based on important traits of these variables the learners who have them the most may be named as Practical Learners.

5.3 Sustainers
They are the one who have motivation having fought with de-motivation towards grammar, reading, and writing. Such learners are not left with much motivation as the complexities of language learning diffuse their motivation to learn the target language.

In no way it is claimed that having different motivations means that the learners will impact their language proficiency negatively or positively but such motivations may direct them to like a particular language process.
References