



FACTORS AFFECTING THE MOTIVATION OF STUDENTS SPEAKING SKILLS' PROGRESS

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Abstract

Speaking skill is of great importance to English language learners. As is known, motivation plays an important role in the development of speaking skills. Motivation, in turn, is also affected by other variables. This study aims to analyze the factors that influence learners' motivation. The analysis was carried out using five variables, namely,

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motivation, personality, attitudes towards English language teachers, classroom environment and instructional media, and attitudes towards English language. Data collection method included a questionnaire distributed to the participant of this study which included 92 participants from Tishk International University (TIU) studying in education, pharmacy, nursing, and medical analysis faculties. From this research, it is concluded that the variables that have the most influence on learners' motivation are attitudes towards English language teachers, classroom environment and instructional media, and attitudes towards English language, where these variables have a positive effect on learners' motivation.

1. Introduction

English language proficiency is now regarded essential in many different fields all around the world. The majority of technology, commerce, tourism, and academia are all conducted in English. Due to the demand for the English language in these diverse fields, it is widely used worldwide [1]. This importance of the English language has led to a great focus on teaching the four main skills, which are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills should be taught in a way to achieve the goals set for the learners [2]. They are divided into receptive skills, which include listening and reading, and productive skills, which are speaking and writing. A great focus is directed to the speaking skill for its significance among the language learners worldwide [3]. Many studies investigated the factors that can influence the development of the speaking skill of the learners. These factors included, motivation, personality, attitudes towards English teachers (ATET), classroom environment and instructional media (CEIM), and attitudes towards English language (AET). The factors namely personality, ATET, CEIM, and AET are considered crucial in which they can have great influence on the student's motivation in learning the language [3]. This study aims to find the most important of these factors affecting the motivation of EFL learners' speaking skills progress.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Motivation

One of the key elements of learning a second language is motivation. It acts as the core part in the learning process. Teaching a second language is basically not easy process if the learners have no desire for it. Majority of learners have issues in acquiring English language for variety of reasons, as not knowing the importance of this language worldwide, while others tend to try to learn merely to pass their exams. Hence, those learners lack motivation to learn the language [4]. Motivation has a great correlation with several factors such as personality, attitudes towards teachers and English language, as well as the classroom environment and instructional media.

2.2. Personality

Personality and its relationship with the language acquisition has been one of the controversial topics [5]. Moreover, and according to [6] theory, motivational variables and personality traits are connected. By analyzing how motivation and personality interact, big five personality traits were compared to two different types of academic motivation in the study of [7]. They discovered that intrinsic motivation was positively and significantly correlated with extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to new experiences. Extroversion and neuroticism were both strongly and favorably correlated with extrinsic drive.

2.3. Attitudes towards English language teachers

[8] pointed out that teachers play a crucial role in motivating their learners to learn the language. Hence, teachers need to use creative teaching methods which eventually lead to enhance learners' motivation. Teachers and students should establish a mutually beneficial connection. Teachers must be able to relate to students who come from different backgrounds, have a variety of interests, aspirations for the future, objectives for learning English, and, most significantly, a variety of personalities. Teachers can develop a trusting relationship with students by applying unique teaching

and communication tactics that are suited to each student once they have a deeper understanding of them. Once a rapport is established, the classroom will feel relaxed and pleasurable enough for students to freely learn from the teacher.

2.4. Classroom environment and instructional media

According to [9], a good learning environment helps to improve learning outcomes and inspires and motivates students. They also asserted that there is a positive association between the learning environment and student motivation. [10] discovered that enhancing the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environment as a whole enhances student motivation. Providing students what they require and informing them of it encourages them to take on more independent learning. Students do not view such an activity as a “chance” to be used in their learning if they do not see a connection to their own efficacy. They lack the motivation to properly comprehend their benefits and to use the tools and resources that are offered. They would not fully appreciate the advantages of the tools they used to develop until they realize how much their own speaking and listening got improved.

2.5. Attitude towards English language

Language attitude is a crucial issue since language acquisition depends heavily on it. Authors in [11] conducted research on attitudes and motivation that revealed a correlation with learners’ language abilities, highlighting the importance of attitudes and motivation as predictors of language learning. Positive attitudes are commonly acknowledged by researchers to speed up learning.

3. Methodology

As mentioned earlier in section one, several factors affect EFL learner’s motivation in improving their speaking skills. The focus of this study is to find the most significant of these factors impacting upon the motivation of

EFL learners' speaking skills. For collecting the data, a questionnaire adapted from a study conducted by [12] with adjustments is used in this study. The Tishk International University, where English is the medium of instruction in all faculties with the exception of the faculty of law, provided the samples for this study, which included first-stage and foundation students. Students from the faculty of education who were majoring in a variety of subjects were chosen to complete the questionnaire, including English language teaching, mathematics education, biology education, computer education, and physics education. Additionally, first-year students from the faculties of pharmacy, nursing, and medical analysis took part in filling out the survey. For their students' first stage, all the chosen faculties offer English language instruction. To find the most significant factors affecting the motivation, the multiple linear regression method is used. The multiple linear regression is a well-known method of analyzing the relationship between one dependent variable and several independent variables [13]. The mathematical equation for this regression is:

$$y = X\beta + e. \quad (3.1)$$

The Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) estimators are

$$\hat{\beta} = (X'X)^{-1}X'Y, \quad (3.2)$$

where $\hat{\beta}$ is the unbiased estimate of β . The least squares estimator works with some assumptions such as linearly independent identically distributed errors with mean zero and constant variance s^2 . According to [14], the null hypothesis of a multiple regression is that there is no relationship between the independent variables (McDonald [14]). The corresponding equation for this study is given below:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{i1} + \beta_2 X_{i2} + \beta_3 X_{i3} + \beta_4 X_{i4} + e_i. \quad (3.3)$$

The equation in this study is constructed as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Motivation} = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ personally} + \beta_2 \text{ attitudes towards teachers} \\ & + \beta_3 \text{ classroom} + \beta_4 \text{ attitude towards language.} \end{aligned} \quad (3.4)$$

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive statistics

The results of descriptive statistics are presented below in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics results

	Motivation	Personality	ATELT	CEIM	ATEL
Mean	39.533	23.435	31.065	35.478	26.815
Median	40.500	24.000	32.000	36.000	28.000
Maximum	50.000	35.000	40.000	50.000	35.000
Minimum	22.000	7.000	10.000	18.000	7.000
Coefficient of variation	15%	25%	21%	19%	20%
Observations	92	92	92	92	92

Table 1 shows individual characteristics of the studied variables. Motivation mean (average) score is 39.533 with maximum motivation score 50.000, and minimum 22.000. On the other hand, personality variable mean score is 23.435 with maximum score 35.000, and minimum score 7.000. The variable of attitudes towards English language teachers mean score is 31.065, with maximum score 40.000, and minimum score 10.000. As for classroom environment and instructional media mean score is 35.478, with maximum score 50.000, and the minimum score 18.000. Finally, the attitudes towards English language mean score is 26.815, with maximum score 35.000, and minimum score 7.000. Also, the mean and the median mean scores of these studied variables can be observed to be approximately equal indicating that these scores seem normally distributed.

3.2. Formation of variables

The data is collected from a questionnaire distributed to TIU students to find out the factors than can have effect on the motivation of the learners. A model was adjusted considering the total number of selected variables with the aim to know the findings and interpret the significance that each variable would contribute (see Tables 1 and 2).

The fitted model using equation (3.4) is:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Motivation} = & 17.15 - 0.1430 \text{ personality} + 0.3408 \text{ attitudes towards teachers} \\ & + 0.2258 \text{ classroom} \\ & + 0.266 \text{ attitude towards English language.} \end{aligned}$$

Table 2. Regression with all variables

Variables	Coefficients	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Interception	17.15	5.70*	0.000
Personality	-0.1430	-1.55	0.125
Attitudes towards English language teachers	0.3408	3.83*	0.000
Classroom environment and instructional media	0.2258	2.42*	0.017
Attitudes towards English language	0.266	2.46*	0.016

*significant

Table 2 indicates that personality has a negative and non-significant effect on motivation. This is described by the negative coefficient value (-0.1430) of our independent variable (personality) and the corresponding probability value of the *t*-statistic (-1.55), its absolute value is greater than the *p*-value 0.05 and should be deleted from the model. The *F*-statistic is used to check the overall significance of the model as given in Table 3.

Table 3. Analysis of variance table

Source	DF	Adj SS	Adj MS	<i>F</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Regression	4	1459.11	364.78	18.07**	0.000
Error	87	1755.79	20.18		
Total	91	3214.90			

**highly significant

A highly significant regression equation was found to be fit ($F = 18.07$, $p < 0.000$) (Table 3).

3.3. Selected variables

The multiple regression model runs again using just the selected variables, obtaining the following new predicted model:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Motivation} = & 16.08 + 0.3339 \text{ attitudes towards teachers} \\ & + 0.1786 \text{ classroom} \\ & + 0.251 \text{ attitude towards English language.} \end{aligned}$$

In this model, the variables: attitudes towards teachers, classroom environment and instructional media, and attitude towards English language are significant as is clear from Table 4 according to their t and p values.

Table 4. Regression with the significant variables

Variables	Coefficients	t -value	p -value
Interception	16.08	5.45*	0.000
Attitudes towards English language teachers	0.3339	373*	0.000
Classroom environment and instructional media	0.1768	2.01*	0.047
Attitudes towards English language	0.251	232*	0.023

*significant

The F -statistic is used to check the overall significance of the model as given in Table 5.

Table 5. Analysis of variance table

Source	DF	Adj SS	Adj MS	F -value	p -value
Regression	3	1410.73	470.24	22.94**	0.000
Error	88	1804.17	20.50		
Total	91	3214.90			

**highly significant

A highly significant regression equation was found to be fit ($F = 22.94$, $p < 0.000$) (Table 5).

4. Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, a questionnaire was distributed to several learners at TIU to find out the variables that influence the motivation of the learners. These variables included attitudes towards English language teachers, classroom environment and instructional media, and attitudes towards English language. To attain the objectives of this study, the multiple linear regression analysis was utilized for achieving the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The applied statistical method was based on the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression, complying with all its assumptions to obtain an optimal model.

Multiple linear regression was performed for selecting the variables that affect the motivation variable. The carried-out regression allowed to achieve an equation that meets the OLS assumptions, thus obtaining coefficients that explain the behavior of motivation. The variables that best explain the behavior of motivation are attitudes towards English language teachers, classroom environment and instructional media, and attitudes towards English language.

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