

Motivation as an important component of soft skills.

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Abstract. This article deals with the role of motivation in foreign language learning as one of the components of soft skills. Motivation is an important factor which accounts for the success or failure of any complex task. The article defines the term motivation, explains different types of motivation, how they interact in learning motivation, highlights key factors of motivation and provides some tips for improving motivation at foreign language lessons.

Key words: learning motivation, types, factors, intrinsic, extrinsic, integrative, instrumental motivation.

The present-day dynamic world is posing new challenges not only to politicians, economists, and scientists who are engaged in important spheres of our life, but to teachers as well. That is why education as one of the most important parts of our life, whose aim is to prepare young people to life, can not stand apart and should respond quickly to all changes and requirements of this fast-moving world. Nowadays our students are increasingly facing the problem of gaining soft skills or as they are often called the 21st century skills to build up a successful career. There are some definitions of the term ‘soft skills’. Some scholars describe them as character traits, attitudes, and behaviors rather than technical aptitudes or knowledge. According to other definitions soft skills are more intangible and non-technical abilities that are sought from graduates; they are not about the knowledge you possess but rather the patterns of behavior you display in different situations. The following list contains the most sought-after soft skills

Effective communication

Integrity

Dependability

Open mindedness

Teamwork

Creativity

Problem-solving

Critical thinking

Organisation

Willingness to learn

Empathy

To gain all these skills to enter and succeed in the workplace after they graduate, to use their educations to become life-long learners, students should be

motivated. As it can be seen the list begins with the ability of communicating effectively, which directly depends on the level of knowledge of a foreign language, in this case, the English Language. And motivation is an important factor in specifying the readiness of learners to communicate, motivation provides learners with an aim and direction to follow, therefore, it has a key role in language learning.

Motivation has been considered as one of important factors influencing the success of a second\foreign language learning. There are different definitions for the term motivation and different scholars hold different ideas, from different perspectives. Quite often motivation is defined as a psychological quality that leads a person to achieve a goal. In domestic psychology, the study of motivation has a long tradition. Modern ideas about motivation originate from the concepts of O. M. Leontiev, S.L. Rubinstein, D. M. [10, 13]. O.M. Leontiev defines that the motive is not the experience of a need, but the objective in what this need is concretized under such conditions and what the activity is aimed at. He distinguishes between the concepts of motive and purpose. The goal is a preliminary result that a person imagines. Motive is the motivation to achieve the goal. S.L. Rubinstein believes that objects and phenomena of the external world are not only objects of knowledge, but also a kind of engine of behavior, winners, which give birth to certain motivations in man. D.M. Uznadze recognizes that the motive replaces one nature of behavior with another: less accepted to more accepted - and thus creates the possibility of carrying out certain activities. S.L. Rubinstein considers the core question of motivation -the question of how the motives that determine the circumstances become stable that characterizes the personality. As for foreign scholars, Gardner defines motivation as the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language [4, 5, 6]. This definition includes three components: (1) effort expended to reach the goal; (2) desire to achieve the goal; (3) favorable attitude towards learning language. "Motivation is a force that energizes, sustains, and directs behavior toward a goal" [11]. Crookes and Schmidt define motivation as the learner's orientation regarding the goal of learning a second language [3, 14]. According to some other scientists, motivation gives the reasons for people's actions, desires, and needs. Motivation can also be defined as one's direction to behavior or what causes a person to want to repeat a behavior and vice versa. It is also said in the works of some scholars that a motive is what encourages the person to act in a certain way or develop an inclination for particular behavior. Some researchers emphasize that goal is a part of motivation. Wen Qiufang thinks of motivation simply as reasons and goals of learning English [16, 17, 18]. He Zhaoxiong and Mei Deming define motivation as the learner's overall goal or orientation [7]. Johnstone considers that motivation is a drive directed towards a goal [9]. Pintrich and Schunk think of motivation as "the process whereby goal directed activity is instigated and sustained", in which

motivation is to start and keep the activity towards the goal [12]. Williams and Burden interpreted motivation as a state of cognitive and emotional arousal, which leads to a conscious decision to act, and which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort in order to attain a previously set goal [19]. Some of them are learners' internal factors, such as interest, curiosity, or a wish to succeed. Others are external, such as the influence of the learning contexts, the learning situation and the influence of other people. This internal-external distinction has played a significant role in many theories of motivation. Gardner defines integrative reasons as those that indicate an interest in learning the language in order to meet and communicate with members of the second\foreign language community [4, 5, 6]. Instrumental reasons refer to those reasons, which stress the pragmatic aspects of learning the second\foreign language, without any particular interest in communicating with the second\foreign language community [5]. As Crookes and Schmidt defined, motivation is the learner's orientation with regard to the goal of learning a second\foreign language. Students develop a motivation to learn; they initiate learning activities, stay involved in a learning task and display a commitment to learning [3, 14].

The scholars define four types of motivation. Gardner and Lambert made the well-known distinction between two types of motivation: integrative orientations and instrumental orientations in motivation [4, 5, 6]. Other scholars express the idea that a motivational construct involves both instrumental and integrative motivation. Most situations in learning language include a mixture of each type of motivation. It is impossible to attribute language learning success to certain integrative or instrumental causes. It is stated that the significance of integrative and instrumental motivation depends on situations or contexts whether learning language functions as a foreign language or as a second \foreign language. Instrumental motivation is generally characterized by the desire to obtain something practical or concrete from the study of a second language [8]. It refers to acquiring a language as a means for obtaining instrumental objectives such as furthering a career, reading technical materials, translation, and so on. Integrative motivation describes learners who want to integrate themselves into the culture of the second\foreign language group and become involved in social interchange in that group.

The other types of motivation are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic/extrinsic distinction has been influential in studies of motivation, and these concepts have been used in various attempts to explain differences in motivation among different learners. Intrinsic motivation: This kind of motivation occurs when students are internally motivated to do something because they believe that it is important or because they enjoy doing it, they engage in the tasks for their own sake and not because they lead to an extrinsic award. Students with this kind of motivation will be happy and excited to do their homework because they find it an exciting challenge, even though they might not receive any reward

or compensation. Intrinsic motivation may wane through schooling as students are required to study subjects that may be of little or no interest to them. In order to improve this kind of motivation, it's possible to make abstract material more concrete and put it in context. Intrinsically motivated students learn because they want to learn. "Intrinsic motivation is the motivation to be involved in an activity for its own sake" [11]. Van Lier defines intrinsic motivation in terms of drive theories: certain basic psychological needs which are innate in the human being [15]. It is important to note that it is intrinsic motivation that is engendered by the learning process itself. Those views are encouraging to language teachers, owing to the fact that some students bring no intrinsic motivation to the classroom. As the language teachers, our task is to maximize the stimulation of students' intrinsic motivation, while extrinsic motivation can be used to marshal the productive forces of intrinsic motivation. Moreover, intrinsic motivation can turn out to be integrative motivation if a second\foreign language learner wants to integrate with the second\foreign language culture; intrinsic motivation can also turn out to be instrumental motivation if a second\foreign language learner wishes to gain aims using a second\foreign language. Likewise, learners with the same integrative motivation can indicate great differences of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is pertinent to integrative and instrumental motivation related to second\foreign language learning.

According to some scholars "Extrinsic motivation is a standing invitation to students to adopt a surface approach." [2]. Students focus on their performance and the value or the importance that they attach to the outcome. "Extrinsic motivation is characterized as the motivation to engage in an activity as a means to an end." [11]. An extrinsically motivated student performs in order to receive a reward, such as graduating or passing a test or avoiding a penalty like a failing grade, which can create a kind of dependency. Extrinsic motivation is stimulated not by the process itself but by what can be got from doing the action. At the same time, students' learning motivation is influenced by the intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, but extrinsic motivation affects mainly. The dominated intrinsic motivation includes curiosity, thirst for knowledge, interest and competition etc; the dominated extrinsic motivation includes current incentives, desire for peers' recognition and admiration [1].

There are three factors of learning a second\foreign language motivation. They are positive attitude towards a second language community, enjoyment of learning, and external pressures. Attitude towards a foreign language community is very important as it is based on the desire to become a member of that community. In its turn, the positive attitude towards the community contributes to gaining positive emotions through learning. There are external pressures that motivate learners to learn a second\foreign language. Whether it is to please parents, receive a reward, or fulfill some pragmatic aims, learners are motivated to satisfy some external pressures. Some scholars connect extrinsic and instrumental

motivation by stating that they both refer to the desire to learn a second\foreign language because of some pressures or rewards from the social environment, internalized reasons for learning a second language, and\or personal decisions to do so and their value for the selected goals.

One key component of a teacher's job is to guide their students in developing the motivation it takes to persist and excel through challenging or unappealing tasks (including practicing). Motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, is important in the success of students at all stages of their education, and teachers can play a pivotal role in providing and encouraging that motivation in their students. As all students are motivated differently, have different capabilities of learning, the awareness of the necessity of exercising the differentiated approach is important and it takes time and a lot of effort to learn to get students enthusiastic about learning, working hard, and pushing themselves to excel. The teacher, as an organizer and leader in teaching, has responsibilities to increase their students' desire to perform willingly and actively while learning English. It is the teacher who can make students realize the obvious value of knowledge, knowledge of English as a means of communication in particular, that through knowledge students can reach their goals in choosing their career. To keep students on track a teacher can use various of methods.

Giving students a sense of control will allow them to have some choice and control over what happens in the classroom and stay engaged. Involve them and let them take an active part in the learning process. Classes need to be student-centered. The teacher should act as a coach or facilitator; to guide and direct the learning process. For example, allowing students to choose the type of assignment they do or which problems to work on can give them a sense of control that may just motivate them to do more.

Setting a goal makes a good beginning for any activity. It can be very frustrating for students to complete an assignment or even to behave in class if there are not clearly defined objectives. Students want and need to know what is expected of them in order to stay motivated to work. At the beginning of the year, lay out clear objectives, rules, and expectations of students so that there is no confusion and students have goals to work towards.

As some students see intelligence as a fixed characteristic which a person may have or may not, students should be taught that their intellectual skills are the things that can be developed- through their hard work, reading, self-education, confronting of challengers, attending English-speaking clubs, etc.)

Due to creating a safe, supportive environment for students, affirming students' belief in their abilities rather than laying out the consequences of not doing things, students are much more likely to get and stay motivated to do their work. so a teacher should focus on what the students can, not can not.

A classroom is a great place for learning, but sitting at a desk day in and day out can make lessons start to seem a bit dull for some students. To renew interest

in the subject matter or just in learning in general, give your students a chance to get out of the classroom. Offer them to interview their peers at the university on some hot topics, bring in speakers, or even just head to the library for some research. The brain loves novelty and a new setting can be just what some students need to stay motivated to learn.

Getting to know your students is about more than just memorizing their names. It is the first and most important step in increasing the growth of intrinsic motivation. Students need to know that their teacher has a genuine interest in them and cares about them and their success. When students feel appreciated it creates a safe learning environment and motivates them to work harder, as they want to get praise and good feedback from someone they feel knows and respects them as individuals.

Even if it is a relatively homogeneous group of students, not all students will respond to lessons in the same way. For some, hands-on experiences may be the best. Others may love to read books quietly or to work in groups. In order to keep all students motivated, mix up your teaching techniques and lessons so that students with different preferences will each get time focused on the things they like best. Doing so will help students stay engaged and pay attention.

Competition in the classroom is not always a bad thing, and in some cases can motivate students to try harder and to do their best. The teacher should create and foster a friendly spirit of competition in their classroom, perhaps through group games, related to the material or other opportunities for students to show off their knowledge.

Everyone likes getting rewards, and offering your students, it especially concerns the first-year students, the chance to earn them is an excellent source of motivation. Consider the personalities and needs of your students to determine appropriate rewards for your group.

Assigning students classroom jobs is a great way to build a community and to give students a sense of motivation. Most students will see classroom jobs as a privilege rather than a burden and will work hard to ensure that they, and other students, are meeting expectations. It can also be useful to allow students to take turns leading activities or helping out so that each feels important and valued. If, for example, you assigned your group to make a presentation, ask one or two students to provide the necessary equipment or just air the classroom before a lesson, and so on.

A teacher should encourage their students to solve problems, do experiments, and work on projects together. The social interaction can get them excited about things in the classroom and students can motivate one another to reach a goal. Teachers need to ensure that groups are balanced and fair, however, so that some students are not doing more work than others.

. Teachers can give students a lot of motivation by rewarding success publicly, giving praise for a job well done, and sharing exemplary work. But it

must be noted that teachers should praise the process (the effort, the strategies, the ideas, what went into the work), not the person.

Most students want to succeed, and they just need help figuring out what they need to do in order to get there. One way to motivate your students is to encourage their self-reflection, to get them to take a hard look at themselves and determine their own strengths and weaknesses. Students are often much more motivated by creating these kinds of critiques of themselves than by having a teacher do it for them, as it makes them feel in charge of creating their own objectives and goals.

One of the best ways to get your students motivated is to share your enthusiasm. When you are excited about teaching, they will be much more excited about learning. It is that simple.

Knowing your students also has some other benefits, namely that it allows a teacher to relate classroom material to things that students are interested in or have experienced. Teachers can use these interests to make things more interesting and relatable to students, keeping students motivated for longer.

Helping students to be able to generate their own motivation, find their own personal reasons for doing class work and working hard, whether because they find material interesting, want to go to university, or just love to learn, is one of the most powerful gifts you can give them.

Students can also be taught that their intellectual skills are the things that can be cultivated – through their hard work, reading, education, confronting of challenges, etc. When they are taught this, they, as a rule, become more eager for challenges, harder working, and more able to cope with obstacles.

Some students find the prospect of not doing well so anxiety-inducing that it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Some students feel desperate of not doing well which may tell on their motivation. For these students, teachers may find that they are most motivated by learning that struggling with a subject is not the end of the world. Offer support no matter what the end result is and ensure that students do not feel so overwhelmed by expectations that they just give up.

If you are not pushing your students to do more than the bare minimum, most will not seek to push themselves on their own. Students like to be challenged and will work to achieve high expectations so long as they believe those goals to be within their reach, so a teacher should not be afraid to push students to get more out of them.

Students who struggle with class work can sometimes feel frustrated and blame themselves, draining motivation. In these situations it is critical that teachers help students to learn exactly where they went wrong and how they can improve next time. Figuring out a method to get where students want to be can also help them to stay motivated to work hard. Students who are taught that their performance simply measures their current skills can still relish learning challenges, for mistakes and setbacks should not be undermining.

It can be hard for students to see just how far they have come, especially with subjects that are difficult for them. Tracking can come in handy in the classroom, not only for teachers but also for students. Teachers can use this as a way to motivate students, allowing them to see visually just how much they are learning and improving as the year goes on.

Not all classwork needs to be a game or a good time, but students who see a learning establishment as a place where they can have fun will be more motivated to pay attention and do the work that is required of them than those who regard it as a chore. Adding fun activities into your classes can help students who struggle to stay engaged and make the classroom a far more friendly place for all students.

It is also very important to give students the opportunity to be successful. Give them tasks where they can see the results of their efforts. The feeling students get when they have done a difficult exercise boosts their motivation. Students, even the best ones, can become frustrated and demotivated when they feel like they are struggling or not getting the recognition that other students are. Make sure that all students get a chance to play to their strengths and feel included and valued. It can make a world of difference in their motivation.

The problem of motivating students to learn English and participate actively in the learning process, cultivating intrinsic motivation in students, getting students prepared to their future careers is becoming more acute every year. Highly motivated students will be good at communicating not only with their countrymen but also with the representatives of another culture; they will be good at setting goals and making preferences, they will be trained to work in a group and take responsibility, to manage their time, to be aware of the importance of self-reflection and such moral characteristics as integrity, loyalty, tolerance empathy will become an integral part of their future social and professional life. The teachers, in their turn, should make a fruitful use of existing motivation mechanisms, significantly expand motivational sphere of the students and direct them to master a foreign language. They are also required to be innovators, to be creative, to be sensitive to all the novelties of today's world to pick up new ideas and pass them on to their students.

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