

HOW GROUP DISCUSSION AND CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE INCREASE
STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN ENGLISH LITERATURE SUBJECTS: A CASE STUDY AT
4TH SEMESTER STUDENTS OF STIKUBANK UNIVERSITY IN 2017/2018 ACADEMIC
YEAR

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Abstract

Foreign language teachers need to motivate their students to learn English. Literature can be a good means to achieve motivation in literature classes. There has recently been a revival of interest in literature as a practical, motivating and an effective resource available for language learning. Therefore, we can assume that literature and authentic literary materials, especially short stories can enhance students' motivations. This study focuses on how students' motivation can be lifted through the use of group discussion as class activities and contemporary literature as learning material. This study is a descriptive qualitative which used questionnaire as main instrument to find out how college students rate English Literature Course and how students can be motivated with certain group activities with certain learning material. The result of this study shows that students rated 82 out of 100 for English Literature Course using group discussion as class activity and contemporary literature as learning material. From this study, there is an obvious implication that college students may enjoy learning English Literature through the utilization of contemporary literature and group discussion. This study found that instead of reading short extracts presented in course books, or any classical short stories, contemporary literature were more suitable complete texts for students to become fluent and competent language users. By learning English through literature, the students' knowledge and competence are enhanced not only through formal English lessons, but rather through informal cognitive ways, in where the students are invited to examine and analyze how human's life are portrayed through vocabularies, grammatical structures, and sociocultural dimensions of language.

INTRODUCTION

Foreign language teachers need to motivate their students to learn English. Literature can be a good means to achieve motivation in ELT classes. There has recently been a revival of interest in literature as a practical, motivating and an effective resource available for language learning.

Therefore, we can assume that literature and authentic literary materials, especially short stories can enhance motivation of ELT students. Students' motivation in ELT relates closely to second language acquisition. In second language acquisition, many scholars argue that in the same class setting, some students progress rapidly while others struggle along making very slow progress. Researches show that different kinds of factors from various aspects influence the process of second language acquisition and make it very complex.

In second language acquisition research, there is a tendency to move from teacher-dominated instruction to individual learner-oriented process, because learner is the key player in second language acquisition. According to the schema provided above, I would argue that the learner factors are more important than others explaining individual difference in postgraduates' English achievements. Without any doubt, postgraduates in China are in the similar social, economic, cultural and linguistic background. School resources, teaching methods and assessment measurements may determine the differences of their group English level. Besides, most families of postgraduates are almost at the same living condition and most postgraduates themselves live on campus. The influence from family is quite minimal. Among all the learner factors, unmodifiable factors play an important role, but they are something given and people can not alter. It is the modifiable factors that are significant to be explored, because both learners and instructors can adopt themselves to them if they know why and how to do it. It is true that learner's learning purposes, belief and effort are part of learner's motivation (Ellis:509), so this paper considers motivation and teaching strategy, including teaching materials, as two key factors to account for the differences of students' English learning achievement.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

Recently, there has been a remarkable revival of interest in literature as one of the most motivating resources for language learning (Duff & Maley, 2007). In addition, the use of literature in ELT classrooms has attracted a great deal of interest among EFL teachers since the 1980s (Clandfield & Foord, 2006). Because foreign language teachers must find new ways to motivate their students during lessons and because motivation is one of the most important aspects of the learning process, the use of literature in classes might be a good way to increase student motivation. Several studies addressed this issue focusing on motivating EFL students with the use of literature

(Brumfit & Carter, 1991; Collie & Slater, 1990; Benton & Fox, 1985). In teaching English literature in ELT class, it is undeniable that motivation is a very important factor. This paper aims to elaborate how certain class activity and certain literature material can enhance students' motivation in English literature subject, especially UNISBANK 4th semester students. Therefore the questions can be formulated as (a) how group discussion influence UNISBANK 4th semester students' motivation as activity in ELT class? And (b) how contemporary literature influence UNISBANK 4th semester students' motivation as material in ELT class?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Definition of Motivation

Gardener defines motivation as the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language. He argues that motivation refers to the directed effort individual learners make to learn the language, the effects of learners' orientation are mediated by their motivation----that is, whereas, orientation and second language learning are indirectly related; motivation and achievement are directly related.

However, Ellis (1994:523-525) claims that strength of motivation serves as a power of predictor of second language achievement, but may itself be the result of previous learning experience. He offers four hypotheses to characterize a non-theoretical view of motivation. First, motivation derives from an inherent interest in the learning task the learner is asked to perform. Second, learners who do well will persevere; those who do not do well will be discouraged and try less hard. Third, the learner brings to the learning situation a certain quantity of motivation as a given. And fourth, external influences and incentives will affect the strength of the learner's motivation. It is likely that the relationship between motivation and achievement is an interactive one.

Gardner and Lambert mentioned two types of motivation, integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. A learner is said to be integratively motivated when the learner wishes to identify with another ethnolinguistic group. By way of contrast to integrative one, Gardner and Lambert introduced the concept of instrumental motivation, in which the learner is motivated to learn a second language for utilitarian purposes, such as furthering a career, improving social status or meeting an educational requirement.

The discussion above indicates that students have different kinds of motivation although they are in the same class. If a teacher does not know the origin of his students' motivation, or, if a teacher does not know how to guide his students' motivation to a successful learning achievement, how can he or she help them in their English study? Therefore, it is important for teachers to positively inspire their students' motivation through short-term and long-term measures, such as establishing the aims of course, and the objectives within it, and making the aims and goals of the course clear well in advance and drawing the attention of the students to the achievement of them. Through long-term and short-term measures, teachers can stimulate the students' desire to think and attract them to complete their learning task, so as to encourage the students to be interested in both the language and the culture not only in classroom, but also in the whole process of their English learning. In other words, teachers can use different kinds of measures to positively affect not only the students' instrumental motivation, but also their integrative motivation, thus leading them to the path of successful English acquisition.

2.2 Involved Factors in Students' Motivation

Learning process is an emotional process. It is affected by different emotional factors. The teacher and his students engage in various emotional activities in it and varied fruits of emotion are yielded. What is emotion? Its implication is wide-ranging and rather implicit. It often serves as a general definition of a series of psychological phenomena, such as feeling, inner experience, need, desire, value pursuit, etc.

Varied emotional factors work in the course of teaching and play an important role in effectiveness of learner and teacher' classroom activities. The emotional factor in the teaching environment that affects the learning mainly is the teacher's characteristic of personality. An enthusiastic and considerate teacher can offer satisfaction to the learner's extra needs. This helps strengthen the learner's study motivation. On the other hand, a teacher's attitude towards the learner has major influence on the learner's learning. As regards emotional cramming, a teacher's physically and mentally pouring into his teaching, and being filled with affection, will help arouse the learning enthusiasm of the learners. However, if the teacher only works as a "teaching craftsman" and put no emotion into teaching, the classroom will become static to lessen the learning enthusiasm of the learners. For this reason, the teacher must place emphasis on emotional interaction with the learner.

After emphasizing emotional interaction, the status and function of the subject among the teacher and the learner in English learning is a matter of overall importance, it is also the starting point and foothold where we make a change in teaching ideology. In the process of teaching there are two subjects: the teacher and the learner, and two forms of activities: teaching and learning, still one common object—the English language. When the subject is the learner, the object as cognition is the English language, the symbolic system and its function. When the subject is the teacher, the English language as the object of cognition is not the symbolic system but an abstract law related to the language that is the law of how to learn the language.

Once the new view is established, the teacher becomes an organizer and director of teacher rather than a sole old-styled transmitter of knowledge. He will organize and direct every learning activity on base of various linguistic features and different learner groups. Actually a foreign language is mastered by learning, not by teaching. In this sense, monitoring “learning” means catching of this point. The effect of English learning depends, to large extent, upon the learner’s subjective initiative and degree of participation. For that reason, the teacher should offer in class “open” questions rather than “close” questions. This method makes the teacher naturally prolong the waiting time so that more time is left for the learners to output. Activities in groups or in pairs can create more natural classroom air, which helps enhance the learners’ output. If the learner participates in the classroom interaction, they will straight obtain chances of learning and mastering the language they are also involved in scheduling their own learning. All this will make them more active and more responsible. Sequentially, the strong and significant learning motivation is formed to cultivate their potential faculty, which lays a solid foundation to enhance the teaching effect and achieve the expected goal.

Behavioristic psychologists first perceived the colossal influence of feedback exerted on motivation. Weinstein (1989) once explicitly pointed out that the form and amount that were supplied by the teacher had a direct influence on the learner’s learning motivation, self-awareness and sense of achievement in study, which, furthermore, influenced the learners’ learning effect. In practical teaching, feedback indicates information on accomplishment of a learning task in order to improve and raise the learners’ achievement. With the help of related information obtained from the

teacher's feedback, the learner keep abreast of the result of his learning motivation and level of his learning behavior for greater progress in study.

The teacher, while conveying knowledge, should pay attention to cultivating the learners' sense of themselves and set up new goal at different learning stages---long-term, short-term and medium-term goals, which will help reinforce his long-term motivation. It is when a goal is realized that a new goal is laid down and the motivation is reinforced. This process is the one that short-term motivation is transformed into long-term motivation.

Besides the methods discussed above, there are some other effective strategies to stimulate motivation for learning English, such as creating a comfortable atmosphere, building students' confidence, promoting cooperative learning, and incorporating the multiple intelligences concept in the classroom. All these strategies do have practical application in classroom and can motivate students' interest in English learning, particularly with regard to their consistently weak oral skills.

When it comes to motivation, there are two kinds of motivation: Intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the type of motivation that is animated by personal enjoyment, interest, or pleasure, engaging in an activity because it is enjoyable and satisfying to do. The other is extrinsic motivation, managed by reinforcement contingencies to achieve some instrumental result, such as earning a reward or avoiding a punishment. According to educators intrinsic motivation is more desirable and results in better learning outcomes than extrinsic motivation does (Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 1999).

Here it can be claimed that the components of motivation overlap with those of literature since literature offers a bountiful and extremely varied body of written material, which is important because it speaks about fundamental human issues, which is enduring rather than ephemeral. A literary work can transcend both time and culture to speak directly to a reader in another country or a different time. It expands language awareness, encourages interaction and discussions, and educates the whole learner's personality. It is also enjoyable and motivating (Clandfield & Foord, 2006), because there is a secret formula in literature that literature reaches the parts of a person's feelings, dreams, fantasies, and experience that other texts can't reach (Pulverness, 2007).

These functions are also among the objectives of teaching a foreign language, and parts of good teaching. Foreign language teachers should use non-defensive approaches in classes, because ELT has linguistic, psychological, cognitive, social and cultural objectives, and literature meets them (Ellis, 2002). Language is a means of teaching communicative competence, language competence, discourse competence and lingo-cultural competence. A fundamental purpose of learning a foreign language is to be able to communicate in a foreign language in oral and written forms, including reading its literature. Literary language may be said superior to spoken language because it is more elaborate (Larsen-Freeman, 1986).

To put it simply, it is suggested that there are three main reasons for using literature: linguistic, methodological, and motivational (Duff & Maley, 2007). First in terms of linguistic reasons, Hedge (1985) suggests that literary texts can develop the student's knowledge of language at the levels of vocabulary and structure and at the level of textual organization. The opportunity for vocabulary acquisition, the development of reading strategies, and the training of critical thinking, that is, reasoning skills happen to be (Kramsch & Kramsch, 2000). Also literary language is often surprisingly ordinary, as ordinary language is often surprisingly poetic (Carter, 1999; Hall, 2001).

Second, when it comes to methodological reasons, meanings in literary texts bring out different understanding, reactions, and interpretations. This means variety in opinions and this variety may inspire discussions and sharing feelings, and all these mean that literature encourages interaction (Duff & Maley, 2007; Clandfield & Foord, 2006). Also second language reading does not differ greatly in principle, from first language reading and can often be studied using the same or adapted techniques and methodologies (Verhoeven, 1999).

Finally, literature involves affective, attitudinal, and experiential factors and so may motivate learners to read (McKay, 1986). So literature is motivating because it deals with situations and themes that the writer considered important to address and the motivational effect of the genuineness of literary texts is increased when the topics relate to the learner's personal experience (Duff & Maley, 2007). With the use of literature learners may build new vocabulary as well as they expand their understanding of words they already knew (Ono, Day & Harsch, 2004). Also literature may help students to have the habit of reading, and if students can develop the habit of reading especially for enjoyment and interest, they may increase confidence and fluency, and gain the habit

of reading in a foreign language (Brown, 2000). This is important for students' further independent motivation in learning a foreign language.

METHOD

This study is a qualitative study. It uses case study as its design. There are 25 students taken as the subjects of examinations. All of those students are the 4th semester of UNISBANK English Literature Faculty at academic year 2017/2018. The students are asked to fill a questionnaire after spending half of the semester of a literature subject, namely *introduction to prose*. During a half of the semester, the students had been exposed to group-discussion as class activity and contemporary literature in the form of short story as learning material. The questionnaire is used as research instrument and is arranged to be filled anonymously by students. The questionnaire lets every student rate the course using 1-4 scale based on the motivation they get in studying literature using contemporary materials and group discussion. The least score is 1 and the most score is 4. The score 1 represents "very bad", the score 2 represents "bad", the score 3 represents "good", and the score 4 represents "very good" The scores represent how well the course motivate students in learning literature subject. Since there are 25 students, the total maximum score is 100. The total score is a reflection of how well the course motivate students in learning English literature with group discussion and contemporary literature. After rating the course, the students were asked to answer why and how they gave such rate to the course. Students' explanations in the questionnaire were used to elaborate how group discussion and contemporary literature can influence students' motivation in learning English.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This paper uses questionnaire as research instrument. The questionnaire is shown by the Fig. 1 below.

Fig 1: Motivation Questionnaire of English Literature Subject

1. Do you find this course motivate you in learning English literature? Please rate the degree of motivation you get from this course in table below.
Tick on the column below your choice.

Very Bad	Bad	Good	Very good
		✓	

2. Based on your answer on the table before, can you explain why? Explain in 1-2 sentences.
I can understand about project who Mrs Sella the teach.

3. Based on your answer on the table before, can you explain how this course motivates you in such way? Explain in 1-2 sentences.
I think this course have good, fun and the tecture is humble.
So I think the are not motivates to this course.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate how group-discussion and contemporary literature influence students' motivation in ELT class. The total score given by all students are 82 out of 100. All of the students rated the course as "good" (18 students) and "very good" (7 students). This score shows that most of students felt that contemporary literature in the form of short-story and group-discussion really help them in ELT class.

From 25 students, there were 15 students which explained that learning literature is exciting and fun, and the material can be understood easily. There were also 17 students who suggested that group-discussion helped them a lot in understanding and discussing the materials. There were 9 students who admitted that group-discussion also helped them in writing literature essay, especially in sharing session when the students are asked to discuss their essay topics. In more comprehensible way, how group discussion and contemporary literature motivate students can be summarized by the table below.

Table 1: Students' opinions concerning group discussion and contemporary literature

Students' opinion	Numbers of Students	Motivation's Base
1) Literature is exciting and fun.	15	The material
2) Learning in group is easier and fun	17	The class-activity
3) Discussion and sharing makes writing essay becomes easier than do it individually	9	The class-activity
4) The teacher is clear and scheduled	11	Teacher's factor
5) The course motivates the student to study literature more	12	The material and class-activity

From the table 1, it is evident the students are motivated most by group-discussion as class activity and by the use of contemporary literature as teaching material. Contemporary literature should be included in ELT classrooms as a complement to curriculum because it provides comprehensible input necessary for the English language acquisition and develops the students' abilities, as students may build new vocabulary as well as they expand their understanding of words they already know (Ono, Day & Harsch, 2004). This study found that instead of reading short extracts presented in course books, or any classical short stories, contemporary literature were more suitable complete texts for students to become fluent and competent language users.

Contemporary literature itself is a term which usually applies to anything written after World War II. For some nonnative English students, studying contemporary literature is proved to be easier than studying classical literature. The language used in contemporary literature and the social-settings are more familiar toward the students compared to classical literature. Classical literature is richer in its historical and social-settings, however it may provoke difficulties in its comprehension, especially if the students' first language is not English, such material will surely invite more confusions due to unfamiliarity in many aspects, such as vocabulary choices, social setting, and social conditions. In this study it is evident that the use of contemporary literature brought enjoyment toward students in learning English literature as the students stated that learning literature is exciting and fun. This possibly happened because they are familiar with the material, thus they are motivated although they still need to struggle in understanding the whole literary works due to the limit of vocabulary knowledge and grammatical structures.

Despite the lack of English vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, the students are helped a lot by group-discussions. The existence of group discussion is advantageous for some students which are field-dependent. Some students need more sharing and discussions in order to understand the whole picture of certain literary works, and they also need to have discussions when they need to do their assignments.

Another important finding is that literature helps students to have the habit of reading, especially reading in a foreign language (Brown, 2000), which is important for motivation in learning foreign language. By reading English short story, for example, the students are enhanced in the matter of vocabulary's knowledge, pronunciation, and sociocultural competence. Literature

itself is a depiction of human's life, therefore the students' knowledge and competence are enhanced not only through formal English lessons, but rather through informal cognitive ways, in where the students are invited to examine and analyze how human's life are portrayed through vocabularies, grammatical structures, and sociocultural dimensions of language.

CONCLUSION

In summary, it is evident the students are motivated most by group-discussion as class activity and by the use of contemporary literature as teaching material. Contemporary literature should be included in ELT classrooms as a complement to curriculum because it provides comprehensible input necessary for the English language acquisition and develops the students' abilities, as students may build new vocabulary as well as they expand their understanding of words they already know. This study found that instead of reading short extracts presented in course books, or any classical short stories, contemporary literature were more suitable complete texts for students to become fluent and competent language users. By learning English through literature, the students' knowledge and competence are enhanced not only through formal English lessons, but rather through informal cognitive ways, in where the students are invited to examine and analyze how human's life are portrayed through vocabularies, grammatical structures, and sociocultural dimensions of language.

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