

How to motivate non-English major students in Vietnamese universities of education to learn English

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Abstract

To Vietnamese non English major students in educational universities, who actually view English as a burden, learning motivation becomes very important. The research in different methods and models of Gardner (1985) or Deci and Ryan (1985) about motivation for language learning opens the foundation for the teachers and students to investigate the flexible strategies to teach and learn English as a foreign language with the highest achievement. The proposed study, therefore, will throw some new light on how to assist non English major students of education to be engaged with learning English. To obtain this aim, a mixed methods research design will be employed. Questionnaires will be administered to 60 non English majors in Hanoi Pedagogical University 2 (HPU2) and 60 other students in Hanoi University of Education (HUE). Besides, 5 Vietnamese teachers and 5 English teachers will participate to convey the interviews. Through the mixed methods, the research yielded three important findings. First, the finding investigated that Non-English students learn English for mostly for the purpose of career opportunity and international communication. The two most influential factors that make students increase motivation in learning English were teachers' behaviour and a teachers' encouragement to students. However, lack of goal setting and self-actualization were identified as internal factors causing demotivated to them. More importantly, the study showed the similarities and differences in the ways teachers in Vietnam and England employed to motivate students to learn English as precious experience and lesson to apply for teaching English in Vietnam. The teachers share the same methods in using games, rewards and regular activities. Nonetheless, teachers in England considered the responsibility and actual care of psychological activities as the powerful tips.

Introduction

According to Dornyei and Guilloteux (2007) "motivation is one of the most important concepts in psychology", which is straightforward to the effectiveness of educational performance. In teaching and learning a foreign language, it is the key for success. Gardner and Lambert (1972) are the pioneers to do studies on motivation in second language acquisition and make it a distinguished research topic. They emphasize that "although language aptitude accounts for a considerable proportion of individual variability in language learning achievement, motivational factors can override the aptitude effect" (Dornyei, 1998). The research in different methods and models of Gardner (1985) or Deci and Ryan (1985) about motivation for language learning open the foundation for the teachers and students to investigate the flexible strategies to teach and learn English as a foreign language with the highest achievement.

In the last 20 years, English has been viewed as an important foreign language, especially for the Vietnamese young generation. Particularly, it is included in the curriculum of almost every schools and universities. Unfortunately, the interest of students who are not majored in this subject is not the same as how well they understand the vital role of it. Students seem reluctantly to learn English as a compulsory discipline in their colleges. Tran (2007) stated that Non-English students just concentrate on English for the external needs for higher education and future career. The other typical reason to motivate them to be with English is from the pressure of getting high marks in university examination. This result was re-found in (Nguyen, 2008; Ton and Pham 2010; Nguyen, 2011) which showed the same reasons for learning English in one university in Hanoi.

I would argue that, for such the case of students whose majors are not in relation with English, the main motivational reasons to learn English is from the extrinsic factors. There is big lack of interest in English in this class of students. The argument also rose when students can see the true value and benefit of being good at English while they know it as an international means of communication. The problems lie in the wrong concept and bias viewpoints for the subjects students are chasing in universities.

The reasons for the ignorance to English of non-English majored students were originated from poor learning condition and traditional teaching methods. The anxiety of this subject also cause demotivated in learning English in a large number of students (Tran, 2007).

When working with non-English students who are majored in different subjects related to science and society for five years, I found that students are not willing to learn English. Although English has been taught for a long time, the results are still not good with students who do not pay attention, particularly those who study subjects such as mathematics, science or computing. The lack of concentration in each lesson of students made me disappointed and I started to blame for my ability. It seems that many students do not get enough motivation to be aware of the important role of English in their life. This problem makes me really concerned. As a teacher of English, I have always cared about how to help students in Vietnam be more involved and passionate in learning English. As a result, the research studied on English language learning and teaching motivation had a great meaning to me. To investigate how to motivate non-English major students to learn English, the research findings were evaluated based on the results concluded from the two following research questions:

1. *What are the factors that influence motivation of Non English students to learn English?*
2. *What are different ways to motivate students to learn English of English teachers in the United Kingdom in compare with Vietnamese teachers in Vietnam?*

Motivation in Second Language Learning.

Motivation is defined as the extent ones strive to acquire the language because of the desire to do so and the satisfaction derived from it Gardner (1985). Motivation is considered significantly in its role in language learning success. Along this line of thoughts, students' motivation toward English language learning can, to a certain degree, influence their learning results. It is worth investigating how students become successful or failed in learning English because it might affect their motivation and the way they learn the language, Dornyei (2001a).

At the early stage, motivation was examined and understood within a behaviour framework based on (Pavlov, 1927) with stimulate - response theory and the application of reward and reinforcement in which reward systems were the key of the approach for motivating individuals to show the desired behaviour. When referring to future trends and direction for second language acquisition, (Nunan, 2001) mentioned the tension of interaction relationship, interaction requirement and goal orientation which is directly link to learning motivation. Apparently, the variables above are based on the social learning theory of Vygotsky (1962) in which he emphasized on the interactions and also influenced by one of the features of andragogy theory of (Knowles *et al*, 2011) in which he presented the role of goal orientation.

Factors influence motivation

In his own view about humanist, (Maslow, 1987) refers the Hierarchy of Needs which has often been represented in a hierarchical pyramid with five levels. The highest level on Maslow's ladder of human motives is the need for self-actualization. Maslow said that human beings strive for self-actualization, or realization of their full potential, once they have satisfied their more basic needs.

The topic that (Herzberg, 1968) emphasizes on is the motivation in working environment. However, based on the fundamental characteristics of motivation which affect not only employees in different areas, but do exert on the achievement and attainment of students in universities. In other words, it has influence on setting and orienting goals for students' career in the future. The most significant and basic difference between Herzberg's two factors is the inherent level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction within each factor. The satisfaction and dissatisfaction in working are based on the theory of human' needs of Maslow (1987) because it straightforward to satisfaction and dissatisfaction of need for self-actualization, Herzberg et al. (1959). Students will work much harder if the subjects they are learning make them feel happy and comfortable. They will be more engaged in learning English as a second language if they find it helps out with developing the future career or helps them to get high salary later. Therefore, to some extent, motivators or hygiene motivations are existed in the form of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and directly affects how much students feel like to learn English.

In the context of education and language learning, hygiene factors are identified in the forms of relationship with peers, teachers and learning conditions, which corresponding to the concept of Dornyei (2001a) on the external influence of groups, teachers and learning environment. Likewise, motivators are transferred to the need to obtain achievement, advancement, growth and work itself. These intrinsic aspects, in fact, still based on the internal need of self-esteem, self-actualization (Maslow, 1987) and self-determination (Ryan and Deci, 1985).

Noels et al (1999) investigates that teachers with active role in supporting student's autonomy and providing useful feedback about students' learning progress, is related to students' extrinsic and intrinsic motivational orientations. (Williams and Burden, 1997; Pearse and Davies, 2000) shows that teachers' feedback mostly affects students' learning motivation especially when they are aware of their students' own progress. Noels (2001a) also confirms that when teachers actively involved in the process of giving positive feedbacks and encouragement in students' learning, they will feel more competent in learning the language. However, if teachers are perceived as controlling,

the intrinsic motivation of students will be decreased. Therefore, teachers play a vital position in contributing intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for students.

Methods to motivate students in teaching English

Teaching English for Non-English majors in the university is towards teaching for adults. Therefore, teachers need to consider the social and emotional aspects which are included in humanistic approaches for adult education. According to (Knowles et al, 2011), the core of humanist is andragogy which is the theory for adult education. There are six principles of andragogy: the learner's need to know, self-concept of the learner, prior experience of the learner, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation to learn.

Grace (1996) cited by (Knowles et al, 2011) argues that the theory concentrates solely on individual and the intrinsic motivation, and almost ignore the influence of the outside factors on the goal, the purpose and the orientation to learning of adult learners. Human cannot exist without integrating with their society even when they are mutual. People and the environment out to some extent can cause bad or good effect on each individual. They are directly or indirectly help him/her be motivated. In fact, there are a lot of adult learners who are engaged in learning through the impact and approve of society, friends and family. However with such motivation, students know how to orient their own goals for their study, which is based on their interest and passion in a particular subject at the university.

However, it is also necessary to combine the humanistic approach with the theory of andragody and adequate feedbacks to improve the students' self-confidence and autonomy. Humanism would concentrate on the development of learners' self-concept. When learners feel self-esteemed and self-confident and have clear strategic learning objectives on their own, they become more responsible for their learning process. Rogers and Freiberg (1994) argue that teachers' openness and empathy to students was important to facilitate learning and development. Teachers are viewed as facilitators of learning while students will become the centre who can develop their own actualisation and determination in activities. Self-actualisation is the basic human motivator and that when this drive is prevented it creates an imbalance within the individuals' life both physical and mental.

Dornyei and Cheng (2007) and Dornyei (2013) stress on proper teachers' behaviour to students. Besides good teaching methods and knowledge, teachers need to treat learners in the most friendly and enthusiastic ways. In the context of Vietnam, (Le et al., 2005; Phan, 2010) find out that students conformed to the Vietnamese traditional values of the care orientation. Thus the kind and helpful support from the teacher of English in the classroom is a good way to motivate students even when they are grown up.

Creating learner autonomy is focused in (Dornyei and Cheng, 2007). Students are more motivated to pursue tasks when they feel some sort of ownership. This can be achieved by teachers' allowing them to make real choices about as many aspects of the learning process as possible, handing over various leadership/teaching roles, and adopting the role of facilitator rather than drill sergeant. Autonomy and motivation go hand in hand.

Applying group work and pair work is also a good way to develop the effect of activities in class. Brophy (2004) suggests that teachers should create as many chances for students to work in pairs or in groups or let them feel free to speak their ideas in class to maximize intrinsic motivation. In doing this, students can also increase their self-confidence and autonomy. (Dörnyei and Malderez, 1999; Dornyei, 2012) also contended

that group dynamics in the classroom played an important role in the students' learning experiences and outcomes. Working in groups helps students to generate commitment toward the goals and the whole team.

According to Gilakjani *et al* (2012), the ways to make students more involved in learning English are generalised by finding learner's passion and connecting activities in class. In the first stage, passion is identified as underlying factor which plays significant role in forming intrinsic motivation for students. Especially, teacher plays as a facilitator (Roger & Freiberg, 1994) to bring students passion by using music, movies, fads or current topics to trigger learners' real interests. Teachers also help learners to find their passion by organizing class activities regularly around the theme of self-expression such as: personalized tasks, idea journals, speaking circles, interactive questionnaires. The method would be effective when students realize that the content of the class is their personal lives, and that the teacher responds to them as people, not just as language learners.

METHODOLOGY

In this research, the qualitative and quantitative approaches were thoroughly combined. According to Newby (2010), mixed methods produce the understanding with deep insight over a large population. To investigate the factors positively and negatively influence on Non English major motivation in learning English, I applied quantitative approach with survey questionnaire collected from non-English students in Vietnamese educational universities.

In the actual survey, the questionnaires were distributed to 60 first year students of Mathematics and Computing in Hanoi Pedagogical University and 60 other students of Biology in Hanoi University of Education. My colleagues in HPU2 and HUE were in charge of choosing certain participants. The strict observation of my colleagues during the survey actually brought the highest responses to me with 120 questionnaires. Before sending teachers the question design, I had small talk to them about the content to make sure that they could guide students whenever they need help and explain. To maximize data validity, the considerations about collectors, time and location are carefully emphasized. Those factors had certain impacts in how participants give out information and answers in a survey (Mackey and Gass, 2005).

The interviews were conducted with 5 teachers of English in my university in Vietnam and 5 others in England. Despite the distance barrier, the interviews with teachers of English in Vietnam were implemented successfully with the combination of mobile phone interview and Skype phone interview.

Data analysis procedure

Piloting is a vital process of quantitative approach which use questionnaire as a method to collect data and increase validity and reliability for the research (Morrison, 1993; Wilson and Mc Lean, 1994). Actually, the questionnaire was carefully piloted by students and teachers in HPU. After being reviewed and commented by several colleagues, the drafted questionnaire was revised and delivered to a group of 10 students (who are not included in the participants of the main research) in HPU2 for piloting.

The complete questionnaire helped me to investigate all the information and data needed to answer the research questions.

For the interview data, I highlight the transcripts in different colours corresponding with seminar themes that help to support analysing and answering research questions. The

codes were also compared with the content in the diary to interpret the notes and data collected.

After collecting the questionnaire response from students, I start to synthesize the data, and classified them to answer the research questions based on the table of questions in relation with research question. The data collected from closed-ended questions were calculated, then transferred into numerical forms and plotted in the form of charts. Mostly the descriptive statistics were transferred into percentage to make the process of comparison and contrast easier to interpret and analyze in the findings. For the Likert scale questions, the CHI squared test was used when there was an equal spread responses on the question to check if the observed distribution is different from the expected one.

For the open-ended questions, I did the same ways as with the qualitative data from the interview, which was coding them and categorized them into different themes or key words so that I could easily match them to the research questions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

What are the factors that influence on motivating Non-English majored students to learn English?

As for factors made motivation of students develop, the results were quite obvious in which most of the students provided their approval for the influence of teachers' behaviour. This result also stated high position in (Dornyei and Cheng, 2007) in which teachers' caring about students was emphasized. Students highly appreciated the factor came from their teacher, especially, the teachers' character. 92.5% of them stated that they were motivated more when teachers were friendly and enthusiastic. However, this aspect did not exert much influence on making students lose the engagement in English. The instruments which accounted the highest proportion of 67.5% in de-motivating HPU2 students was, interestingly, setting goal and self-actualization factor. The influence from peers and friends in class also dominated how well students got engaged in learning English. According to Phan (2010) the social comparison with classmates and peers was the most introjected stimulation for students to improve their English. Dornyei and Malderez (1999) also emphasized that group dynamics in the classroom had significant influence on the students' learning experiences and outcomes.

Although the statements made on questions 6 & 7 were designed in the opposite contents, the results found are not opposite. Students can be motivated by these factors very much; it does not mean that they would be decreased their motivation by those factors. In fact, 65% students thought that the encouragement from their family contribute their motivation to learn English. However, solely 15% of agreed that their family can have much influence on their motivation in English. It is actually easy to explain because students are adults and they are awareness of decide to do everything themselves. They have self – concepts and enough confidence to know what the bad and the good things for them are. They are capable of doing the right thing and avoid what influence negatively to their study.

The results with regard to students' self-esteem and self-actualization support some of the findings concluded from (Tran and Baldauf, 2007), which also emphasized on internal demotives of students and make demotivated to 57,5% of them. However, the conclusions only stated the influence from students' and teachers' factors while the aspects of peers and learning quality also need referring.

It is worth considering the students' perception on teachers' method. This factor seemed to not have significant influence on how much students decrease their motivation in learning English. As shown in Figure 1, solely 32.5% students showed that poor teaching methods of teachers caused students demotivated in learning English while one third of students did not see this factors as an important aspect, and the figure 37.5 % is not sure about the influence of this instrument in their English study. To make this result to be clearer and convincing, and ensure the accuracy, the Chi-Test was undertaken during the process of data analysis.

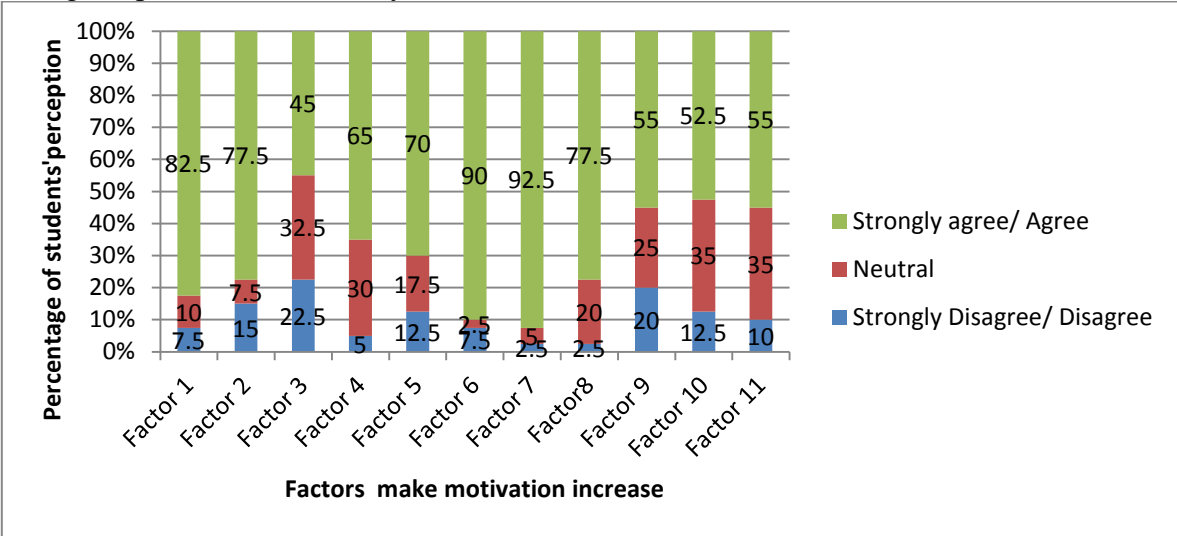


Figure 1: Factors that make student's motivation increase

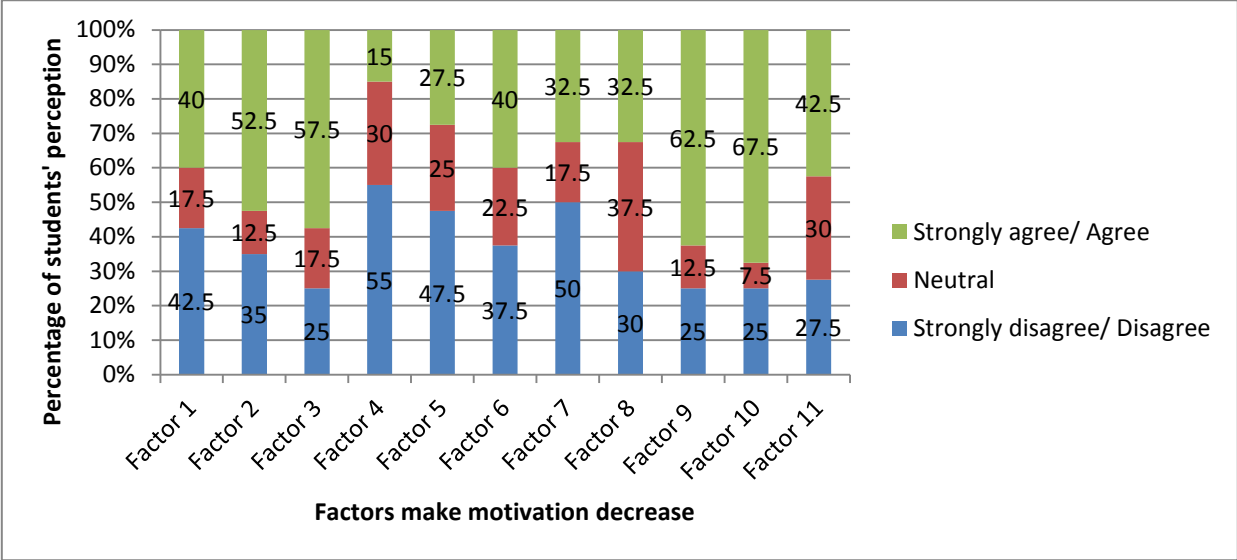


Figure 2: Factors cause students demotivated to learn English.

As seen in the figures 1 and 2, the course book design, teachers' style and encouragement and teaching methods were stated as the most important keys to engage students in each English lesson. However, lack of self-determined, poor teaching strategies of teachers, lack of competitiveness between groups and lack of goal setting for the subject were considered as demotivation. Showing quite a similar results from my topic, in her research on finding out the perception of students on motivational factors in one university in Vietnam, Nguyen (2011) investigated different ideas on the

instruments based on Dornyei' model. The most influential factors which could help to increase students' motivation are teacher's encouragement and methods while competitiveness in class showed the least effectiveness. Lack of autonomy, poor teaching methods and unsatisfactory in grade are the main factors that negatively influence on students' motivation. In terms of demotivated factors, Tran and Baldauf (2007) also find the same results in which grading and teachers' methods were viewed as major causes.

Hygiene Factors

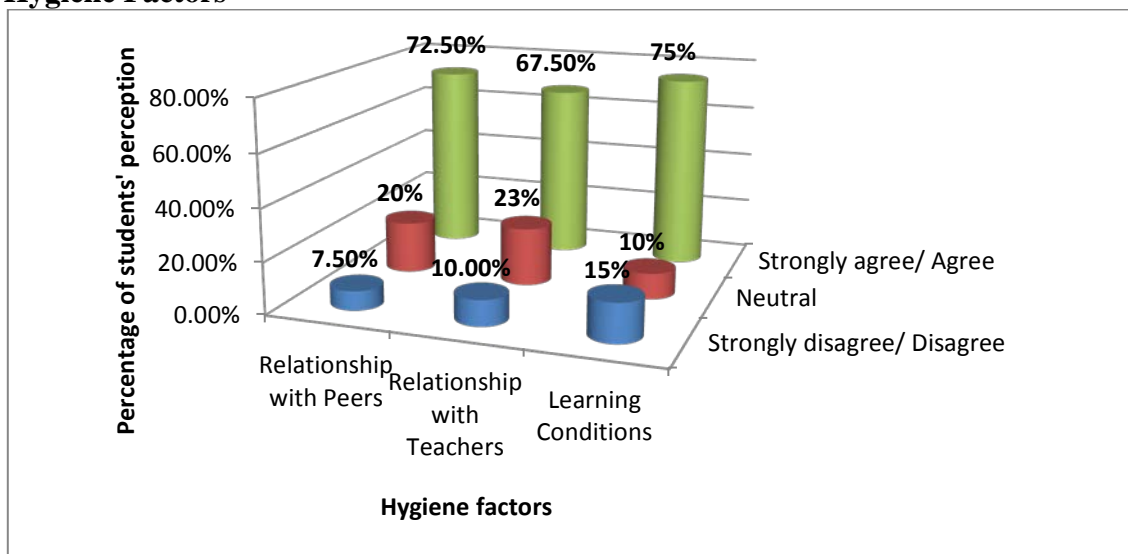


Figure 3: Perceptions of students towards Hygiene motivation

In terms of hygiene factors (Herzberg, 1968) the role of communicative learning condition scored the highest attention from students with 75% in compare with the other aspects including the relationship with peers and teachers. In such the case of students in Vietnam, teachers had not paid much attention to use encouragement, clear guidance and activities to motivate their students to learning English. That's why students can be able to see much motivation from their relation with teachers. However, studying and living in a university where is quite far from city centers, the opportunities to practice English with native speakers or to approach modern facilities will make them much more motivated when initialed the lesson (Harmer, 2007). In general, the ideas on how important hygiene factors influence on students' motivation in learning English are still conserved and true for the case of not only language learning students but also non-English majors in HPU2 and HUE.

What are different methods to motivate students to learn English of teachers in the United Kingdom in compare with those in Vietnam?

Teachers' methods to motivate students in HPU2 and HUE

The typical method that five interview teachers in Vietnam are using is organizing games and activities in pairs or in groups. However, the frequency was not regular. This way of teaching methods was concurrently agreed by English interviewee teachers.

70% students agree that they are motivated to learn English with activities which teachers use in class. With activities in class, students feel intrinsically inspired when the teacher was close to them and the whole class was enjoying these activities. The reason leading to most of the answers agreed with the vital role of activities from created by teacher is that the participants are students of pedagogical subject and they

know what they have to say and how they can make the others concentrating on the lesson. Some of the students when answering opened questions added that teacher did use activities to motivate them but solely sometimes.

35 % students presented that their teachers are using games to stimulate their curiosity and passion on each lesson. And of course this method makes them feel happy to attend each English period and therefore it is effective. In a large scale, this method drills the psychological needs (Maslow, 1985) and thinking of each person in the process of demanding and completing their leisure and relaxation. The mix and match between entertainment and studying is considered as one of the best way to create intrinsic motivation for students. 4% students confirmed their teachers' friendliness and enthusiasm made them comfortable and wanted to learn the lesson more. Some are resistant to learn well just because teachers are so devoted. There are still 25% students were not satisfied with the methods teachers kept to teach them. Most of them found demotivated and get bored in each English lesson. The reasons were originated mostly from the traditional methods which take teachers as the centre of class.

Vietnamese teachers' methods	English teachers' methods
Games employing CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) approach to teach English for non-English majors in the university Combination between activities in class and psychological methods: Students find learning English more interesting with activities. They will remember the lesson for a longer time.	Games Doing presentation Use creative lessons Ownership: let students own their work and face the challenge Group discussion Teachers and students learn from each other. They don't see them as teachers but as facilitators Rewards at the end

Table 1: Methods and activities that teachers are using to motivate Non English students to learn English

English teachers' methods

Promote learners' self-confidence and interest in learning English

According to teacher E1, the main teaching methods applied in England now is Student-centred method (Roger, 1951; Dornyei and Gajdatsy, 1989) which aims to let the student master their activities and knowledge and focus mostly on goal orientation which matched with the strategies and methods raised by (Gardner, 1985; Dornyei, 1994). Teachers act as a facilitator to instruct learners. In this field, (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994) views a teachers' role as a facilitator of learning, and he suggests that students need to take more responsibility for their own learning. If students see themselves as autonomous agents they will take more interest in their studies, develop greater motivation and are not dependent on others to achieve and learn. Moreover, learners should be seen as clients, which mean that they are served in the most enthusiastic ways by teachers.

Proper teacher behaviour

Teacher E3 agreed that they are using humanist teaching method in teaching English with most teachers believing in the process of education above and beyond the product (exam results). Students were treated as equals, with first name terms being used by all

teachers- teachers in the school didn't expect to be called 'teacher', or given more respect than the students. They have an overall policy, of inclusion and differentiation; any student who feels they are not being given sufficient respect, or who have any other worries that might affect their learning, can see a counsellor employed by the centre. Showing students that teachers are friendly and care about them (Dornyei and Cheng, 2007) is a good way to increase motivation for students.

Creating dynamic activities

According to teacher E4, during the process of teaching English to students, teachers are flexible to create as many activities as possible and get students involved in pairs or in groups. The role of organising group activities was also found effective by (Dornyei and Cheng, 2007; Bophy, 2004; Dornyei, 2013). Specifically, in speaking class, students are encouraged to discuss questions with the support from bank conversation and the assistant from teachers. Specifically, students were regularly invited to involve in playing games, doing presentations or making videos. Importantly, they have made use of the four steps during a class including: teaching theories, providing supporting practice, let individual practice, and expansion.

Combination between psychological methods and activities are advised as a vital stage in teaching a foreign language for students, especially when they are not really excited at the subject. All of the teacher interviewees asserted the same agreement on the necessity of using cognitive psychology, humanistic or andragogy. According to teacher E2, psychological methods are underpinned activities teachers applying to engage students to focus on the lesson.

Teachers’ recommendations

While teacher in Vietnam repeat the communicative teaching methods which focus on creating games, doing presentations, group dynamic and rewards, teachers in English contributed more ways to motivate Non English students to learn English. Teacher E1 suggested emphasizing on challenge the culture existing in Vietnamese education. The differences in culture between two countries make the different effectiveness in generating motivation to students. This view is consistent with (Dornyei and Cheng, 2007) when they contended that different cultures appear to have their own perception of what autonomy entails and what the optimal degree of learner freedom is. Thus, teachers of English in Vietnam should be the first to challenge the students’ culture in language learning first. One of the parts of this process is to show students the real value of English in their study, career and life.

Like teacher VN3, teacher E2 kept suggesting using task-based and learner-centred method (Roger, 1951; Dornyei and Gajdatsy, 1989) to increasing the autonomy and self-actualization of students. This method is described through different tasks and activities such as games or presentations that can also develop students’ confidence. Pair works and group works are emphasized in the process to enhance the commitment and responsibility of students in the task they are assigned.

Teachers in Vietnam	Teachers in the United Kingdom
Applying games Doing presentation Pair work and group work Giving awards for working hard and good	Teachers should be more friendly Focus on task based learning/students centered methods Using Meta-cognition Rewards at the end

students Giving clearer instructions Task based learning	Give students more opportunities to see the value of English by showing videos, picture. Challenge the culture Give students chances to choose topics or plans on their own Make tasks challenging
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Table 2: Recommendation of teachers in Vietnam and English on how to motivate students to learn English

Make the learning tasks stimulating

A model being used regularly by an experienced teacher interviewee, teacher E3, is considered as an effective method for Vietnamese teachers to take as an example. The model is divided in three stages. Certainly, when using the model teachers need to make sure that they are very good at combining the understanding of psychological methods and the pedagogical skills to apply in activities they create to get students involved in the lessons. In the first place, having students own their work can help them with obtaining self-esteem and independence. Letting students learn how to face the challenge by themselves is the key point of the first stage.

By doing more presentations after the teamwork's activities, students can improve their confident and self-actualization. Finally, discussions enhance the ability of analyzing and interpreting of students. During the process, the feeling of losing face in front of the class may a big influence. Thus, teachers need to advice and guide them how to get over that feeling to reach to a higher objective that any students want to have: the needs of self-actualization (Maslow, 1987). Rewards after the lessons were also emphasized by teacher Julia to stimulate the competitiveness among students and therefore make them to engage with the lessons in a long term.

Motivation in language learning has now been turning to phase three which take into account the new approaches for motivational changes (Dornyei, 2009). And in fact, it needs more studies and innovations to continuously update. Thus, doing research on motivation for not only language learning but also for education will be always a seminar topic.

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