THE ROLE OF MOTIVATION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract: This article examines the role of motivation in foreign language learning as one of the most important factors of successful language acquisition. It analyzes the main types of motivation: intrinsic, extrinsic, integrative, and instrumental. Special attention is given to the factors influencing learners' motivation, such as the teacher's role, learning environment, teaching methods, personal goals, and social support. The article also discusses the problems caused by low motivation and suggests effective ways to increase it. It is concluded that motivation is an essential condition for successful language learning and requires continuous support in the educational process.

Keywords: *motivation, language learning, foreign language, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, teaching, students, language competence.*

Motivation is considered one of the most significant factors influencing success in language learning. While intelligence, teaching methods, and learning environment are important, motivation often determines how much effort learners invest in acquiring a new language. It affects the learner's willingness to practice, overcome difficulties, and continue learning over a long period of time. Researchers in the field of psychology and education have widely studied motivation because it directly influences academic achievement, especially in second and foreign language acquisition. Language learning is a complex process that requires continuous practice in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Unlike some subjects that rely mainly on memorization, language learning demands regular communication and active participation.[1] Therefore, students who are motivated usually progress faster and achieve better results than those who study only because it is required. Motivation can inspire learners to use the language outside the classroom, communicate confidently, and develop independence in learning. This article examines the role of motivation in language learning, types of motivation, factors affecting learner motivation, challenges connected with low motivation, and effective strategies teachers can use to increase students' interest and success. Motivation can be defined as the internal desire or external encouragement that drives a person to act in order to achieve a goal. In education, motivation explains why students begin learning, how long they continue, and how much effort they make during the process. In language learning, motivation is especially important because progress usually takes time. Students must remember vocabulary, understand grammar, improve pronunciation, and practice communication skills regularly. Without motivation, many learners lose interest when they face difficulties. According to educational psychology, motivation influences: attention during lessons; persistence in completing tasks; confidence in communication; willingness to practice independently; long-term achievement. Students with strong motivation often develop positive attitudes toward the target language and culture. They are more likely to take risks, speak without fear of mistakes, and continue learning even after formal education ends. Researchers usually divide motivation into two main categories: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic motivation comes from personal interest or enjoyment. Learners study a language because they like it, enjoy discovering new cultures, or feel satisfaction from improvement. For

example, a student may learn English because they enjoy watching films in the original language or communicating with people from other countries. Intrinsically motivated learners often continue learning independently because the process itself is rewarding.

Extrinsic motivation comes from outside rewards or pressures. Students may study a language to pass exams, get a good job, receive praise, or meet school requirements. For example, many students learn English because it is necessary for university admission or career opportunities. Although extrinsic motivation can be effective, it may become weaker after the reward disappears. Another important classification was introduced in second language research: Integrative motivation – the desire to communicate with members of another culture and become part of that community. Instrumental motivation – learning a language for practical goals such as employment, travel, or education. Both types can strongly support language learning depending on the learner's personal goals. Motivation is not fixed.[2] It can increase or decrease depending on many personal and environmental factors. Teachers greatly influence student motivation. Supportive, enthusiastic, and well-prepared teachers create a positive classroom atmosphere. When teachers encourage participation, respect mistakes as part of learning, and provide useful feedback, students feel more confident. A comfortable and friendly classroom motivates students to participate actively. If learners feel fear, embarrassment, or constant criticism, motivation decreases. Interactive methods such as games, discussions, role plays, projects, and technology-based activities make lessons more engaging. Repetitive and passive methods may reduce interest. Students with clear goals usually remain motivated longer. For example, learning English for travel, study abroad, or future employment gives purpose to effort. Parents, friends, and society can encourage language learning by valuing education and supporting learner progress. Low motivation creates many difficulties in language learning. [3] Unmotivated students often: avoid speaking activities; do not complete homework; lose concentration in class; feel anxious about mistakes; stop learning after short periods. As a result, their vocabulary remains limited, communication skills develop slowly, and confidence decreases. Sometimes students believe they are not capable, while the real problem is lack of motivation rather than lack of ability. Teachers and learners can use several strategies to improve motivation. Large goals can seem difficult, but small goals such as learning ten new words weekly or speaking for five minutes daily help students feel progress. Constructive praise increases confidence. Students who notice improvement become more willing to continue. Songs, films, podcasts, news articles, and social media content show practical value of language learning and make lessons interesting. When students choose topics, materials, or learning methods, they feel responsible for their progress. Independent learning often strengthens intrinsic motivation. Tasks should be challenging but possible. Frequent failure reduces motivation, while successful experiences build confidence. Technology has become a powerful motivational tool in language learning. [4] Mobile applications, online courses, videos, games, and communication platforms allow students to practice anytime. Many learners feel more motivated when using digital tools because learning becomes flexible, interactive, and personalized. For example, language learning apps reward progress through levels and achievements. Video platforms provide authentic pronunciation models. Social networks allow real communication with native speakers. However, technology should support learning goals rather than distract learners.

Motivation plays a central role in language learning because it influences effort, persistence, confidence, and achievement. Motivated learners are more likely to practice regularly, overcome difficulties, and reach long-term success. Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be effective,

while integrative and instrumental motives also shape learner behavior. [5] Teachers, families, and educational institutions should recognize that successful language learning depends not only on textbooks and grammar rules, but also on emotional and psychological factors. By creating supportive environments, using engaging methods, setting realistic goals, and encouraging learner independence, motivation can be strengthened significantly. In conclusion, motivation is not simply an additional factor in language learning—it is one of the foundations of success.

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