THE ROLE OF MOTIVATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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A B S T R A C T

Numerous studies have found a positive connection between learners’ motivation towards foreign language and foreign language achievement. Drawn upon semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions among students, this study sheds light on the significant impact of motivation in English language learning. Further, this study explores the lived experiences of students and the factors influencing their motivation in learning the English Language. Purposeful sampling was to select participants in the different courses of Quirino State University, Cabarroguis Campus, Philippines. The results revealed that the teacher’s influence, enjoyment in learning, desire to learn, parental influence, and classroom environment were the factors influencing students’ motivation in learning the English Language. Thus, this study suggests that teachers should be aware of these factors of inspiration in their classrooms and consider these as significant parts in developing an English Language Intervention Program to motivate the students and improve their proficiency in learning the English Language.

Keywords: Motivation, English Proficiency, English Language Learning

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Motivation refers to the combination of attempt plus desire to obtain the objective of learning the Language plus desirable attitudes towards learning the Language (Alizadech, 2016). Motivation is the backbone of language teaching (Aquino et al., 2016). Moreover, Basco & Han (2016) posited that students with high motivation levels had a high level of self-esteem.

Furthermore, Oroujlo & Vahedi (2011) emphasized the use of systematic and academic application of “motivation and attitude” in language learning classes is very significant and can make language courses more engaging. Finally, Zaman et al. (2015) stressed that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation strongly influences the learner in learning a second language.

Research Objectives

This study was perceived to explore students’ experiences and determine the factors influencing their motivation in learning the English Language. This study served as a basis and guide in developing a language intervention program to motivate and improve students’ English language proficiency.

Methodology

This study used a qualitative design of research to capture the students' lived experiences during their English classes and explore the factors influencing their motivation to learn English. The study was conducted among 24 sophomore students from the seven courses in the university. The participants are purposely chosen based on the ELMS (English Language Motivation Scale) by Gardner (1985) and their grades in the English Proficiency Test administered by the guidance office in the university. To acquire reliable information, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The
said interview and FGD concentrated on students’ experiences in their English classes and demotivated learning the English Language. The data gathered were read and re-read to extract significant articulations and collectively described common among the participants’ views and experiences. Further, the condensed meanings of important statements were formulated and categorized into codes and themes. The researchers did the correspondence technique and critical friendly technique to ensure the trustworthiness and the reliability of the data.

**Results**

The findings revealed that the students who participated in this study are intrinsically and extrinsically demotivated to learn English. The five exciting themes relative to the factors influencing their motivation in English language learning include teacher influence, enjoyment in learning, desire to learn, parental influence, and classroom environment.

Rahman et al. (2017) posited that a teacher’s influence is essential for students. Further, Ekiz & Kulmetov (2016) emphasized that students’ learning motivation is directly affected by the teacher and his teaching methods reinforced with proper advice and guidance. Moreover, Alizadeh (2016) found that enjoyment of learning is a severe motivation factor aside from positive attitude and external pressures towards the L2 community. On the other hand, Krishnan et al. (2013) discovered that desire to learn English is one factor that influences successful English language learning in EFL settings. Further, Rahman et al. (2017) emphasized that “parents are the first teachers of students and are responsible for their education. Finally, Aquino (2016) mentioned that the classroom environment demotivates students in learning the English Language.

**Findings**

The current study revealed that the participants have positive experiences in learning the English Language and were intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to learn English. When the participants were asked to describe their experiences in their English classes, many of them verbalized that they were motivated to learn English. Further, the factors influencing their motivation include their teacher’s influence, enjoyment in learning, desire to learn, parental influence. On the other hand, they were demotivated to learn the English Language due to the classroom environment. Thus, the result of this study suggests that instructors/professors should be aware of the existence of these factors of motivation in their classrooms. Further, they should develop an atmosphere by which students could be more comfortable in English classes using varied strategies to express themselves and sustain students' motivation freely. Finally, proper dissemination of the result of the study and presentation of the proposed intervention program to the administration, deans, program chairs, and English instructors and professors for evaluation and proper implementation should be done to motivate and enhance their proficiency in learning the English Language.
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References


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Dr. Roselle M. Soriano is an Assistant Professor and Program Chairperson of Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies at Quirino State University, Cabarroguis Campus, Philippines. She finished her Doctor of Philosophy in Rhetoric and Linguistics at St. Paul University, Philippines. She has served as a resource speaker in Public Speaking and Business Communication. She has presented
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