
Motivational Influences of Proficient Students in English: Implications for Teaching and Learning

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Abstract

All students are basically learning English. However, despite the fact that learners receive different instruction procedures and strategies, they show varying degrees of success in language learning. This study identified and examined the various motivational influences that students felt led them to proficiency level in English language. It utilized single-case analysis method to describe the various factors that students identified as influential in acquiring English language. The students involved in this study were all grade 10 who belonged to the first batch of K-12 program at a university in the Philippines. The results of the analyses revealed that the quality and the quantity of the students' past language experiences greatly influenced their drive to learn the language. The feeling of making progress and having the opportunity to execute this achievement further strengthen their desire to learn more about the complexity of the language. Their learning environment also create a huge difference in their attributions to reaching proficiency level. The findings call for the needs to let the second language learners experience success through designing instructional sequence in a stepped fashion from easy tasks to more difficult ones to develop their confidence and increase support from people in the learning environment. Lastly, communication of feedback is essential to students' motivation to language acquisition.

Keywords: English proficiency; motivation; language acquisition.

1. Introduction

The Philippines, despite being named the world's best country in business English proficiency in the study conducted in the year 2012 by Global English Corporation, has not escaped the problem of language education like any other multilingual communities globally.

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The medium of instruction has always been a constant subject of debate and has always been a vital problem of Philippine education. With the implementation of mother-tongue-based multilingual education in the early grades of K-12 system, the Department of Education has supported the idea that children can learn best in the language they understand. Having the first language as a model would help the learners acquire another language such as English in a more formal way with a smooth transition from their home language to learning a second language. As English has come to be used more extensively in various areas of professional and social life, there is a growing perception that people's ability to communicate in English is closely related to both individual and national economic success according to the author in [57]. Thus, learning to be proficient in English is still a must in the K-12 system. The curriculum in English is designed in a way that the learning tasks and experiences will help the learners become proficient of the language. But what does it mean to be proficient in English language? As cited by the authors in [2], English language proficiency is the English language learners' communication of information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of social studies. Limited English proficient student is defined as a student whose first language is a language other than English who is unable to perform ordinary classroom works in English as stated by the author in [28]. The definition of English language proficiency that was adopted in this study is the ability to perform the classroom works in English, since this definition associates to the other variable in the study (academic achievement) which is the same definition used by the authors in [2] in their study of the relationship between language proficiency and academic achievement. In this study, English language proficiency was characterized by Grade Point Average (GPA) of English subject in secondary schools. All Filipino students are basically learning English. However, despite the fact that learners are exposed to varying instruction procedures and strategy, they show varying degrees of success in language learning. Not all of them are acquiring the same level of proficiency due to the varied point of experiences that affect their language acquisition. For one, not all are given the gift of linguistic intelligence, and simply saying that the gift for language learning is what makes the difference is too simple an explanation. This brought up the fundamental focus of this study: Why do other students achieve proficiency in English language learning while others in the same educational setting struggle? In the past years, researches were focused on the individual learning style of learners that affect language acquisition and cultivation of strategies and methods that will address these styles. Unfortunately, despite new innovations in the teaching of foreign languages, including sophisticated interactive software, as well as consistently updated standards from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages emphasizing communicative skills and a broader cross-cultural component, the design of foreign language programs continues to emphasize what is called teaching about the language rather than with the language. The authors in [68] noted, "Since no one could seriously expect the current approach to foreign language education to succeed, then the system is in fact expected, at least to some degree, to fail".

2. Methods

This study utilized single-case analysis method to allow for reflective and introspective responses from the participants on their motivational influences for being proficient in English. The study required the participants to identify, reflect upon, and subjectively describe specific events that they have experienced in various social and linguistic settings, which lent itself quite naturally to a qualitative research design. Through the use of a

semi-structured open-ended interview guide, participants were able to describe at length the various factors that they identified as influential as they “lived” through the experience of acquiring English language. Participants’ responses were coded, categorized, and put under themes. Concepts were drawn from the raw data and organized them along a temporal axis reflecting the motivational process as it happens in time. This study involved grade 10 students of St. Paul University Surigao identified to be proficient in English. The students belonged to the first batch of the K-12 program with curriculum that evaluates students’ performance in terms of their proficiency level.

3. Results and Discussion

This study identified several motivational influences that seem to lead to their English language proficiency. From the interview conducted with the students, 163 responses were transcribed which generated 123 concepts, 56 categories, and 5 themes.

Theme One: Motivational Influence on Goal Setting

The first theme is the starting point of the motivated behavior of the informants. As non-native speakers of English, proficiency with its use in and outside the classroom does not come to students in an instant. It is imperative therefore to look at the point where the motivated behavioral process begins in earnest. In the goal setting theory of the authors in [55], a goal is seen as the ‘engine’ to fire the action and provide the direction in which to act. We take an intermediary position and see goals as the first concrete mental representations of a desired end state; goals do not directly determine action but are an indispensable step in the motivated behavioral sequence. The data revealed that four of the five informants exhibited very positive attitude towards English language saying they “like” the language. Several reasons were pointed out for liking the language which eventually led them to learn it. First and foremost are the individual’s subjective values and norms that have developed during the past, as a reaction to past experiences. This “*sense-of-self*” dimension, as stated by the authors in [5], refers to the more or less organized collections or internalized perceptions, beliefs, and feelings related to who one is in the social world. Responses like “*I grew up with English language,*” and “*I was around 4 when I first learned English,*” convey that opportunity to be exposed in the language at early age provides motivation in its own right. Generally, language is an integral part of growing up and is necessary to communicate and participate in one’s environment. “*I am a product of professional parents, so at early age, I was taught simple English words and sentences,*” shows the role of parents in children’s language journey. Side by side with this is the role of imitation in language acquisition. “*Initially, by mimicking my parents at home,*” proves that children learn the language that they hear. The idea that language is learned through imitation is connected with Bandura’s social cognitive theory which explains that children imitate the words and language patterns they hear by watching and listening to the models, caregivers, and family members in their life. Another factor that brings pedagogical message home is the revolution in children’s television, “*I learned it from listening and watching television shows,*”. Television shows transformed the way we think about early childhood education: its method, its audience, and its possibilities which lead the students to learn abstract words, numbers, letters, and so much more. In a postdoctoral research conducted by the authors in [45] early exposure to appropriate television programs shows enhancement in the cognitive and academic performance of

learners whereas exposure to pure entertainment and violent content in particular, is associated with poorer cognitive development and lower academic achievement. Aside from television shows, the availability of 'educational reading materials and toys for children' in home also influences learners' preference to learn the language. According to American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), children see and interact with print (e.g. books, magazines, grocery lists) in everyday situations well before they start elementary school. Parents can see their children's growing appreciation and enjoyment of print as they begin to recognize words that rhyme, scribble with crayons, point out logos and street signs, and name some letters of the alphabet. Gradually, children combine what they know about speaking and listening with what they know about print and become ready to learn and write. The effect of the print materials becomes conclusive in this study as informants recounted: "*It (English) is an interesting subject aside from drawing,*"; "*I fell in love with the beauty and variety of English words,*" and; "*English words can form immensely beautiful stories,*". From the availability of parental supervision, the scope of motivation expands to the students' conversational opportunities as one of the informants recounted that she had to learn English because it was the language used in kindergarten. The authors in [5] said the role of environment is strong and that it has a strong influence on the goals that students adopt. Individuals differ greatly in the content and the hierarchies of their value dispositions. These internal preferences interplay with the specific incentive values associated with the anticipated goals. Responses like: "*It gives access to a wealth of ideas and information,*"; "*An individual with a good command of English actually becomes more employable,*" and; "*It is one of the needs to have a job,*" are the perceived advantages associated with the anticipated goal of language proficiency. Studying English in this case has been conceived as merely instrumental to reaching perceived consequences and career advantage or as said by the authors in [32]. Despite the students citing the extrinsic utility of the language, intrinsic interest in pursuing the language studies have not been underplayed. Integrativeness also plays crucial role in making motivational decision. The line, "*American people are free and direct, independent and equal which I want to adopt,*" implies the student's high perception of the culture from which the language originates. The response, "*Yes, since it is the universal language and most common for conversing with people of other nations,*" conveys student's interest in intercultural dialogue. As said by the authors in [32] integrative learners usually have positive feelings toward the target language group and culture and may wish to integrate themselves into both areas. The above mentioned value preferences already screen out many 'unsuitable' wishes and desires, and they also help to determine the general "potency" of the goals as said by the authors in [40]. This refers to a subjective feeling about the general probability of attaining the respective goal. Potency appraisals are based on the opportunities and affordances that one perceives one will have in the future.

Theme Two: Motivational Influence on Intention Formation

People harbor a variety of desires and wishes which often lead them to set goals. However, some of them fall on the plane of being unrealistic and remain as desires while others are intended to be carried out and to be fulfilled in the long run. An 'intention' is qualitatively different from a 'goal' in that it already involves commitment. The significance of the 'commitment' component was also recognized by goal theoreticians. Authors in [55], for example, stated that "Believing that a goal is desirable and reachable does not automatically force an individual to act. The individual must choose to put his or her judgment in action." At this stage, factors that determine whether the goals students set at early stage will be further processed into action. It is unlikely that effort will be

invested in a task if the learners are convinced that they cannot succeed no matter how hard they try. Such is the case of informant 5 as she recounted that at first, she didn't like English in school. Her following statement: *"But growing up being taught at home, I slowly came to like it,"*; *"I became motivated to speak English when I found out it was easier than Filipino,"* suggests that due to her evaluation of her coping potential and language ability, her goal of learning the language was then intended to be put in action. This appraisal combines with perceived goal discrepancy to define the situation as an opportunity where one can fulfill one's desires and achieve the as yet unmet goal. Another important factor in intention formation stage is the perceived relevance of the goals. Personal and setting-related relevance of the goals were given emphasis by the informants. Informant 3 stressed out that she wants to learn the language so as to make judgment and to connect to people through social media for self-expression. This personal-related aspect is associated with the individual's current life concerns: Only a limited number of goals can be pursued at a time so the individual needs to choose the ones currently most pressing. Setting-related relevance is similar in nature but concerns more specific situational aspects. It implies that a goal may or may not fit into the current concerns that dominate at the time or social setting. Informant 4 implied that language learning is appropriate in the situation and at the moment since it is part of the curriculum while informant 2 wanted to be conversant and confident in the use of English language. Achievement theories have traditionally entailed the relatively stable and enduring personality constructs of need for achievement and fear of failure (Response like, *"When I was in grade 6, I got bullied for grammatical error, so I strived harder,"* shows the informant's interest in excellence for its own sake. Individuals with a high need for achievement tend to initiate achievement activities, work with heightened intensity at these tasks, and persist in the face of failure. Fear of failure is the opposite of need for achievement in that here the main drive to do well comes from avoiding a negative outcome rather than approaching a positive one. These two tendencies are considered to affect a person's achievement behavior in every facet of life, including language learning. A further set of influential factors concern various properties of selected goals such as its specificity, proximity, harmony, and level of aspiration. Specific goals like *"to discover and mentally grasp as much English words as humanely possible"* and *"to be proficient in the use of English grammar"* rather than vague ones like *"to be proficient"* or *"to do my best"* enhance performance according to the authors in [8, 11, & 55]. The one exception is when specific goals are overly easy to accomplish, in which case they are less effective than general but difficult goals [55]. *"I want to increase my vocabulary and lexile score next school year,"* is a goal projected in a certain time in the future. Proximal, short-term goals are achieved more quickly, and result in higher motivation because they allow clear and frequent self-evaluations of progress. It is often difficult to determine progress toward a distant goal as posited by [74]. An individual may often wish to achieve a number of different goals at the same time as in the case of informant 4. She conveyed her wishes to explore the culture from which the language originates, to acquire knowledge, and to have a good time. All of these will be possible if she improves her comprehension in English. All of her goals can coexist harmoniously which increases her goal commitments. *"I want to improve myself and be really good at it,"* (36e) is the ultimate level of proficiency the learner intends to reach. Not all English learners aspire to reach near native level of English mastery. Learners who show greater aspiration to achieving their goals are more likely to strive harder according to the author in [21]. Among the most recent development in L2 motivation is the author in [23&24] L2 Motivational Self System framework, which is comprised of three dimensions. The first dimension is the Ideal L2 Self and is based on the notion that all individuals have an image of their ideal self (e.g. *"I admire my mom when she deals*

with clients using the language, and I want to be like her and my grandmother". Thus if one's ideal self is someone who speaks the language (English), then this in itself becomes a strong motivator to learn it. The second dimension, the Ought to Self, is grounded in more extrinsic motives, there are traits and attributes that we believe that we should have. These do not necessarily be aligned with one's wishes and desires; they are attributes that we ought to possess (e.g. "*Westerners are notorious for their liberated culture, and I always like the idea of being free,*". The third dimension is the L2 Learning Environment, or motives related to a specific learning experience (e.g. "*In my generation we are quite lucky since sources, references are readily available and accessible*". Intention formation involves a process of deliberation, weighing the feasibility and the desirability of the available options before one commits. Commitment, however, according to the authors in [40], does not appear to be a necessary result of the beliefs that attainment of a goal is desirable. Even a high product of value expectancy may not be sufficient to produce a commitment. A unique opportunity, powerful external demands, or increased urgency may represent an additional requirement for a commitment for future action.

Theme Three: Motivational Influence on Initiation of Intention Enactment

There is always that stage between choice and action that decides whether a plan should be delivered to actional phase or not. An operationalized intention is the immediate antecedent of action, but it is important to realize that action does not follow automatically from it. The right opportunity for starting the action may never materialize, or the means and resources may not be made available, leaving the intention unfulfilled. It is not a question whether to do the actual thing but a question of the right point in time for actualizing the intention to act with respect to opportunities and preparation of appropriate steps for implementation. Forming an implementation intention increases the likelihood of attaining one's objectives compared to the formation of a goal intention on its own as posited by the authors in [35] Study revealed that motivational influences affect this action initiation phase. Of particular concern here is the possibility that forming an implementation intention means that behavior is elicited by situational cues in a mechanistic fashion. That is, when the person encounters the opportunity to act that was specified in his or her implementation intention, behavior is initiated automatically, and in a manner that is not consistent with the underlying goal intention. For example, informant 4 relayed that from home, her English skill was developed when she started attending school despite the not so strong intention of excelling on it. Another variable affecting the enactment of intention is the person's perceived behavioral control. This is evident as students spare time to learn English due to their perceived ease or difficulty of the planned behavior. Simply said, one must believe that he/she has sufficient control over the outcome to exert effort towards achieving it according to the author in [21]. This also proves that these students are with action orientation. They are more disposed on acting their action out and are more concern of the control of their action rather than formation of intentions.

Theme Four: Executive Motivational Influence

The onset of action is a major step in the motivational process, resulting in significant qualitative changes. Here the individual has committed him/herself to action and now the emphasis shifts to factors concerning the implementation of action. Not surprisingly, the biggest group of factors concerns the appraisal system and the

outcome of appraisal process. The rest of the components concern the effectiveness of the action control processes, the impact of external influences such as the teacher's role, and the factors inherent to the action itself. The first factor pointed out in this study that affects the result of appraisal process is the quality of learning experience. Authors in [72] posited that motivations are stored as emotional memories, and the dimensions of stimulus appraisal influence the degree of motivation related toward achieving a goal. Some anecdotal data (based on the informants' responses) support this notion of Schumann's neurobiological underpinnings of L2 motivation which is based on the author in [71] stimulus appraisal of emotional situations. This model occurs in five dimensions. *Novelty*. The expectedness or familiarity of the stimulus event. "*The challenge I encounter whenever there is something new*" and "*I start leaning it from home first and receive formal instruction at school later*" *Pleasantness*. The degree to which an event is perceived as pleasant or unpleasant. "*I spend time studying it because it is enjoyable learning English*" and "*Yes, like when giving dare and challenge to our working students and laugh over grammatical mistakes, but we learn by this,*". A particular relevant model to this concept is the one developed by the author in [62] and her colleagues as she delineates three subtypes of L2 intrinsic orientations where the underlying reasons for learning L2 come from a sense of internal pleasure and satisfaction in feeling competent: the intrinsic knowledge (refers to the feeling of pleasure that results from satisfying one's curiosity and gaining knowledge about a subject matter; intrinsic accomplishment (refers to the pleasure that comes from having accomplished a challenging task; and intrinsic stimulation (refers to the pleasure that comes from enjoying "aesthetics of the experience" (see appendices for examples) *Goal/need significance*. The relevance of stimulus events, how the stimulus relates to one's expectations, and how conducive the stimulus is to achieving one's goal. "*Everything I have gained from these activities of mine will become useful*". *Coping Potential*. The cause of the stimulus, and the ability to change the outcome of the stimulus event. "*In school, I initially had troubles in learning English*" and "*The activities in the classroom made me realize I can be good with it*". *Self and social image*. The extent to which the stimulus is compatible with social norms and expectations. "*Speaking English gives the air of being a professional,*" and "*To be cool for being able to be fluent in English and from that I was inspired to be a speaker*". Moreover, other situation-specific appraisals explain much of the variance in the quality of learning experience such as: task attraction (*Yes, I read interesting stories, poems, and essays that catch my eyes and attention and read them even though it takes a lot of time*); availability of resources (*the internet is so wide where I get videos, picture, news, and articles from which I learn*); involvement (*Participation in class helps me be motivated to study English*) and; perceived self-competence (*I try to learn by myself too*). Besides the learners, there are certain other key figures affecting the motivational quality of the learning process. In previous studies, researchers in [66] have either collected information directly from school districts or used data collected by research institutions by the authors in [1] presenting evidence that students' performance is affected by the quality of their teachers which cannot be separated from other classroom specific factors. One particular aspect of how teachers structure classroom life is the type of performance appraisal, reward structure, and classroom goal structure they introduce. Authors in [37] found that combination of comparative grading practices, standardized test score, and salience of social comparison serve to decrease children's interest in enjoyment of learning process. However, the commendation students receive seem to boost their motivation as informant 1 shared that her motivation comes from "*...the commendation I receive as I excel in the language*". Students also implied in their responses that their language instructors help them get motivated in some sort of way. One student

recounted, “*Teachers would read nursery rhyme and teach us phonetics and phonology*”. Another one said “*The way I was taught motivated me since it helps me develop better understanding.*” While others said that they “learn a lot” not just from parents, but from teachers as well. Students also described how they had been motivated by the learning activities in their classrooms. One student said that “*...activities that connect to the lesson like fill in the blanks, multiple choices, construct sentences with given words,*” helped her a lot in learning the language. Activities like these: “*We are made to listen, read, watch carefully in a demo, write, and follow a certain model,*” and “*I experienced discussing a certain topic in our class,*” and other authentic activities also add up to their motivation. These data seem to suggest that the influence of the instructor and his or her methodology is crucial to successful language acquisition. It was also evident that the presence of people who use English around the learners also raise their motivation to communicate in the language; thus, acquiring the competence and proficiency level. Responses like: “*I learn from friends or people I was able to converse with using English*”; “*the people around me who use English like the cashier from the Jollibee,*” and “*I learn from random people who speak the language,*” support this idea. The informants also raise the topic of digital learning. They described how digital world inspires them to be proficient. One said that social media such as Facebook, Twitter, etc become an avenue to connect to people and communicate using English. She also mentioned how teachers would use technology for stand-alone exercises and the internet for social networking activities to make learning interesting. Another one demonstrates her skills as she writes stories to be shared in the internet. As cited by the author in [9], one of the main reasons there are more successful learners of English than of other languages is that there's more 'material' out there, and it's more socially relevant in the sense that people you connect with are likely to share your enthusiasm for the material – films and music, for example. Learning in digital age is distributed across network of connections as advancement in technology mediates the society globally. The proliferation of social network has caused educators to embrace this new option for knowledge to be used in the classroom. It probably requires little justification that failures and other distracting influences have weakening effect in one’s motivation. In such cases, action control and strategies should be activated so the goal will not be terminated. In the case of informant 1, she initially had trouble in learning English, but the availability of learning alternatives like hiring tutor helped her learn how to read. Another important source of scaffolding and enhancing motivation to persist in pursuing goals is the knowledge and skills of learning strategies. One of the informant’s goals is to “*...discover and mentally grasp as much English words as humanely possible*”. To achieve this, she activated learning strategy when she said “*I scan dictionary and list down foreign words that catch my attention,*” and maintain the action to protect her active intention as she shared: “*When I read books, I list down quotes that are worth keeping.*” By using learning strategies, a learner already demonstrates motivation, since they involve processes whereby the learner voluntarily activates cognitions/behaviors in order to increase the effectiveness of his/her own learning. Author in [17] refers to them as “*mindful effort investments*”. The fact that learning strategies enhance achievement generates positive affect in the learners about how and what they study, thereby reinforcing their motivated disposition.

Theme: Motivational Influence on Post-Actional Evaluation

The main processes during this phase entail evaluating the accomplished action outcome and contemplating possible inferences to be drawn for future actions. In this stage, critical retrospection contributes significantly to accumulated experience, and allows the learner to elaborate his/her internal standards and the repertoire of

action- specific strategies. It is through such evaluation that an individual can develop a stable identity as a successful learner according to the authors in [11]. Informant 1 attributed her success to her own ability and effort; she exhibits what applied linguists call self-efficacy hypothesized by the author in [8]. She understands that she has no one to credit, or to blame, for her accomplishments at this achievement other than herself as she said, *"If it wasn't for my will and interest to learn, then I wouldn't have gone this far even if I were given the most prestigious teachers,"* and *"I get recognition because I excel on it"*. These are the reasons for informant's high self-belief. It needs little justification that performance history plays an important role in shaping these self-beliefs. The responses from informants 1 and 5: *"My passion for writing grew tenfold when I get recognized for writing competition,"* and *"I experienced entering a debate contest and it was a formal one where we need to speak English throughout it,"* established their self-confidence and self-competence. As a result of this success, the informants' desire to learn more become stronger as they said, *"After becoming proficient, I only wanted to improve and learn more still,"* and *"It's fun to be able to use skills in English to be of help to others, so I'm thinking I want to be a lawyer or to be a broadcaster."* Informant 2, on the other hand, attributed her success to the way she learned which can be traced back to the teachers and other key figures as she learned the language. *"The way I learn English continues to motivate me."* Informant 3 seems to attribute her success to controllable causes. This means that the informant feels like she has the volitional control over the situation, something that can be worked on or altered for the better outcome in the future; thus, the statement *"It motivates me to strive harder so I can go to the next level."* The statement *"I was awarded 'Star Reader' in our school reading program,"* shows an attribution to external context such as classroom or school. The social comparison involved here, a controlling feedback that judges one's performance against external standards according to the authors in [12], is considered most detrimental to intrinsic motivation as posited by the author in [4]. The said attribution is clearly expressed by informant 4 when she added, *"Younger kids can speak fluently, so I got motivated and determined to speak English proficiently."* The temporal dimension of motivation discussed in this study outlines the sequential pattern of the motivational process of the informants, but it is incomplete without a second, complimentary dimension of motivation which is made up of the various motivational influences that fuel the actional sequence. These energy sources are considered enhancing to the learners for they contribute to the successful implementation of achieving English language proficiency. As such, motivational influences encompass all the various motives discussed in the motivation literature, including cognitive, affective, and situational factors or conditions.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The quality and the quantity of learner's English exposure at an early age (or before the goal setting stage) have a big impact to their motivational behavior to learn the language. From their past language experience, they develop their language goals;
2. The effect of goal-setting on achievement depends on students' commitment. Students commit after they undergo self-appraisal and define the goal discrepancy to see the chances of success. The greater the perceived likelihood of goal attainment, the higher the degree of their positive motivation;

3. There should be the availability of the necessary means and resources and opportunity for students to execute the achievement of goals;
4. The stimuli coming from the environment during the execution of goal achievement affect students' motivation to enhance, scaffold, or protect learning-specific actions;
5. Teachers, classroom activities, and the use of technology make a difference in students' motivation;
6. Students contemplate about their expectancies and how they turned out in reality and form attributions about the extent the intended language goals have been reached which contributes significantly to future actions.

5. Implications of the Study

This paper implicates the important role of the many motivational influences involved in English language acquisition. The idea here is to try to use the motivational influences of the successful language learners to pull up those at the bottom. Ultimately, the researcher hopes that the data from this study may serve to improve teachers' practices by enabling them to better understand and then tap into the key components of language learner motivation, thus transforming their classrooms into places where more authentic English language acquisition may occur. Here are some implications of the study to teaching and learning.

1. Setting goals can be especially important for students with low achievement. The Strengthened use of backward design popularly known as 'Understanding by Design' (UBD), a well known instructional design model that uses goal setting as the focal point of lesson will be very helpful.
2. In school, there is often little pre-actional activity (goal setting, intention formation, initiation of intention enactment) by students. Instructors can set course level learning goals to help structure their content, they can also encourage students to set their own goals. Instead of setting goals for students in a top-down fashion, involve them actively in the process of learning. Moreover, help the students narrow down the goals set as much as possible and gauge them as accurately as possible to their existing level of competence. Make sure that the knowledge required by the learners to prevent or fix the target errors is learnable and that the students are provided with learning strategies which will assist them in achieving the set goals.
3. According to the author in [16], if a learner looks for a chance to show off his skills but not given the opportunity to do so, he will feel frustrated, angry, and or unappreciated –a very common scenario in school often dismissed as the child being naughty or unruly. Find out what drives your students, especially the difficult ones. Instead of approaching the problem by 'punishing' them, have a one-on-one chat with them and try to discover what is that they find fulfilling and see if you can find opportunities in your lessons for them to enact their drives. For instance, if you have a student passionate about drama who does not seem to enjoy language learning, ask them to contribute their acting skills to mime vocabulary or sentences to the class. In order to increase commitment in the task, as teacher, you need to ensure that before engaging students in challenging tasks they may perceive as

being beyond their ability, prepare students adequately, cognitively and emotionally. For instance, in language learning, before carrying out a difficult listening comprehension task, students should be exposed several times to any unfamiliar vocabulary or other language item contained in the to-be-heard recording so as to facilitate the task.

4. When students feel they have made some progress towards a goal, they will feel more committed towards its achievement. Conversely, people who are making little or no progress are more likely to give up early in the process. Whatever the task you engage your students in, ensure that they all experience success in the initial stages. This may call for two approaches which are not mutually exclusive: (1) design any instructional sequence in a 'stepped' fashion, with 'easy' tasks that become gradually more difficult to increase the learners' self-confidence; (2) provide lots of scaffolding (support) at the initial stages of teaching.
5. When dealing with students who are not progressing because they think the subject, skill or task is too hard for them, show them – where applicable – that the reasons why they are not improving is not intrinsic in the nature of that subject, skill or task, but has more to do with other factors under his/her control (e.g. the study habits, such as lack of systematic revision). This will create cognitive dissonance and may have an impact on his/her attitude, especially if they are shown strategies that may help them improve in the problematic area(s) of their learning. Also, communication of constant feedback on assignments, on graded exams, and during classroom instruction to learners is very important. When teachers communicate to students that success or failures are due to certain factors, students are likely to get motivated to try harder or to use more appropriate actions in the future. Research indicates that specific feedback is more useful to students because it can assist them in developing adaptive attributional beliefs as believed by the author in [42].

6. Methodological Limitations

In order to draw together the manifolds of motivational influence of the participants, the researcher of this paper used a model of student motivation that follows through the motivational process from the initial wishes/desires to the completion of action and the subsequent retrospective evaluation as stated by the authors in [21 & 23]. It must be noted that the construct does not offer any radically new insights or identify novel motivational factors, but rather attempts to synthesize various motivational influences of students who are successful language users in the classroom context in the hope that the result will help educators to make decisions on the factors that directly or indirectly involve them.

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