

Motivation in Chinese Children's English Teaching

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Received 5 April 2016; accepted 23 May 2016; published 26 May 2016

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Abstract

In China, the majority of children would not learn to read or speak without promoting from adults. Those teachers who teach a bewildered group of little ones will have to know the solution of prompting the young. Teachers must lay great emphasis on motivation and application of motivation theories in children English teaching. There are some theories that can be used by the teachers. They are drive and need theories, cognitive theories, instinct theories. Motivation theories can be used in many aspects of teaching.

Keywords

Motivation, Chinese Children, English Teaching, Theories

1. Introduction

With the development and depth of China's reform and open policy, it is more necessary to cultivate the young's will to acquire many varied cognitive as well as physical skills. These skills necessarily include second language acquisition—English learning. In fact schools are created as artificial arrangements in which we require our children to carry out all kinds of activities which would not occur to them spontaneously in their young lives. Most Chinese parents realize the importance of English learning and force their children to learn however young they are.

A study of motivation, therefore, is crucial for a teacher. Without the means of encouraging the children learning, understand their “appetites”, in the widest sense of the world and nature, being sensitive to their interests, the teachers' would be impossible.

2. Motivation Theories

Theorists in the study of motivation generally concerned themselves with four basic questions representing

different states in the processes of motivated behavior. They are: what initiate action, what direction does this action take and why, how “strong “is the action and why does action terminate? By action is meant no only obvious movement, but also mental action [1].

3. Motivation of Learning English

3.1. Motivation of Learning Foreign Language

R. Garden (1985) introduces four components in the Motivation of learning foreign language: purpose, diligence, desire and attitude. Working hard does not mean having strong motivation. Similarly, having desire or correct attitude to study does not necessarily reflect motivation. Only combining desire to success and correct attitude and hard working together can students have a real motivation [2].

R. Gardner and W. Lambert postulated two kinds of MLFL. One is integrative motions, with which people want to become a member of this target language speaking community [2]. So they should not only learn the language, but receive their culture style. The other is instrumental motivation. People of such motivation of learning English have their actual purpose, such as find a better profession or improve their social status. Gardner also stated that students’ attitude to target language can influence their study effect [3]. And if students with integrative motivation can get positive support from their parents, they are sure to make progress.

3.2. Motivation Applied in Practical Education

It would be safe to say that all theorists in the field of learning either explicitly or by implicitly argue that a motivated creature is more likely to learn than one which is not. Children need to satisfy their desire to explore and manipulate their surroundings; they need the approval of others; they pursue success. Incentive in the form of rewards, immediate knowledge of satisfying results, cooperate and self-competition. In practical teaching, most language teachers will agree that the motivation of the students is one of the most important factors influencing their success or failure of the teaching. Therefore it is important for teachers to find out how to effectively stimulate students in English learning and hoe to make up the language instruction.

3.3. Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation

In order to adapt English and the classroom setting to appeal to children, a teacher relies on two sources of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic. But there is no clear distinction between these two motivations. For instance, reward in school such as praise, grades, and recognition are extrinsic motivation or incentives; Comparatively, extrinsic motivation is related to far-reaching success while intrinsic one is linked with short-term achievement [4].

3.3.1. Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation is when I am motivated by external factors, as opposed to the internal drivers of intrinsic motivation [4]. Extrinsic motivation drives me to do things for tangible rewards or pressures, rather than for the fun of it.

Most young learners have no stationary purpose in English learning and they are changeable in character, which makes incentives important in the way to stimulate them to proceed their learning. During the process of applying extrinsic motivation, there are two points that teachers must notice. Firstly, teachers have to apply immediate rewards. No longer the time between completing work and being told the verdict, particularly if it is favorable, there is of the results having a motivational impact on children. Secondly, the application of reward should be vary according to person and situation.

As for the second point, I made an experiment in a spare-time English class in which three hundred primary school students are learning Cambridge English for Young Learners. And I chose thirty students from them. They are divided into three groups: a) a praised group who are complimented on the previous week’s work; b) a reproved group receiving criticism for poor work; c) a neglected group given no special motivation. They are asked to recite 50 words every week for two months (Tables 1-3).

The conclusion is that, while the praised group is the worst in the first week, they outstripped all the others in subsequent performance. The reproved group in the shouting term, but continued harassing tended to have a deleterious influence.

Table 1. Survey on praised group.

Number	Time 1	Time 2	Time 3	Time 4	Time 5	Time 6	Time 7	Time 8
1	95	92	92	100	88	97	98	92
2	69	71	94	84	80	76	84	88
3	52	88	89	96	78	96	92	84
4	33	72	54	78	68	78	68	80
5	51	55	90	88	86	75	100	90
6	48	46	64	79	74	92	88	87
7	65	66	78	74	79	80	84	87
8	70	75	71	66	78	86	88	85
9	56	60	66	61	65	63	73	68
10	88	83	85	93	95	96	89	97
Means	62.7	70.8	78.3	80.9	79.1	83.9	86.4	85.8

Table 2. Survey on reproved group.

Number	Time 1	Time 2	Time 3	Time 4	Time 5	Time 6	Time 7	Time 8
1	78	100	81	90	76	88	96	87
2	70	100	83	88	84	92	70	78
3	94	64	62	78	92	82	98	90
4	35	67	65	45	70	72	68	70
5	55	67	58	66	61	72	60	75
6	65	66	78	60	73	79	70	77
7	76	70	78	68	80	79	90	84
8	86	88	75	83	75	79	85	88
9	65	76	86	64	74	78	80	85
10	45	65	66	59	64	70	78	68
Means	66.9	76.3	76.3	70.1	74.9	79.1	78.5	80.8

Table 3. Survey on neglected group.

Number	Time 1	Time 2	Time 3	Time 4	Time 5	Time 6	Time 7	Time 8
1	60	85	50	75	58	36	68	77
2	65	87	88	96	86	92	76	76
3	73	100	83	88	95	70	100	92
4	94	100	98	97	98	92	88	94
5	94	100	86	29	64	78	92	82
6	96	82	84	94	76	84	82	66
7	48	66	56	68	77	74	66	56
8	56	18	68	31	51	68	88	70
9	96	96	46	82	62	74	70	71
10	61	55	69	70	77	75	66	78
Means	74.3	78.9	72.8	73	74.4	74.3	79.6	76.2

3.3.2. Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is when I am motivated by internal factors, as opposed to the external drivers of extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation drives me to do things just for the fun of it, or because I believe it is a good or right thing to do [5].

Intrinsic motivation is more important than extrinsic motivation. Illustrate of children' motivation are desire for self-esteem, the need to satisfy curiosity, the need for approval and social need. Play is regarded as manifestation of the intrinsic motivation. The use of play in education has its origins in the belief that all children want to play and that learning will occur at the same time, as a bonus in a case [6]. Well-chosen games are invaluable as they give students a break and at the same time allow students to practice language skills. Games are highly motivating since they are amusing and at the same time challenging. Furthermore they employ meaningful and useful language in real contexts. They can also encourage and increase cooperation. However, long periods of unstructured practice are wasteful and unnecessary. As most students and teachers know, learning has its enjoyment, but it also involves hard work.

On the whole, teachers should not concentrate on passing knowledge but try to strength students' motivation:

- a) To educate purposefully. Should not only definitely know syllabus and set their study plan.
- b) To summarize important points before a class is over and review regularly.
- c) Frequent encouragement. Students often get feedback of summarize main points before a class is over and review regularly.
- d) To hold adequate contents among classes, groups and individuals respectively.
- e) To teach inspirational and interesting materials in various kinds of class organization with games and modern multi-media equipment.
- f) To attribute medium quantity and difficulty of homework.
- g) Suitable tests and scores standards.
- h) To hold more activities outside of class, using target language to communicate.
- i) To get know culture of target language speaking country.

4. Conclusion

Children with vitality have an urge to satisfied many kinds of human needs. Armed with this knowledge, teachers are able to make the formal setting of school into an environment in which children can learn efficiently. Therefore, the correct application of motivation is so vital for teachers as it can help teacher to realize educational objects. As long as they find interest in study, an opportunity to strengthen their confidence and a chance of self-realization, students will devote themselves in learning English. Knowing childhood motives is one of the essentials of teaching skill. When children are pursuing purposeful activities in class because they feel the need and want to learn, their teacher is clearly well on the way to an understanding of their motives.

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