

WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MOTIVATION AND DEMOTIVATION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING?

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Outline of the presentation

1. What is motivation and demotivation?
2. Overview of the theories of “motivation”
3. Examples of motivation/demotivation research
4. Discussion on future directions in motivation/demotivation research
5. Q & A

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This talk will be based on a book chapter I wrote in *Language Learning Motivation in Japan* (Kikuchi, 2013) and a book recently published (Kikuchi, 2015)

Kikuchi, K. (2015). *Demotivation in SLA: Insights from Japan*. Multilingual Matters. Bristol: UK.

Kikuchi, K. (2013). Demotivators in Japanese EFL context. In *Language Learning Motivation in Japan* (M. Apple, D. Da Silva, and T Fellner, Eds). Multilingual Matters. Bristol: UK.



Let's think about the conceptual issue. –What is this, do you think?–

- willingness to do something, or something that causes such willingness ([Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary](#))
- the act or an instance of motivating
- desire to do; interest or drive
- incentive or inducement
- (psychology) the process that arouses, sustains and regulates human and animal behavior ([Collins English Dictionary](#))

What does “motivation” mean?

- The choice of a particular action
- The persistence with it
- The effort expended on it.

So, we should research

- Why people decide to do something
- How long they are willing to sustain the activity
- How hard they are going to pursue it.

(Dornyei and Ushioda, 2011)

History of motivation research

- **The social-psychological period** (1959–1990), characterized by the work of Robert Gardner and his associates in Canada
- **The cognitive-situated period** (during the 1990s), characterized by work drawing on cognitive theories in educational psychology
- **The process-oriented period** (turn of the century), characterized by a focus on motivational change
- **The socio-dynamic period** (current), characterized by a concern with dynamic systems and contextual interactions.

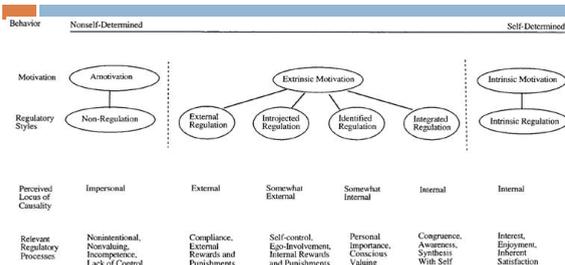
(Dornyei and Ushioda, 2011)

Theories of motivation in psychology

- Expectancy-value theory
 - Expectancy of success, value attached to success.
 - Achievement motivation theory
 - Need for achievement, incentive values, fear of failure
 - Self-efficacy theory
 - Perceived sense of efficacy
 - Self-worth theory
 - Perceived sense of personal value and worth
- (Dornyei, 2001, p. 10-11)

- Attribution theory
 - ▣ Causal attributions to past successes and failures
 - Self-determination theory
 - ▣ Human motives can be placed on a continuum between intrinsic and extrinsic forms of motivation
- (Dornyei, 2001, p. 10-11)

More about Self-determination theory...



Dörnyei, Z. (2005)'s Self System

- **Ideal L2self** (i.e., L2 specific facet of one's ideal self)
- **Ought-to L2self** (i.e., the attributes that learners believe they ought to possess in order to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes)
- **L2 experience** (i.e., situated motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience)

Example of the questionnaire constructs used...
from Taguchi, T., Magid, M. & Papi, M. (2009)

The L2 Motivational Self System: A Comparative Study 75

Table 4.3 Composites of attitudinal/motivational variables with Cronbach Alpha coefficients in Japan, China and Iran

Factor name	Japan		China		Iran	
	Item no.	α	Item no.	α	Item no.	α
Criterion measures	5, 17, 28, 41	0.83	3, 13, 23, 31, 37, 45	0.75	8, 16, 24, 32, 40, 50	0.79
Ideal L2 self	8, 20, 33, 58, 66	0.89	6, 14, 29, 38, 46	0.83	9, 17, 25, 33, 41, 51	0.79
Ought-to L2 self	13, 25, 38, 62	0.76	5, 12, 19, 27, 36, 42, 49	0.78	1, 10, 18, 26, 34, 43	0.75
Family influence	2, 14, 29, 40	0.83	2, 11, 21, 30, 40	0.70	2, 11, 19, 27, 35, 44	0.69
Instrumentality – promotion	6, 18, 31, 35, 64	0.82	4, 10, 16, 22, 28, 35, 41, 48	0.78	3, 12, 20, 28, 37, 45	0.67
Instrumentality – prevention	10, 23, 36, 60, 67	0.73	7, 18, 25, 33, 43	0.84	4, 13, 29, 36, 42, 48, 53	0.81
Attitudes to learning English	12, 24, 37, 61	0.90	50, 55, 60, 65	0.81	54, 59, 63, 67, 71, 75	0.82
Cultural interest	43, 46, 49, 52	0.77	83, 88, 63	0.67	57, 61, 65, 74	0.76
Attitudes to L2 community	44, 47, 50, 53	0.86	54, 59, 64, 67	0.76	58, 62, 66, 70	0.76
Integrity/ness	45, 48, 51	0.64	82, 57, 62	0.63	56, 69, 73	0.56

Eight constructs in the questionnaire

- **Criterion Measures (Mot)** : the learners' intended efforts towards learning English
- **Ideal L2 Self (Ids)** : an L2-specific facet of one's ideal self
- **Ought to L2 Self (Ots)** : the attributes that one believes one ought to possess (i.e., various duties, obligations, or responsibilities) in order to avoid possible negative outcomes
- **Attitudes to Learning English (AttL)** : situation-specific motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience

- **Instrumentality-Promotion (InPrm)** : the regulation of personal goals to become successful, such as attaining high proficiency in English in order to make more money or find a better job
- **Instrumentality-Prevention (InPrv)** : the regulation of duties and obligations, such as studying English in order to pass an examination
- **Cultural Interest (CI)** : the learner's interest in the cultural products of the L2 culture, such as TV, magazines, music and movies
- **Attitudes to L2 Community (AttC)** : learner's attitudes towards the community of the target language

The complexity of student motivation...

- A theory of student motivation... will have to include many concepts and their interrelationships. Any theory based on a single concept, whether that concept is reinforcement, self-worth, optimal motivation, or something else, will be insufficient to deal with the complexity of class activities.
(Weiner, 1984, p. 18)

What is motivation?...
(Lamb, 2016)

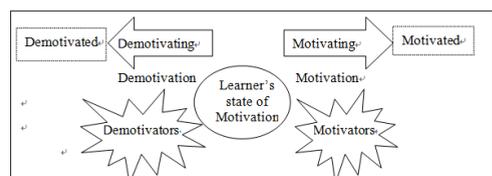
- ...motives interpreted as attractors do not necessarily have a linear relationship with ongoing action. Their pull or push is interfered with by a multitude of other pulls and pushes...
(Dornyei, 2009, p. 210-211)
- ...the language learner, unlike the researcher, seems unlikely to perceive the motivation for language learning to be wholly independent of the motivation (or lack of motivation) for other areas of learning.
(Ushioda, 1998, p. 83)

- it is important to recognize that it is also a social construction; that is, we come to **strive for certain things in life as a result of our socialization in a particular community** or society, and the extent to which we can act on our desires **is also constrained by our social environment** (p.324).

Back to 90's...
(Crookes & Schmidt, 1991)

- Current SL discussion on this topic lacks validity in that it is **not well-grounded** in the real world domain of the SL classroom, **nor is it well connected to other related educational research** (p.470).
- Consequently, the term motivation has been used as **"a general cover term-a dustbin-to include a number of possibly distinct concepts, each of which may have different origins and different effects and require different classroom treatment"**
(McDonough, 1981, p. 143).

Conceptualization of motivators/demotivators (Kikuchi, 2015)



Vallerland (1997)'s model of three levels of motivation

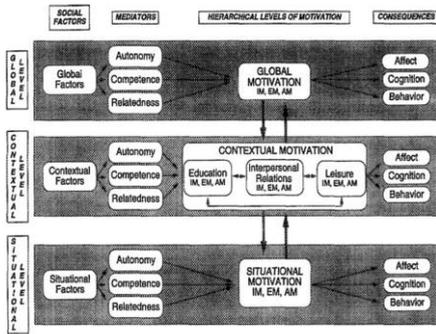


Figure 1. The Hierarchical Model. Note: IM = Intrinsic Motivation; EM = Extrinsic Motivation; AM = Amotivation

What do people say about demotivation?

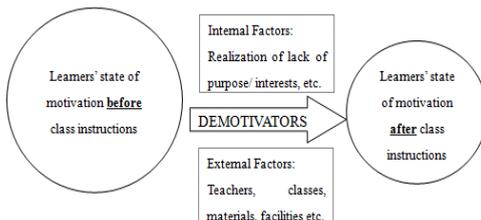
- Most companies have it all wrong. They don't have to motivate their employees. They have to stop demotivating them (Sirota, Mischkind, and Melzer, 2006).
- Motivation is perceived by students as personally-owned state while demotivation is perceived as a teacher-owned problem (Christophel and Gorham, 1995)
- the flip side of motivation (Keblawi, 2005).
- the "dark side" of motivation. (Dörnyei, 2001).

What is demotivation?

- Dörnyei (2001)
 - "Classroom practitioners can easily think of a variety of events that can have demotivating effects on the students, for example public humiliation, devastating test results, or conflicts with peers. If we think about it, 'demotivation' is not at all infrequent in language classes and the number of demotivated L2 learners is relatively high." (p. 141)

- Dörnyei (2001)
 - Definition of demotivation
 - "specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioral intention or an ongoing action" (p. 143).
 - Some studies expanded this definition and **demotivators** including both internal and external forces have been explored.
 - In today's presentation, I will try to focus mainly on demotivators observable in the classroom settings.

Focus of studies on demotivation so far...

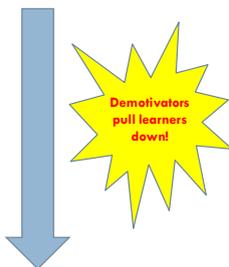


Amotivation vs. Demotivation

- Amotivation is at work when individuals display a relative absence of motivation. In such instances, individuals do not perceive a contingency between their behaviors and outcomes, so they do not act with the intention to attain an outcome... **They begin to feel helpless and may start to question the usefulness of engaging in the activity in the first place** (Vallerand & Ratelle, 2002, p. 43).

What is the relationship with other factors of Individual Difference?

- Motivation
 - Personality
 - Language aptitude
 - Learning and cognitive styles
 - Language learning strategies
 - Other learner characteristics
 - Anxiety
 - Creativity
 - Willingness to communicate
 - Self-esteem
 - Learner beliefs
- (Dörnyei, 2005)



Previous Studies (Dörnyei, 1998, cited in Dörnyei, 2001)

- Based on interviews with 50 secondary school students, he identified following as demotivators, the reason to get demotivated.
 1. Teachers' personalities, commitments, competence, teaching methods.
 2. Inadequate school facilities (very big group, not the right level or frequent change of teachers).
 3. Reduced self-confidence due to their experience of failure or success.
 4. Negative attitude toward the foreign language studied.
 5. Compulsory nature of the foreign language study.
 6. Interference of another foreign language that pupils are studying.
 7. Negative attitude toward the community of the foreign language spoken.
 8. Attitudes of group members.
 9. Course books used in class.

Previous Studies

- Kikuchi (2009)
 - 47 university students
 - open-ended questionnaires
 - reflection on high school days
- Kikuchi and Sakai (2009)
 - 112 university students
 - a 35-item questionnaire with a 5-point scale
- Sakai and Kikuchi (2009)
 - 676 high school students
 - a 35-item questionnaire with a 5-point scale

Common demotivation factors

- Sakai and Kikuchi(2009)
 - F1: *Learning Contents and Materials*,
 - F2: *Teachers' Competence and Teaching Styles*
 - F3: *Inadequate School Facilities [Classroom Environment]*
 - F4: *Lack of Intrinsic Motivation*
 - F5: *Test Scores [Experience of Inferiority]*
- Kikuchi and Sakai (2009)
 - F1: *Course Books*
 - F2: *Inadequate School Facilities*
 - F3: *Test Scores*
 - F4: *Non-Communicative Methods*
 - F5: *Teachers' Competence and Teaching Styles*
- Both studies used a principal axis factor analysis using the direct oblimin rotation.

Six Constructs Identified in literature

- **Teachers:** Teachers' attitude, teaching competence, language proficiency, personality, and teaching style
- **Characteristics of classes:** Course contents and pace, focus on difficult grammar or vocabulary, monotonous and boring lessons, a focus on university entrance exams and the memorization of the language
- **Experiences of failure:** Disappointment due to test scores, lack of acceptance by teachers and others, and feeling unable to memorize vocabulary and idioms.
- **Class environment:** Attitude of classmates, compulsory nature of English study, friends' attitudes, inactive classes, inappropriate level of the lessons, and inadequate use of school facilities such as not using audio-visual materials
- **Class materials:** Not suitable or uninteresting materials (e.g., too many reference books and/or handouts)
- **Lack of interest:** Sense of English used at schools is not practical and not necessary. Little admiration toward English speaking people

Another study, Sakai and Kikuchi (included in Kikuchi, 2015)

- In the part of the questionnaire about their motivation/demotivation in their high school time, we asked questions about their changes of motivation in their high school
- 5 point likert scale (JHS1 Spr. -Uni1 Spr.)
 - 77 college students attending classes for English teacher certificates in a public University in Shinshu area participated.

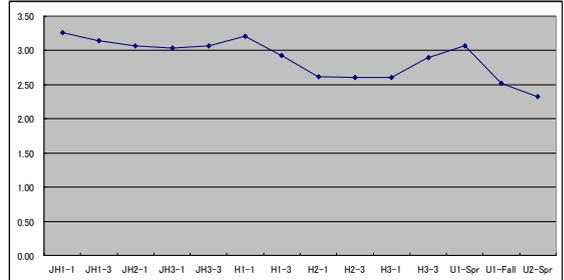
CLT in English language Teaching in Japan

- In 2013, the new curriculum started in high schools. For instance, the name of the main courses in senior high schools became "Communication English" at the senior high school (SHS) level.

Goals of the "new" curriculum at SHS level, then,

- To develop students' communication abilities such as accurately understanding and appropriately conveying information, ideas, etc., deepening their understanding of language and culture, and fostering a positive attitude toward communication through foreign languages.

Tentative Result (Average of 77 students' response to 5point likert scale)



Some answers from students: What demotivated them?

Out of 549 input from high school students, we found

- Studying about grammar (N= 51; 9%)
- Test score (N= 50; 9%)
- Vocabulary (N= 35; 6%)
- Test related (e.g., Many quizzes) (N= 29; 5%)
- Memorization related (e.g., Cannot memorize) (N= 28; 5%)
- Homework related (e.g., Many assignments) (N= 25; 5%)
- Teacher explanation (N= 24; 5%)
- Teaching style (e.g., the way they teach) (N= 21; 4%)
- Amount of materials to study (N= 21; 4%)
- Nothing particularly (N= 16; 3%)

Some answers from students: What demotivated them?

- When I couldn't get good results because I couldn't memorize vocabulary easily.
- When I can't get a good score on tests. I start to feel that I'm not talented.
- The experience that I didn't understand English sentences.
- I started to have a hard time in English study once I got into high school. I felt a big change from lessons focusing on communicating in English in junior high schools to lessons focusing on grammar in senior high schools, which was boring.
- -When I feel tired. When my room is dirty.

Some answers from students: What demotivated them?

- When there were many assignments, the teacher was too scary.
- I started not to care about learning because there was a lot to memorize (vocabulary, idioms, sentences) for mid-term/final exams.
- I became demotivated when the teacher's pronunciation was very much like reading katakana.
- Since the teacher was just keeping up the pace of the lesson by himself.
- Teacher's lack of motivation toward teaching classes.

Some answers from students: What motivated them?

Out of 476 input from high school students, we found

- Test result (N= 103; 21%)
- Experience with English-speaking people (N= 66; 13%)
- Teachers (N= 32; 7%)
- Finding future goals (N= 28; 6%)
- Solved difficult questions (N= 25; 5%)

Look at one example interview data closely... (1)

R: ... Well, I feel like you actually have motivation since you review vocabulary outside of class.

A: I will do this because I may not be able to understand the next class.

So, do you have motivation?

A: Do I have motivation?

B: I probably cannot study like you...

A: Well, there is no meaning for taking classes if you don't understand. Well, I don't know if I have motivation, but I should understand the class and move on to the next class.

There are learners like her who look up words in dictionaries because it's their habits. She thinks she is not motivated...

Do you think she is motivated?

Look at the interview data again(2)

B: I feel like I'm not motivated to do anything right now.

R: What do you mean by that?

B: *Right now, I don't have anything I'm doing with motivation. When I was in high school, I had motivation every day to do club activities and such. I practiced everyday and I think I was motivated. Even though I didn't have motivation, I felt that everybody else had their motivation. However, I cannot think of anything that I'm doing with motivation off the top of my head.*

A: Me neither.

R: Were you doing something with some amount of motivation?

A: Well, my grades were very good when I was a junior high school student. I was at the second place with my grades in my year and I wanted to keep up with it so that I didn't get worse grades. I was motivated. *But, right now, hmm, I don't have motivation for anything in particular. I really like being lazy and I feel like I don't have any particular motivation.*

B: If we don't have motivation, we cannot understand what it is.

A: *I don't understand what motivation is. It's so abstract.*

Ambivalence in the field of SLA...

□ ...[The] SLA field should consider the notion that the language learner frequently is of two minds, **one that urges moving forward and the other disposed to hold back**. These tendencies can be identified in various social, motivational, affective and physiological processes and for that reason, ambivalence appears to be inherent in the language learning process. (MacIntyre, MacKinnon, & Clément, 2009, p. 3)

□ ...learners **'invest' in the target language at particular times and in particular settings**, because they believe they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will, in turn, increase the value of their cultural capital... investment and identity together signal the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language and their **sometimes ambivalent desire to learn and practice it** (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 420).

Discussing the importance of *socializing* rather than *controlling* students' motivation...

- ...socializing students' motivation entails orchestrating the social learning environment in ways that invite interaction, participation and involvement, and thus motivation from within. This is qualitatively different from using progressive attempts to control and regulate students' behavior from the outside (Ushioda, 2012, p.80-81).

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To sum up...

- The conceptualization of motivation and demotivation
- Maybe, learners you are facing to have ambivalent desire to learn and practice the target language.
- What can teachers do is limited, but hope that what I have discussed today give you some sense of what learners may be going through.

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