

LANGUAGE IN INDIA

Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow

Volume 12 : 7 July 2012

ISSN 1930-2940

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Motivation toward Learning English among Undergraduate Students of Pakistan

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Abstract

The determination of motivational factors serves a key to suggest improvements and to enhance the experience of language learning. Various projects and training sessions are held regularly in Pakistan to further refine learning strategies. Theorists emphasize the necessity to identify motivational factors in a learning environment which, according to them, can account for both high level of achievement or can be of value to explain underachievement among the FL or L2 learners. The purpose of this study is to define, describe and examine integrative and instrumental motivation among the undergraduate students of Pakistan towards learning of

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English as a foreign language. The idea was explored through a questionnaire, completed in University of Malakand (UOM), which was designed on the model of Gardner (1985) and Clément, Dörnyei & Noels (1994). For the purpose of the study, a total of 40 students were selected from undergraduate courses including Sociology, Economics, Mathematics and Statistics. Based on findings of the study, students were found to be more instrumentally motivated.

Key Words: Motivation; Integrative motivation; instrumental motivation, Pakistan, undergraduate students

Introduction

Research studies indicate that the role of attitudes and motivation remain vital in the context of foreign language learning (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Gonzales, 2010). To Gardner (1985) attitudes are significant as they influence motivation of foreign language learning and this constitutes a major feature of his socio-educational model. This model, according to Dörnyei (1994), is a milestone in the history of foreign/second language motivation research. To him, its distinctive feature is addition of social dimension to the study of motivation. MacIntyre, MacMaster, & Baker (2001) identify four basic sets of variables with reference to Gardner's model. The first one identifies existence of socio-cultural milieu and intergroup beliefs between language communities. The second set of variables relates to individual differences among learners while the third set delineates the learning context both formal and informal. The fourth set relates to learning output which serves as a feedback to the other sets and render the model more dynamic and useful.

Motivational studies have been of considerable focus to psychologists, and psycholinguists among others after the seminal contribution of Gardner and his associates. They are of theoretical and practical nature and the findings have proved to be appealing as motivation, in the context of the studies, has emerged to be of decisive importance in studying language learning differences on individual level (MacIntyre, MacMaster, & Baker, 2001). Motivation is a concept rooted in the interest one shows in the learning of particular linguistic skills for some specific

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purpose. Its presence is considered as the main factor determining the success of FL learner (Rahman et al, 2010). Nida (1956) argues that desire to communicate and sensitivity to the out-group are its two fundamental types, the presence of which can considerably influence the level of success in language learning. Gardner (1960) argues that language learning is dependent upon ‘integrative orientation’ and ‘instrumental’ orientation and they in turn differentiate between language learners.

In the subsequent discussion, research questions are set and a hypothetical statement is given which is followed by literature review covering the various theoretical and practical aspects of the topic in the light of previous studies. It is followed by review of the ELT in Pakistan in the light of various research studies. Afterwards, methodology is discussed which is followed by data analysis and discussion. A comprehensive conclusion sums up the study.

Research Questions

This study explores the motivation of FL learners in the context of Pakistani undergraduate students. The essential questions addressed in the paper include:

1. Why do Pakistani undergraduate students learn English?
2. What are the major goals of the undergraduate students in learning English?
3. To what extent their motivation is integrative or instrumental as FL learners?

Research Hypothesis

This study is based on the hypothesis that undergraduate students in Pakistani universities are more instrumentally motivated to English as FL / L2 learners.

Literature Review

Many research studies have been conducted to elicit the role of motivation among foreign language learners. Majority of these studies reveal that they have benefited from the theory of motivation by Gardner (1985), which identifies two types of motivation. Firstly, integrative motivation points to learner’s interest in integrating with the target language speakers while the

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presence of instrumental motivation reveals itself when the primary aim of a learner is to acquire sufficient knowledge mainly for its instrumental value e.g. school performance or better job prospects in addition to the desire for retention or improvement of status in his 'old' reference group (Gardner, 1960; Obeidat, 2005). In other words, those foreign language learners who display openness in identifying themselves with the target language community and are equally enthusiastic about the language situation are said to be integratively motivated (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003) while the primary pursuit of learners who are instrumentally motivated relate to the practical benefits that they may reap as a result of learning the target language.

Motivation and its manifestations are not static and vary from day to day and task to task in a dynamic manner during the course of learning (Dornyei, 2002). Several factors have been pointed to in the research studies which have their bearings upon the level of motivation of learners including age, aptitude, cognitive style, motivation and personality (Ehrman, Leaver & Oxford, 2003). These factors also relate to learning situation, learning task along with formality and informality of the learning context. It is noted that negative application of either of these factors may adversely affect the motivation level of the learners (Qashoa, 2006). The objectives of research studies in the field of motivation of FL learners include the exploration of ways and means through which learners could be made to have self-confidence and determination in deciding the course of their learning (Conttia, 2007). Similarly, such studies have also contributed in identification and understanding of learners' goals in FL in addition to providing guidelines to teachers, curriculum planners and education policy makers for related improvements (Qashoa, 2006).

Focusing on integrative and instrumental motivation, researchers debate the importance of either of the two in the context of FL learners. To some, the former is more important and superior for measuring the extent of success in learning as it leads to acceptability of the target language's culture, literature and life-style (Gass & Selinker, 2001). However, the proponents of instrumental motivation are no less vocal in arguing that in most FL learning situations, the motive to practically benefit from the target language seems more important than integrating into

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the target group. Based on various studies (Gardner, 1985; Qashoa, 2006; Dörnyei, 2002; Ehrman, Leaver & Oxford, 2003), it is said that both types of motivation can be equally effective to encourage FL learners based on the social and cultural setting of the learners.

It is assumed that integrative orientation to FL is long lasting and such motivation survives over 'extended periods of language study' (Gardner, 1960, p. 13). According to this hypothesis, individuals aiming at seeking better jobs or scores do not sustain their motivation for longer period of time. Further, instrumentally motivated learners do not necessarily have a personal liking for what they learn while those with integrative motivation enjoy learning process as the speech sounds they hear and the grammatical rules they learn are associated with the 'valued members of another language group' (Gardner, 1960, p. 13). It is in this context, that researchers attach more value to integrative motivation than the instrumental one (Ellis, 1997). However, in learning situation, where learners do not find ample opportunity to use and utilize the target language or there is virtual absence of native speakers to interact with, instrumental motivation can prove more appealing and successful.

English Language teaching (ELT) in Pakistan

At the dawn of 21st century, globalization, media, and transnational dependencies have rendered an international status to English. It has assumed crucial importance in a nation's access to modern technology and to meaningfully associate with the world for constructive role in politics, trade and education (Zubairi & Sarudin, 2009). Being an active participant in global issues, there is a growing realization in Pakistan to improve the status of ELT. In the recent years, rapid increase in language learning institutes particularly in the private sector is witness to it. Further, the HEC is also taking practical steps and is focusing on teachers' training programs for improvements in ELT techniques (Ahmad and Sajjad, 2011). In addition, the HEC has also implemented increase in credit hours of English courses up to 12 for Non-English Majors at undergraduate level. However, more concerted efforts are required to improve the status of EFL at school level.

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In Pakistan, public sector schools and colleges rely mainly on translation method for teaching English (Rahman 2001), focus grammatical rules rather than oral use of language (Ghaffor, 1998) and attend to writing and reading at the cost of ignoring listening and speaking skills (Shamim, 2008). The teaching process remains teacher-centred (Zareen, 2000) and learners, for fear of making mistakes, avoid the use of FL. Lack of teachers' training also reinforce the status quo (Mehdi, 2000). In the backdrop, students entering universities predominantly go through the same process except those students who are schooled in private sector institutions.

Methodology

The population sample was selected from Non-English Majors in the field of social and mathematical sciences. The sample size comprised of 40 (third semester / second academic year) students with 10 each from Sociology, Economics, Mathematics and Statistics out of the total population of 117 students. The respondents presented a variety of approaches to English on two grounds. Firstly, they had entered the university from different familial and educational backgrounds and secondly, their respective departments at the university carried variety in their approaches to learning. The selection of third semester students was based on the ground that they had enough exposure to university education and environment and it was expected that they would envision their future course in a better manner.

Questionnaire for the study was designed on the pattern of Gardner (1985) and Clément, Dörnyei & Noels (1994), which enjoys wide recognition for its reliability and validity, and adapted to a 5-point scale in consonance with the research questions of the study. The scale indicated the probable response options of the respondents and included strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree (left to right). During the course of data collection, the students were asked to fill in the questionnaire to the best of their understanding and to ask their teacher for explanation / clarification if needed. They were further informed about the importance of their information as that would lead to the findings and the consequent validity of

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the study. In addition, they were briefed about the confidentiality of the information they would provide.

The scale for integrative orientation of the learners towards the target language contained 6 items (item 1-6, see appendix A) while instrumental motivation for English was measured through a scale containing 8 items (item 7-14, see Appendix A).

The data collected from the undergraduate students from the department of Sociology, Economics, Mathematics and Statistics regarding the measurement of the level of their integrative and instrumental motivation was analysed in tabular form with percentage value against each statement. The tabular data was then analysed and discussed in detail.. In addition, department-wise details of the collected data in tabular form are also included (see appendices B, C, D, E).

Results and Discussion

Integrative Motivation

Upon analysis of the students' response to questions related to their integrative motivation towards English language (Table 1), the data indicates that they are more inclined towards question 5 (learning English would allow me to converse more freely with English speakers) to which (40%) of them showed agreement while (27.5%) strongly agreed to it. Response to question 4 (I love learning English) was also favourably perceived as (40%) showed agreement and (7.5%) showed strong agreement. However, in reply to both the questions, (32.5%) students opted not to take sides. The response of the students was indicating comparatively low level of integrative motivation when their reply to question 6 (learning foreign language is an enjoyable experience) was analysed where (32.5%) showed agreement and (10%) strongly agreed to it. Integrative motivation was found to be at its lowest ebb in response to question 3 (English are very friendly and caring people) to which only a tiny (12.5%) students agreed while (35 %) and (30%) showed their disagreement and strong disagreement respectively. The level of disagreement was also found higher for question 1 (I want to understand the art and literature of the English people) and 2 (I have always admired the English

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people) which was found to be (67.5%) and (52.5%) respectively (disagreement and strong disagreement combined). However, some students were also found to be on the agreement side with their respective percentage of (17.5%) and (22.5%).

TABLE 1 Statistical description of the 6 items on integrative motivation (n=40)

I study English because...	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1. I want to understand the art and literature of the English people	8	(20%)	19	(47.5%)	6	(15%)	6	(15%)	1	(2.5%)
2. I have always admired the English people	2	(5%)	19	(47.5%)	10	(25%)	6	(15%)	3	(7.5%)
3. English are very friendly and caring people	12	(30%)	14	(35%)	9	(22.5%)	5	(12.5%)		
4. I love learning English			8	(20%)	13	(32.5%)	16	(40%)	3	(7.5%)
5. Learning English would allow me to converse more freely with English speakers					13	(32.5%)	16	(40%)	11	(27.5%)
6. Learning a foreign language is an enjoyable experience			9	(22.5%)	14	(35%)	13	(32.5%)	4	(10%)

Instrumental motivation

The analysis of instrumental motivation based on the responses of the students reveals high level of motivation for all items (Table 2). To analyse the collected data item-wise, it is indicated that question 8, 11 and 14 ranked the highest on the agreement scale. In response to question 14 (without English I cannot get higher education), majority (82.5%) showed strong agreement while (17.5%) simply agreed to it. With reference to question 11 (it will allow me to understand English books and newspapers), majority (60%) strongly agreed while the agreeing percentage was (40%). Similarly, question 8 was also met with strong agreement of (72.5%) and Language in India www.languageinindia.com

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agreement of (22.5%). Responses to question 7 (I will need it in my future career) and 12 (it is the language of knowledge) were no less encouraging. To them, strongly agreeing percentage was (72.5%) and (60%) while agreement was (22.5%) and (35%) respectively. Likewise, the students responded with strong agreement (65%) and agreement (27.5%) to question 13 (it is necessary to know English in different professions). Although the students showed high level of motivation in response to question 9 (people will respect me if I have knowledge of a foreign language) and question 10 (it is an international language and is a sign of success in many fields), but they were found lacking on comparatively analysis with other items on the scale. Among them, the former was strongly agreed to by majority (35%) while the latter received (42.5%) in the same category. Similarly, the agreement percentage for them was (32.5%) and (25%) respectively.

TABLE 2- statistical description of the 8 items on instrumental motivation (n=40)

I study English because...	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
7. I will need it in my future career					2	(5%)	9	(22.5%)	29	(72.5%)
8. I think it will someday help me in getting a good job							17	(42.5%)	23	(57.5%)
9. People will respect me if I have knowledge of a foreign language			4	(10%)	9	(22.5%)	13	(32.5%)	14	(35%)
10. It is an international language and is a sign of success in many fields			6	(15%)	7	(17.5%)	10	(25%)	17	(42.5%)
11. It will allow me to understand English books and newspapers							16	(40%)	24	(60%)
12. It is the language of knowledge					2	(5%)	14	(35%)	24	(60%)

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13. It is necessary to know English in different professions			1	(2.5 %)	2	(5%)	11	(27.5 %)	26	(65%)
14. Without English I cannot get higher education							7	(17.5 %)	33	(82.5 %)

Discussion

The findings of the study and their subsequent analysis explicitly reveal that the students who participated were highly motivated to learn English. This was more evident in the case of instrumental motivation in comparison to integrative motivation where the motivation level was not encouraging. In the context of the study, it needs to be underlined that the students did not find themselves at ease when they were asked to identify themselves with the English people or their way of life. Similarly, they were also found less enthusiastic about understanding English art and literature. Several suggestions may be offered for this decreased level of motivation.

Firstly, from cultural point of view, most of the respondents have a distinct identity and have national or local pride which conflicted with the notion of assuming or at least accepting English identity. Secondly, their educational background was associated with Pakistan and they had not got a chance to interact with English people and were therefore oblivious to English culture and lifestyle. Thirdly, as they were students from non-English major courses, they had less flavour for integrative motivation. Yet, a major part of the students did agree that learning English would allow them to converse more freely with English speakers. It is also possible that the current political situation in the region could have contributed this negative attitude.

The students were found highly motivated with reference to the instrumentality of English language which can be conveniently attributed to its global value in politics, trade, commerce, science, information technology and education. More importantly, as the data indicates, higher education in Pakistan is in English and students could not succeed in their education without sufficient grasp of the language. Further, the jobs offered by reputed organisations, at the national level, rely heavily on English language particularly communication skills. Similarly, competitive exams at higher level for entry into army, civil service, judiciary etc

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employ English language to test the intelligence and aptitudes of the aspiring students. In this scenario, it is evident that the instrumentality of English is very high and therefore we can conveniently understand the logic behind students' responses. The findings of the study are also in line with the research questions and hypothesis of the study. Thus, it can be said that the data corresponds with the hypothetical statement of the study.

Conclusion

Motivation is a key component in the analysis and appreciation of the process of FL learning. The data and its analysis clearly indicate that the university students are more instrumentally motivated towards English language in Pakistan as was assumed in the hypothesis of the study. Although, this study was undertaken in University of Malakand, a public sector university located in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, it shares almost the same amount of teaching resources and faculty as do the other public sector universities in the province. Guided by the research questions for the study, the purpose was to analyse the current motivational trends among students on the one hand and to provide research-based data to teachers, trainers and policy makers on the other for effective planning.

The study concludes that in order to improve English language learning, attention should be more focused on the instrumentality of the language during the process. The findings are also an addition to the argument of the proponents of instrumental motivation in FLL in the context of the study. In other words, the data indicates that students are more concerned about their future careers, finding better jobs, increasing their knowledge-base and above all their higher education that drive and motivate them to learn English language. In comparison, they are found less inclined toward assuming English identity or lifestyle.

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Appendices (A, B, C, D, & E)

Appendix A

Survey Questionnaire (FL / L2 Motivation Scale)

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Below is a questionnaire consisting of statements to which you can answer by a tick mark (✓) in the relevant column. You are free to mark anyone of the categories. However, you are requested to be true, accurate and honest in your responses as this study shall derive its value from your responses. In case of any confusion, you can ask your teacher for necessary guidance / clarification.

Name:

Age:

Class / Semester:

Department:

Question / Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I study English because I want to understand the art and literature of the English people					
2. I study English because I have always admired the English people					
3. I study English because English are very friendly and caring people					
4. I study English because I love learning English					
5. I study English because learning English would allow me to converse more freely with English people					
6. I study English because learning a foreign language is an enjoyable experience					
7. I study English because I will need it in my future career					
8. I study English because I think it will someday help me in getting a good job					
9. I study English because people will respect me if I have knowledge of a foreign language					
10. I study English because it is an international language and is a sign of success in many fields					
11. I study English because it will allow me to understand English books and newspapers					
12. I study English because it is the language of knowledge					

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13. I study English because it is necessary to know English in different professions					
14. I study English because without English I cannot get education higher education					

Appendix B

Statistical description of data on Integrative and Instrumental motivation (item 1-14) collected from department of sociology, University of Malakand.

I study English because...	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I want to understand the art and literature of the English people	1	4	1	3	1
2. I have always admired the English people		5	1	2	2
3. English are very friendly and caring people	6	1	1	2	
4. I love learning English		1	4	4	1
5. learning English would allow me to converse more freely with English speakers			3	4	3
6. learning a foreign language is an enjoyable experience		3	1	2	4
7. I will need it in my future career				1	9
8. I think it will someday help me in getting a good job				4	6
9. people will respect me if I have knowledge of a foreign language		3	3	4	
10. it is an international language and is a sign of success in many fields		2	1	2	5
11. it will allow me to understand English books and newspapers				3	7
12. it is the language of knowledge			1	4	5
13. it is necessary to know English in different professions			1	2	7
14. without English I cannot get higher education					10

Appendix C

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Statistical description of data on Integrative and Instrumental motivation (item 1-14) collected from department of Economics, University of Malakand.

I study English because...	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I want to understand the art and literature of the English people	1	5	2	2	
2. I have always admired the English people	2	4		3	1
3. English are very friendly and caring people	5	3	1	1	
4. I love learning English		2	3	5	
5. learning English would allow me to converse more freely with English speakers			1	7	2
6. learning a foreign language is an enjoyable experience		2	4	4	
7. I will need it in my future career				2	8
8. I think it will someday help me in getting a good job				5	5
9. people will respect me if I have knowledge of a foreign language			2	2	6
10. it is an international language and is a sign of success in many fields		1	2	3	4
11. it will allow me to understand English books and newspapers				5	5
12. it is the language of knowledge				4	6
13. it is necessary to know English in different professions		1		3	6
14. without English I cannot get education higher education				1	9

Appendix D

Statistical description of data on Integrative and Instrumental motivation (item 1-14) collected from department of Mathematics, University of Malakand.

I study English because...	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I want to understand the art and	3	5	1	1	

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literature of the English people					
2. I have always admired the English people		7	2	1	
3. English are very friendly and caring people	1	4	5		
4. I love learning English		3	3	4	
5. learning English would allow me to converse more freely with English speakers			6	3	1
6. learning a foreign language is an enjoyable experience		2	4	4	
7. I will need it in my future career				4	6
8. I think it will someday help me in getting a good job				3	7
9. people will respect me if I have knowledge of a foreign language			2	3	5
10. it is an international language and is a sign of success in many fields				3	7
11. it will allow me to understand English books and newspapers				4	6
12. it is the language of knowledge			1	2	7
13. it is necessary to know English in different professions			1	1	8
14. without English I cannot get education higher education					10

Appendix E

Statistical description of data on Integrative and Instrumental motivation (item 1-14) collected from department of Statistics, University of Malakand

I study English because...	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I want to understand the art and literature of the English people	3	5	2		
2. I have always admired the English people		3	7		
3. English are very friendly and caring people		6	2	2	
4. I love learning English		2	3	3	2
5. learning English would allow me to converse more freely with English			3	2	5

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speakers					
6. learning a foreign language is an enjoyable experience		2	5	3	
7. I will need it in my future career			2	2	6
8. I think it will someday help me in getting a good job				5	5
9. people will respect me if I have knowledge of a foreign language		1	2	4	3
10. it is an international language and is a sign of success in many fields		3	4	2	1
11. it will allow me to understand English books and newspapers				4	6
12. it is the language of knowledge				4	6
13. it is necessary to know English in different professions				5	5
14. without English I cannot get education higher education				3	7

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