

Motivation of Students Towards Learning English at Faculty of Science, Azzaytuna University, Libya

By

**Mustafa. F. S. Almrtdi¹ and Salama. E. S.
Alabani²**

*1 English Department, Faculty of Education,
Azzaytuna University, Tarhuna, Libya.*

mustafa.almrtdi@yahoo.fr

*2 Psychology Department, Faculty of Education,
Azzaytuna University, Tarhuna, Libya.*

salamapsy1.2004@gmail.com

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate undergraduate students' motivation toward learning English as a Foreign Language (FL). The population of the study was (943) undergraduate students at the Faculty of Science at Azzaytuna University during the spring semester of 2017. A sample of (100) students was selected randomly to complete a questionnaire reflecting their motivation for learning English. The data collected was analyzed by using some statistical methods such as arithmetic mean, standard deviation, T-Test and One-Way ANOVA Test. The results revealed that around 77% students are highly motivated. They have positive motivation towards learning English as a Foreign Language. They emphasized that the high motivation level is an important element in English language learning process. In the same perspective, the findings showed significant statistical differences amongst students' motivation level towards learning English language according to their field of study.

Keywords: *motivation, types of motivation, English language learning.*

ملخص الدراسة

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة مستوى الدافعية نحو تعلم اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية لدى الطلاب الجامعيين. ويتكون مجتمع الدراسة من (943) طالب من كلية العلوم بجامعة الزيتونة، ليبيا، وذلك خلال الفصل الدراسي الربيع 2017م. وقد اختيرت منهم عينة عشوائية بلغ قوامها (100) طالب تم توزيع استبانة عليهم لجمع بيانات الدراسة، والتي تم تحليلها باستخدام بعض الوسائل الاحصائية مثل المتوسطات الحسابية، والانحرافات المعيارية، والاختبار التائي (T-Test)، وكذلك اختبار تحليل التباين الأحادي (One-Way ANOVA). وكشفت نتائج الدراسة أن حوالي 77% من الطلاب يتمتعون بدافعية عالية نحو تعلم اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية، حيث أكدوا على أهمية دور الدافعية الموجبة في نجاح عملية تعلم اللغة الانجليزية لديهم، كما أظهرت النتائج وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية لدى أفراد العينة في مستوى دافعتهم نحو تعلم اللغة الانجليزية و التي تعزى لمتغير مجالاتهم الدراسية.

1. Introduction

Motivation has been the subject of many researches in psychology and the sciences of education. Moreover, it is a widely researched and studied phenomenon and in the recent decades, the researches of motivation have been increased rapidly. In the field of teaching and learning languages, motivation plays a very important role. There are numerous researches refer to the importance of motivation in learning a second or foreign language. Gardner (2000), for instance, states that motivation is responsible for achievement in a second language. In the same perspective, Oxford and Shearin (1994) emphasize the importance of motivation in the process of a foreign language learning.

In Libya, English is taught as EFL compulsory course to the students at the Faculty of Science. They learn English as a Foreign Language. They learn English to understand the scientific terms in English and the grammar rules which enable them to read the update English sources in their field of study such as books, journals, ...etc. In this study, a sample of students from the Faculty of Science at Azzaytuna University will be investigated about their motivation towards learning English. The researchers will explain the definition of motivation, the types of motivation, and motivation and language learning process. The data collection methodology and analysis will be explained too.

2. Definition

The term motivation is easy to write, but it is difficult to define. Gardner (2006, p. 242) argues that: "motivation is a very complex phenomenon with many facets...Thus, it is not possible to give a simple definition". The difficulty of giving a simple definition of the term motivation is due to its various kinds of views by different schools of thought. There are many different definitions for the term motivation. Harmer (1991, p. 3) states, "Motivation is some kind of internal drive that encourages somebody to pursue a course of action". This means that if someone has a goal that he wants to achieve, he will be strongly motivated to do all that is necessary to achieve that goal. For example, if a student's goal is to achieve an excellent average, he will be motivated to study diligently to achieve his goal. Dörnyei (2001c), and Good and Brophy (2000) explain that motivation is an internal process. This means that it is not directly

observable. Littlewood (1984, p. 57) makes it clear "Motivation is the crucial force which determines whether a learner embarks on a task at all, how much energy he devotes and how long he preserves". According to Dörnyei (1998, p. 118), the definition of motivation is "A process whereby a certain amount of instigation force arises, initiates actions, and persists as long as no other force comes into play to weaken it and thereby terminate action, or until the planned outcome has been reached".

3. Types of motivation

There are different points of view to categorize motivation, the types of motivation will be discussed in the following lines:

3.1. Intrinsic and extrinsic Motivation

According to Ryan and Deci (2000), there are two basic types of motivation: Intrinsic and Extrinsic. They introduce these two types as Self-determination theory. Dörnyei (2001c) states that intrinsic motivation refers to the satisfaction of learning for personal pleasure and fulfillment, while extrinsic motivation is related to external regulations such as rewards, imposed rules or choiceful behavior. In other words, intrinsic motivation is the eagerness and interest to do and take part in some certain activities, whereas, extrinsic motivation is a motivation to do a work or an activity as a means to achieve a goal. The people who have an intrinsic motivation do the work because it pleases them, it interests them or because this work gives them satisfaction. They do the work or the activity freely and without external control or pressure and they do not expect a reward, a price or a compliment. This type of motivation is related to pleasure. For example, the intrinsic motivation happens when student wants to integrate strongly with foreign people and their culture. He will learn their language (s) in order to communicate with them and to have contact with their culture.

According to Lucas et al. (2010, p.7), "The term extrinsic motivation refers to the performance of an activity in order to attain some separable outcome". This means that extrinsic motivation is related to the achievement of a target. Extrinsic motivation occurs when the student's goals for learning a foreign language are professional, such as learning a

language in order to have the necessary qualifications to get a job. The motivation of learning English for specific purposes is an extrinsic motivation. The students learn English as a means to achieve practical and professional goal for finding a job.

3.2. Integrative and instrumental motivation

Brown (2000) and Gardner (1985) categorized motivation into two basic types of motivation: integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Alizadeh (2016, p. 12) clearly states, "The instrumental motivation refers to acquiring a language as a means for obtaining instrumental objectives such as furthering a career, reading technical materials, translation, and so on. The integrative motivation describes learners who want to integrate themselves into the culture of the second language group and become involved in social interchange in that group". In other words, the integrative motivation occurs, such as when the learner who is working hard to improve his English language, his motivation can be the desire that he wants to interact with native English speakers and be integrated into English culture, which he is fascinated with, while, the instrumental motivation occurs when the learner is studying hard to get practical benefits from learning a second or foreign language, such as getting a good job, or fulfilling an academic requirement. Hudson (2000) explains that the instrumental motivation is generally indicated by the aspiration to get practical benefits from the study of a second language.

4. Motivation and language learning

Motivation is key to all fields of learning. Several experts in the field of language learning and motivation such as Dörnyei (1994), Ellis (1994), Gardner and Tremblay (1994), Gonzales (2010), and Oxford and Shearin (1994) emphasize the importance of motivation among learners in the learning process of the second language. Cheng and Dörnyei (2007, p. 153) states, "Motivation serves as the initial engine to generate learning and [it] later functions as an ongoing driving force that helps to sustain the long and usually laborious journey of acquiring a foreign language". According to Manolopoulou-Sergi (2004), motivation plays a significant role in each of the three stages of learning the foreign language. (input /

central processing / output). Manolopoulou–Sergi explains the three steps as follows:

- a) The first step (input): is the first encounter with new materials.
- b) The second step (central processing): is the connection between new materials and existing knowledge.
- c) The third step (output): is the demonstration of acquired knowledge.

Kenworthy (1987) emphasizes the role of motivation in learning pronunciation. He states that some students focus on the performance of a good pronunciation. They ask their teachers to correct their pronunciation whenever they make a mistake. The desire to have a precise pronunciation is a kind of motivation that pushes them to improve the quality of their pronunciation. Cook (1991, p. 75) suggests that: "High motivation is one factor that causes successful learning". According to Oroujlou and Vahedi (2011, p. 995), "Motivation plays a significant role in the process of learning a language. Language teachers cannot effectively teach a language if they do not understand the relationship between motivation and its effect on language acquisition". Roe cited in Kennedy and Bolitho (1984) suggest three levels of motivation for learning English. The first level is considered the highest; this is the level for which English is a need to get a job or to have a promotion. The second level is when the student is learning English to improve their exam grades or improve their career. The third level is for motivated students to learn English as a means of communication with English speakers.

5. Motivation and language teaching

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) emphasize the role of the teacher, calling it a "motivational instrument," which has a significant effect on the quality of motivation of his students. Similarly, they say that self-regulating strategies are essential for learning motivation as well as for maintaining it. In addition, Dörnyei (2001a) explains that most professors and researchers admit that motivation plays a very important role in success or failure in any learning situation. He adds, "My personal experience is that 99 per cent of language learners who really want to learn a foreign language (i.e. who are really motivated) will be able to master a

reasonable working knowledge of it as a minimum, regardless of their language aptitude" (ibid, p. 2). This quote emphasizes the role of motivation and at the same time diminishes the role of aptitude in learning the foreign language. Dörnyei (2001b) clarifies the role of teacher motivation in teaching the foreign language. He says recent studies show that teacher motivation has a significant influence on student learning. In other words, it can be said that a motivated teacher can increase students' motivation for an effective learning. Teachers must motivate students by engaging them in language activities. Similarly, Good and Brophy (2000) indicate that the teacher can generate student motivation by asking students to think about interesting subjects and activities. Crookes and Schmidt (1991, p. 480) emphasize the role of the teacher in motivating students. They said "The source of the motivation is very important in a practical sense to teachers who want to stimulate students' motivation". Dörnyei (2005) considers the teacher's motivation as an effective factor in second language teaching, as it has a positive influence on student motivation. This means, if the teacher is motivated, he will motivate the students. On the other hand, if the teacher is unmotivated, he will demotivate the students too.

6. Research question

The research attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1– What is the EFL undergraduate students' motivation level towards English Language learning?
- 2– Are there any statistically significant differences amongst undergraduate students' motivation towards learning English language according to their field of study?

7. Review of related studies

There are several studies have been carried out on the students' motivation towards learning English as a Foreign or a Second language. Some of these studies which are relevant to the current study will be displayed briefly in this research. For instance, Zidane (2011) conducted a study attempting to investigate students' motivation toward the learning of English. It was carried out with the participation of (50) first year

students at the Civil Engineering Department, Chlef University, Algeria. The instrument used in data collection was the questionnaires. The questionnaires were addressed to teachers and students and the results revealed that civil engineering students were motivated mainly for practical reasons, such as including getting better jobs, and higher prospects in the future ...etc.

Zanghar (2012) did his MA thesis at Colorado University in USA on instrumental and integrative motivation among undergraduate Libyan students of English as a Foreign Language at the English Department, Bani Walid University, Libya. The study aimed at investigating whether EFL students in Libya are instrumentally or integratively motivated to study English and it also looks at the relationship between EFL Libyan students' motivation and their achievement in English. The sample of study consists of forty (40) participants. The data-collection instrument used in this study was a questionnaire adapted from Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The findings revealed that the Libyan students were highly instrumentally and integratively motivated to study English, and their integrative motivation appeared to be a little higher than their instrumental motivation. The findings also showed that there were no relationship between the Libyan students' motivation and their achievement in English as a Foreign Language.

In the same perspective, Azabdaftaril, Gharehaghaji and Akbari (2014) conducted a study on motivation in learning English among the Paramedical Science students in Iran. The purpose of study was to determine whether or not the Undergraduate Paramedical Students of Tabriz University of Medical Sciences of Iran are motivated to learn English; to which orientation of motivation, integrative or instrumental motivation, they incline; and how much their field of study affects increased motivation to learn English. Participants were (141) Undergraduate Paramedical Students including four fields of study: Laboratory Sciences, Technology of Radiology, Anesthesia, And Health Information Technology. The researchers used the questionnaire as tool of data collection. Two questionnaires were filled by the participants. The findings revealed that the participants are highly motivated in learning English in general; however, there was a difference in the degree of motivation according to the student's field of study.

Another study was conducted by Sase, Abdelaal and Amhimmid (2015) to investigate the motivation among Libyan High School students in Kajang, Malaysia. The purpose of this study was to determine whether EFL Libyan students are instrumentally or integratively motivated to study English, and the relationship between gender and type of motivation. A focus group interview was the instrument used in the study. In fact, five (5) female students and five (5) male students were interviewed as a sample. The results of the study indicated that students are more integratively motivated than instrumentally and the female students are more integratively motivated than male students are.

8. Methodology

8.1. *Participants*

The participants involved in this study were (100) university students from all Faculty of Science departments, namely, Chemistry Department, Computer Science Department, Mathematics Department, Biology Department, and Geology Department at Azzaytuna University, Libya. A sample of the students was selected randomly from different departments of the faculty as shown in table 1 below. Their ages range from 18 to 26 years, with a mean age of ($M=21.2$, $SD = 1.3$) years. The population of this study consists of students who were studying and had been studying English language subject when this study was carried out. They have similar background of English language. The general characteristics of the participants will be shown in table 2 below.

Table 1: Shows the distribution of the participants according to their field of study

Departments	No. Of Students
Chemistry	22
Computer science	18
Mathematics	20
Biology	25
Geology	15
Total no. (N)	100

Table 2: Shows the basic participants data

Age	18–26 years
Gender	Female
Class	Undergraduate stage
Academic Establishment	University of Azzaytuna, Libya
No of students	100

8.2. Instrument

The present study used the questionnaire to collect the data from the participants. Seliger and Shohamy (1989) clearly state that, in researches on learning a second or a foreign language, questionnaires are used to collect data on phenomena that are not easily observable, such as motivations. In the same perspective, Adams, Kiko and Mackay (2005, p. 81) recommend, "Questionnaires can be utilized to gather information that learners are able to report about themselves, such as information about their beliefs about learning or their reactions to learning and classroom instruction and activities". The data-collection instrument used in this study was a questionnaire adapted from Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery AMTB (1985). The questionnaire consisted of 20 items which designed to measure students' motivation towards learning EFL. All the items were put in three-point scale ranging from "agree", "neutral" to "disagree", which measure the degree to which the participants agree with those items. The participants were asked to pick one of the choices *agree, neutral, and disagree*.

8.3. Data collection

The Researchers asked for a permission to distribute questionnaire from the heads of all scientific departments at the Faculty of Science to

conduct this study. The approval of the request was received four days later. The researchers distributed the questionnaires to the 100 students during their English classes and explained the aim of this questionnaire. Each participant was asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of 20 items inside the class. The participants were informed not to write their names on the questionnaire. The researchers also explained all parts of the questionnaire to the participants to avoid any misunderstanding to the meanings of its components. Participants were told in advance that the information they wrote would be kept confidential and be used for scientific purposes only. The questionnaire was distributed and collected during the spring semester of 2017.

9. Results and discussion

A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed to undergraduate students in the Faculty of Science at Azzaytuna University, Libya. Their age group is ranging from 18 to 26 with the mean age of ($M=21.4$, $SD = 1.3$) years. Duration of their academic study showed the following rates: The average length of the participants' educational period was 4.2 ± 1.6 semesters (it ranges from one to eight semesters).

The results of the first question showed a high rate of motivation towards learning English language as a foreign language as shown in table 3.

Table 3: Shows the findings of means and standard deviations of the motivation level towards learning English

	N	Mean	Std. D.	Df.	Mean W.	T.	Sig.
Motivation	100	81.85	11.55	99	60	*1.66	0.000

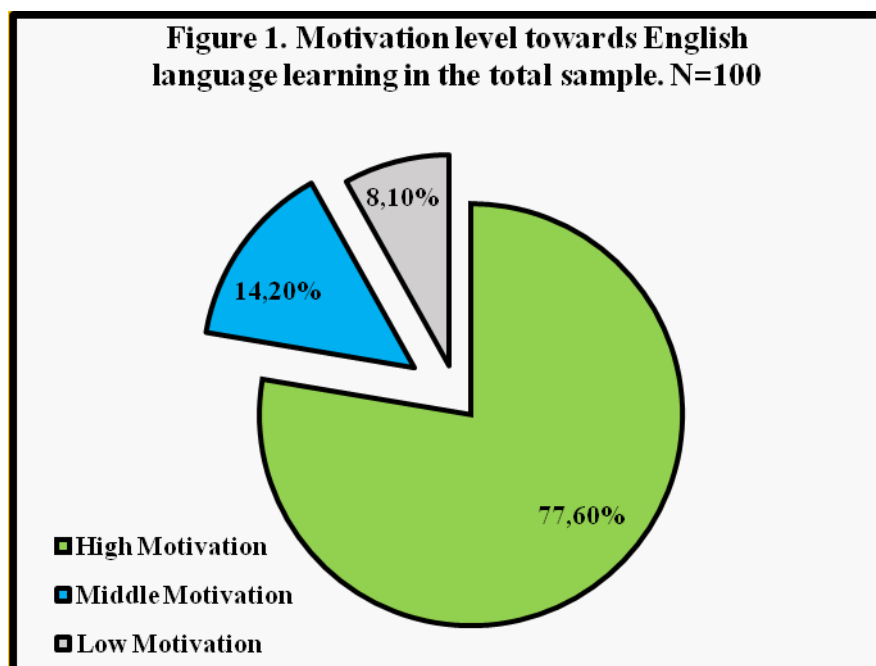
***The mean difference is significant at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level.**

As presented in the table 3, the T-Test score of the total sample is ($T = 1.66$). This result indicates that the participants have highly motivation

level towards learning English as FL. It also showed that the mean scores is (81.85) and the standard deviation is (11.55), while the Mw of the questionnaire is (60). The value of Mw is less than the mean and by using the T-Test to investigate the differences between the two means (M, MW), T. Value is (1.66). The data analysis revealed obviously that the differences of motivation level between the participants in their fields of study are not statistically important at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level. This result indicated that the participants have highly motivation level towards learning English as FL.

In the same perspective, there are results of some other studies indicated the same findings of the current study. The result of Zidane's study (2011), which was carried out with the participation of (50) first year students at the Civil Engineering Department, Chlef University, Algeria, revealed that undergraduate students are highly motivated towards learning English. It also showed, there were no statistically significant differences in the level of motivation between the participants. Furthermore, the study of Rehman, Sheikh, Bilal, Bibi, and Nawaz (2014) that conducted on a group of Pakistani students from a private college in Pakistan and the study of Ahmed, Aftab and Yaqoob (2015) which was carried out with students at undergraduate level from University of Sargodha (UOS) Women Campus Faisalabad, Pakistan, pointed out that the students are highly motivated towards learning English language.

On the other hand, the Figure 1 below gives a comparative view of the data analysis percentage of the motivation levels containing three options: high level (HL), middle level (ML) and low level (LL) for all groups.



In Figure 1, 77.6% of the students indicate a high level of motivation, while, 14.2% of the students have a middle level of motivation and the 8.1% represents the rest of the students with a low level of motivation. According to this result, the level of motivation towards learning English as a foreign language in the total sample is considered very high. This reason is mainly due to the students' awareness of learning English which enables them to use the target language effectively and appropriately in communication, particularly, in the field of their academic specialization. In addition, it provides them a better future in obtaining a distinguished job. In this regard, the findings of this study are clearly matched with the study of Azabdaftaril, Gharehaghaji and Akbari (2014), on motivation in learning English among the Undergraduate Paramedical Students of Tabriz University of Medical Sciences of Iran. It showed that the percentage of highly motivated students is really high towards learning English language, since it is vital for their professional success in the future. As this present study puts forward the learning of English language amongst the students' priorities to obtain some professional privileges not only in their field of study but also in their future job seeking. Therefore, there is a need that undergraduate students must be absolutely competent in mastering English language in any level of education.

The results of the second question is related to the variable of students' academic specialization. One-Way ANOVA test was conducted to find out if there is a significant difference between students' motivation towards learning English as a Foreign Language in their field of study. The following table gives more details of the data analysis.

Table 4: The descriptive statistics of the students' motivation level towards learning English according to their field of study

	Source of Variance	Sum of squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean of squares	F	Sig.
Motivation	Between Groups	3350.159	4	837.540	*1.641	0.05
	Whithin Groups	48480.8	95	510.325		
	Total	81	99			
		51831.040				

*** The value is not statistically significant at the $\alpha=0.05$ level**

As presented in table 4, it is obvious that there is no significant difference of the students' motivation towards learning English as a Foreign Language according to their field of study ($F=1.641$, $\alpha = 0.05$). Regarding this finding, the result showed that the students' different fields of study does not influence their motivation level towards learning English. Therefore, the findings highly support the value of learning English as a FL to undergraduate students in the Faculty of Science departments. In other words, regardless of their academic specialization, the learning of English is important because it will enable them to access to a great amount of information which published in English.

Moreover, they can contact with other cultures and getting a good job in future

Conclusion

This study is an attempt to provide the most reliable idea about motivation towards English language learning as a FL between undergraduate students. From the study results, it can be concluded that high motivation towards learning English language was highly common between participants. Probably, the reason for this manner is due to the importance of the role of English in their life, such as, reading English books, getting good job, contact with different cultures,...etc . In other words, it can be said that the English learning is one of the greatest factors affecting the type and the quality of professional life in the future. Moreover, there is still a need for further studies about motivation to contribute in developing the importance of motivation among undergraduate students.

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