



Citation:

Mazumder, M. (2019). Impact of Motivation on Learning EFL Speaking: An Empirical Study at the Private Universities in Bangladesh. *Journal of ELT and Education*, Volume-2, Issue-3 & 4, 116-121.

Article info:

Received: 01.11.2019; Accepted: 15.12.2019; Published: 18.12.2019

Website:

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Research Paper

Impact of Motivation on Learning EFL Speaking: An Empirical Study at the Private Universities in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Motivation is one of the most influential factors in learning English as Foreign Language (EFL) speaking. The present study attempted to explore the impact of motivation on learning EFL speaking in the private universities in Bangladesh. The study was conducted in four private universities of Dhaka city ranked 1-10. The key participants were 40 students from the department of English of those universities. Findings showed that most of the learners were intrinsically and instrumentally motivated to be the good EFL speakers. From the perspective of intrinsic motivation, desiring to be like native speaker, understanding English art and culture, taking part in foreign exchange program, meeting foreign people had the tremendous impact on learning EFL speaking. Instrumental motivating factors like securing good grades, getting good job and higher salary had great impact on learning EFL speaking. It was recommended that positive attitude and support from teachers and authority could motivate learners in learning EFL speaking in large scale.

Keywords

EFL, speaking, motivation, private university

1. Introduction

Motivation plays an important role in EFL learning, particularly in speaking skill because it fosters and encourages students during the whole learning process. In terms of language learning Gardner (1985) defined motivation as “the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitude toward learning the language”. It also gives them particular direction and keeps them going. It covers such aspects as energy, direction, persistence, activation and also intention (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

According to Dörnyei (1998), ‘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 student achievement’. Until today, many theories have attempted to explain the basis of motivation in second language learning including socio-

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educational model, self- determination theory, goal theories, and attribution theory. So, motivation can be defined as a significant component affecting the success of second language learning.

Lack of motivation is perhaps the biggest obstacle faced by teachers, counselors, school administrators, and parents. So, teachers, counselors, school administrators, parents and lecturers in universities, concisely all stakeholders in education, should be in cooperation and work together for motivation of students. Only, this way the student achieves to fully success in the class. Dornyei (2003) stated that the learner's enthusiasm, commitment and persistence were the key determinant of success or failure. Teachers and lecturers ought to know or find out the students' enthusiasm, commitment and persistence, in order to make them successful in their subjects.

In another 1885 study, Gardner considered that with the intention of being motivated, the learner necessitates, requires, and needs to have something to anticipate, foresee, expect and long for, a reason, principle, or rationale having to do with aim or target. Concerning second/foreign language acquisition, this intention would be learning a foreign language. In fact, there must be something that the learner desires to achieve or do, being the target language the vehicle to attain it. According to Cook (2000) the performance and presentation of a number of learners in the context of second or foreign language learning is improved and superior to others. The reason is that they are better motivated. Ellis (1994) sees the incident of learning by means of motivation and believes that the learning process simply occurs when a person is motivated. Relating to this matter, Ellis (1994, p. 508) says that "language teachers readily acknowledge the importance of learners' motivation, not infrequently explaining their own sense of failure with reference to their students' lack of motivation". Ellis (1994) suggests that motivation is "the effort which learners put into learning an L2 as a result of their need or desire to learn it".

2. Objective

The current study aimed at examining the impact of motivation on learning EFL speaking at the tertiary level in the private universities of Bangladesh. Specific objectives are:

- To identify the issues that motivates EFL learners to improve their speaking skill in the private universities of Bangladesh
- To explore the impacts of motivation in learning EFL speaking
- To recommend research-based suggestions to overcome the challenges

3. Literature Review

Motivation has great impact in every step of learning; and learning EFL speaking in the private university in Bangladesh is not an exception. Ryan and Deci (2000) define motivation as concerning energy, direction, persistence and all aspects of activation and intention. Elizabeth F. Barkley (2010) proposes a definition within the context of a college classroom and points out that "student engagement is a process and a product that is experienced on a continuum and result from synergistic interaction between motivation and active learning". They also indicate that active learning is the total active engagement of mind. Its features involve learners' dynamic participation in the process of learning. Other features include monitoring and reflection on the tasks and discussions they are engaged in.

Lightbown and Spada (1999) assert that teachers can make a positive contribution to learners' motivation to learn by making their classroom a place where they enjoy attending, because the classroom's content is more fun, interesting and relevant to their age and level of their capabilities. In this case, their learning goals are made challenging and clear. Moreover, this process will make the classroom atmosphere supportive and non- threatening. According to Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope (1986), speaking skill is an anxiety-provoking skill. When individuals speak in the target language, they often experience a high level of anxiety and thus become more unwilling to take

part in conversational activities. Cook (2000) states that acquisition of language is not the same among learners. He also believes that there are three main factors which influence the Second Language Acquisition. These three factors are: age, personality and motivation. Motivation is the most significant factor among the mentioned three factors that affect second language acquisition.

3.1. Integrative & Instrumental Motivation

According to Gardner (1985), there are two types of motivation: integrative and instrumental. The integrative motivation means learning the language with the intention of participating in the culture of its people. And instrumental motivation suggests and implies that a learner learns the language in support of a purpose relating to occupation or further useful motive. These two types of motivation can affect and control the procedure and outcome of learning. Cook (2000) further believes that the integrative and instrumental motivation suggested by Gardner and Lambert is useful and effective factor for second language learning.

Gardner (1985) and Ellis (1994) also introduce the mentioned types of motivation; the former occurs when the student likes to join or be a member of the certain crowd and the culture. The latter crops up when the learner anticipate numerous benefits that he proposes to have while learning some particular language.

Comparing these two types of motivation with each other, Ellis (1994) believes that the best and the perfect motivation is the integrative motivation. He believes that integrative motivation is more competent and well-organized. Students who don't have instrumental or integrative motivation, in fact, will face with problems and difficulties to learn and gain knowledge of a second language in the classroom and generally, learning the language would be difficult for them (Cook, 2000).

3.2. Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

There is also another concept in the field of motivation introduced by Ryan & Deci (2000) as Self-Determination Theory; Ryan & Deci (2000) say that Self-Determination Theory categorizes and tells apart diverse types of motivation in accordance with the different rationales, causes, or targets which strengthen a deed or an achievement. In proportion to this theory, the most fundamental difference is between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the eagerness and interest to do and take part in some certain activities because an individual feel that they are attractive and pleasant.

To come to the point, intrinsic motivation is a motivation to do an activity because of itself. In fact, the individuals who are intrinsically motivated do and practice the activities and works because they feel that those activities are enjoyable. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is motivation to do a work or an activity as a means or way to achieve a target. Those who are extrinsically motivated perform and do affairs as they think that their contribution will cause enviable results like a reward, teacher admiration, or evasion (prevention) of punishment (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996).

4. Methodology

To conduct the study, researchers have used a self-made checklist to collect data considering all the important motivational factors of the students studying at the tertiary level, particularly at the private universities in Bangladesh. It included the essential issues that could motivate their learning EFL speaking. In this case, issues related to intrinsic and instrumental motivation got emphasized. The checklist had options as 'always', 'sometimes' and 'never'. It had also a comment box for each individual issue.

The study engaged 40 students studying in the department of English from 4 private universities (ranked 1-10) of Dhaka city.

5. Findings and Discussion

This section deals with interpretation and discussion of the results of the study. The results are presented through assessing the response of the participants. Statements were coded as ‘Always’, ‘Sometimes’ and ‘Never’.

5.1. Impact of Intrinsic Motivation

This section discusses the findings of the questionnaire survey. The section mainly tries to find out the answer of the questions related to intrinsic motivation.

Table-1: Impact of intrinsic motivation (Domain-1)

Statements	Students		
		Frequency	Percentage
Desired to be like native speaker	Always	26	65
	Sometimes	09	22.5
	Never	05	12.5
Understanding English art and literature	Always	18	45
	Sometimes	13	32.5
	Never	09	22.5
Meeting and conversing with varied people	Always	20	50
	Sometimes	14	35
	Never	06	15

In response to the first statement, 65% (frequency-26) students opined that they had always the desire to be like native speaker. Another 22.5% (frequency-09) students said that they in some cases they had the desire to be like native speaker. In answering to the same statement, 12.5% students (frequency-5) chose *Never* option. In response to the second statement, 45% (frequency-18) students believed that they liked to be good EFL speaker to understand English art and literature always. Another 32.5% (frequency-13) chose the *Sometimes* option. In answering to the same question, 22.5% students (frequency-09) chose *Never* option.

Regarding the third statement 50% (frequency-20) students believed that they liked to be proficient EFL speaker to meet and converse with varied people. Another 35% (frequency-14) chose the *Sometimes* option. In answering to the same question, 15% students (frequency-06) chose *Never* option.

Table-2: Impact of intrinsic motivation (Domain-2)

Statements	Students		
		Frequency	Percentage
Taking part in different foreign exchange programs	Always	21	52.5
	Sometimes	13	32.5
	Never	06	15
To keep in touch with foreign friends	Always	22	55
	Sometimes	10	25
	Never	08	20

In response to the first statement, 52.5 % (frequency-21) students believed that they always had the desire to develop their EFL speaking skill for taking part in different foreign exchange program. In answering to the same statement, 32.5% students (frequency-13) chose the *Sometimes* option and 15% (frequency-06) chose *Never* option.

Regarding the second statement, 55% (frequency-22) students believed that they liked to be proficient EFL speaker to keep in touch with foreign friends. Another 25% (frequency-10) chose the *Sometimes* option. In answering to the same statement, 20% students (frequency-08) chose *Never* option.

5.2. Impact of Instrumental Motivation

This part of the findings and discussions is related to the impact of instrumental motivational factors.

Table-3: Impact of instrumental motivation (Domain-1)

Statements	Students		
		Frequency	Percentage
Securing good grades	Always	36	90
	Sometimes	04	10
	Never	0	0
For higher studies abroad	Always	27	67.5
	Sometimes	11	27.5
	Never	2	5
Getting good job and higher salary	Always	40	100
	Sometimes	0	0
	Never	0	0

In response to the first question, 90% (frequency-36) students opined that they had always the desire to get good grades in EFL speaking part. Another 10% (frequency-04) students chose *Sometimes* option. In answering to the same question, no one chose *Never* option. Answering to the second question 67.5 % (frequency-27) students believed that they always liked to be good EFL speaker for the purpose of higher study abroad. Another 27.5% (frequency-11) chose the *Sometimes* option. In answering to the same question, 5% students (frequency-02) chose *Never* option.

Regarding the third question 100% (frequency-40) students believed that they desired to develop their EFL speaking skill to get good job and higher salary.

Table-4: Impact of instrumental motivation (Domain-2)

Statements	Students		
		Frequency	Percentage
Appreciation and respect from others	Always	26	65
	Sometimes	10	25
	Never	04	10
Making overseas trip	Always	23	57.5
	Sometimes	12	30
	Never	05	12.5

In response to the first question, 65 % (frequency-26) students opined that they had always the desire to get appreciation and respect from others through good EFL speaking skill. Another 25% (frequency-10) students chose *Sometimes* option. In answering to the same question, 10% (frequency-04) students chose *Never* option. Answering to the second question 57.5% (frequency-23) students believed that they always liked to be good EFL speaker for the purpose of making overseas trip. Another 30% (frequency-12) chose the *Sometimes* option. In answering to the same question, 12.5% students (frequency-05) chose *Never* option.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Through the findings and discussion of the study, it is unfolded that motivation has immense impact on learning EFL speaking skill and especially intrinsic and instrumental motivation play the vital role in this regard. There are many factors to motivate learners in improving their EFL speaking skill. Some measures should be taken to boost up several issues regarding motivating EFL learners in the pathway of improving their speaking skill. Some of them are as follows:

- a) EFL teachers should instruct according to each learner's level

- b) Learner should not be dealt with from any negative point of view
- c) Teachers should unfold the EFL learners' social, cultural and economic backgrounds while motivating them.
- d) Students should be motivated combining intrinsic and instrumental issues regarding their context.
- e) Students should be admired and valued in every stage of learning EFL speaking.

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