

# Enhancing Students' Level of Motivation in Learning English: The Case of 1<sup>st</sup> Year's Economics Students

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**Abstract**—The aim of this study is to focus on the importance of students' motivation in learning English. Teachers of English who teach students of other subjects other than English should face the challenge of motivating their students to learn English. The teacher who tries to find out the causes of obstacles in front of students motivation and tries to remove them will succeed in his mission of teaching because the more we get motivated learners the more teaching is efficient. In Algeria, enhancing students' level of motivation is an ongoing challenge especially with the students of other subjects because during their previous school years they do not give importance to English as they do for example with Physics or Mathematics if these students belong to the scientific stream. In our study, we have used a questionnaire as a research tool. We have distributed 100 copies to our population; 1st year students of the Preparatory School to Economics, Commerce and Management Sciences of Annaba Algeria. We have collected 90 answered copies that constitute the basis of our study and analysis.

**Index Terms**—English for specific purposes, teaching/learning English, motivation.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Aim of the Study

When we talk about the level of motivation of ESP students in learning English, it is always thought that it is high because, generally, the ESP students are mature and aware of the importance of English and they know why they need English. However, what about the level of motivation of 1<sup>st</sup> year Economics students who are young, who have just joined the University and who are coming from scientific stream where English language was not given high importance compared to the other modules? Are they aware of the importance of English for their study? Do they have an idea about their future job and whether they will be in need to use English?

In fact, these 1<sup>st</sup> year students are young and new; they are not as yet mature enough to have a deep idea about the importance of English for their field of study or for their future job. It is rather the role of the teacher of English to make them aware about the importance of English and to enhance their level of motivation in learning English.

We believe that if the teacher of English identifies the obstacles that hinder his students to like English and takes them into consideration during teaching, their level of motivation will be enhanced.

### B. Theoretical Background

#### 1) Motivation

According to Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English motivation is the act or state of being motivated; need or purpose: The stronger the motivation, the more quickly a person will learn a foreign language.

To motivate also means to provide (someone) with very strong reason or cause for doing something, etc: he was motivated only by his wish to help me, and expected nothing in return [1].

Motive: a cause of or a reason for action; that which urges a person to act in a certain way. Eg: his love of money is the only motive that drives him to work so hard.

According to Oxford Dictionary, motivation is defined as a reason or reasons for acting or behaving in a particular way: escape can be a strong motivation for travel.

Desire or willingness to do something; enthusiasm: keep staff up to date and maintain interest and motivation [2].

Motivation is the force that pushes us to do things [3]. It is also an interior power that triggers, leads, and preserves actions consistently [4].

Motivation is defined as the desire to engage in an activity out of curiosity, interest, or enjoyment [5].

Motivation is usually understood to refer to the desire to initiate L2 learning and the effort employed to sustain it, and in lay terms, we all understand it to be a matter of quantity, as in the everyday observation that some learners are highly motivated and others have little or no motivation [6].

#### 2) Types of motivation

##### a) Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation that comes from inside an individual rather than from any external or outside rewards, such as money or grades. The motivation comes from the pleasure one gets from the task itself or from the sense of satisfaction in completing a task.

An intrinsically motivated person will work on a math equation, for example, because it is enjoyable. Or an intrinsically motivated person will work on a solution to a problem because the challenge of finding a solution is provides a sense of pleasure. In neither case does the person work on the task because there is some reward involved, such as a prize, a payment, or in the case of students, a grade.

An intrinsically motivated student is already eager and prepared to learn English; he does not need his teacher to tell him that English is important or a universal language. He is innerly ready for learning English.

##### b) Extrinsic motivation

Extrinsic motivation refers to our tendency to perform

activities for known external rewards, whether they be tangible (e.g., money) or psychological (e.g., praise) in nature [7].

Extrinsic motivation refers to behavior that is driven by external rewards such as money, fame, grades, and praise. This type of motivation arises from outside the individual, as opposed to intrinsic motivation, which originates inside of the individual.

A student can be extrinsically motivated to learn English when he makes efforts in learning but for the sake of exam only or for pleasing his parents or teacher. In reality, he is not innerly motivated to learn English but rather pushed by external factors.

c) *Instrumental motivation*

Instrumental motivation is generally indicated by the aspiration to get practical benefits from the study of a second language [8]. It is thought to be the purpose of learning a second language when the learner is not interested in interacting socially with new target language community members.

Instrumental motivation refers to the perceived pragmatic benefits of L2 proficiency and reflects the recognition that for many language learners it is the usefulness of L2 proficiency that provides the greatest driving force to learn language. It subsumes such utilitarian goals as receiving a better job or a higher salary as a consequence of mastering L2 [9].

The instrumentally motivated learner of English is neither intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to attend the English course but for the sake of getting a job for example at an American or a British company that offers a good salary he learns English. He sees English as a key and a tool to achieve his purpose.

Most ESP learners have this type of motivation because their desire for learning English came after discovering that mastering English can be a key for opening the way to rewards and promotion. This can be confirmed when you talk with an adult learner who is attending an English course. If you ask him, do you like English? He will tell you: no, I do not like it but I am obliged to use it in my work or it will be my key to get a job or to immigrate.

d) *Integrative motivation*

Integrative means belongingness and loving the community that speaks that language. Who wants to live in the American society and who likes their values has an integrative motivation. It means also attitude. Attitudes can be about languages or about being bilingual in general, as well as about the relation of the student's attitudes toward L1 or L2 [10].

II. METHODOLOGY

A. *Research Population*

Our research population are 1st year students of the Preparatory School to Economics, Commerce and Management Sciences of Annaba Algeria.

These students study two years in this preparatory school; they get prepared at this school before joining the superior schools of Management, Economics and Commerce of Algiers Algeria. English is one of the most important subjects

given to the students at this school.

B. *Time of the Study*

Our study has taken place in the period between September 2014 and March 2015.

C. *Research Tool*

We have used a questionnaire as a research tool for our investigation. We have distributed 100 copies and we have got back 90 answered ones that constitute the basis of our analysis.

The questionnaire was written in English but during its distribution all the questions have been explained and clarified to the participants who have also been given the freedom to choose the language they want in replying on the questions.

The questionnaire contains these rubrics:

- Personal information about the participants.
- Previous course of English.
- Importance of English for study and work.
- Suggestions of students about what motivates them.

III. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

A. *Personal Information about the Participants*

The total number of participants who replied on the questionnaire is 97. All results are shown in Tables I-X.

Their age is between 18 and 20.

1) *Previous course of English*

Results of Question 1:

TABLE I: REPLY OF Q1 OF THE 2ND RUBRIC

Have you been happy with the English course?	
Yes	No
71	19
.Our teacher taught us very well, she behaved with us like her children	I hated the teacher so the same for the subject
.When we study English we get rid of the boredom of the other modules	The teacher was not serious
.I love English, our teacher had a strong influence on us	The teacher did not explain well
.I prefer to communicate with my colleagues in English	The teacher works only with excellent students
.I dream of travelling to New York	The teacher himself was not motivated to teach us because of our weak level
.I see films in English	I hate it and our teacher was so bad
.Since I heard English language I love it and I want to study it no matter what happens	I do not have the will to learn English
.Excellent, helpful and encouraging teacher	The program was boring
	I don't know how to speak it
	I don't practice it

Results of Question 2:

TABLE II: REPLY OF Q2 OF THE 2ND RUBRIC

Have you been happy with the environment of the course?	
Yes : 60	No: 40
The time of the course was good for me	Noise in the class and we find difficulty in listening to the teacher
The class was calm and vast	The class was over crowded
The course was in the morning	The time was not suitable it was at the end of the day when we tired so we
I live near the lyc ée	
The way my teacher used to teach us made me love English and able to study it even in dark caves	
Studying English is like an entertainment for me, I like it and I don't care about	

Results of Question 3:

TABLE III: REPLY OF Q3 OF THE 2ND RUBRIC

<b>Have you been happy with the way of teaching of your English course teacher?</b>	
Yes 51	No 46
Our teacher simplifies the lesson makes sure that we have all understood it He gives us different exercises Every day she gives us interesting ideas and information even if they were out of the program He makes us all participate When we do not understand she explains to us in Arabic and French Our teacher uses drawing, data show and video to explain the lesson He encourages us to learn English He used to give us opportunities to practice English at class She is experienced and she knows how to manage the class He made us show our skill and discover our mistakes so we could evaluate our level We all participate and correct our mistakes She was kind, she behaved like our mother with us	I have been disappointed about the way of teaching Sometimes I was not very happy, our teacher used to give us a paragraph to write and leave us for an hour alone without teaching us the lesson that is needed in the exam She does not use exercises He used to be very rapid when he explains the lesson She was not able to give us the information and she used to believe that we have understood the lesson She does not know how to deal with students He does not translate to us Our teacher used to work only with excellent students and he did not care about the weak ones He does not concentrate on what we do not understand Because my classmates made noise he was motivated to teach us

2) Importance of English for study and work

Results of Question 1:

TABLE IV: REPLY OF Q1 OF THE 3RD RUBRIC

<b>Do you see that the mastery of English will help you in your study?</b>	
Yes : 96	No: 01
It is an international language It will help us understand the economy of USA and China It helps me to be more cultivated It is important in economics It will help me pursue higher studies All the world uses English The books we need are in English We use the economics terms in English New businessmen use English English of economics will help me	No because my domain of study can be studied in French

Results of Question 2:

TABLE V: REPLY OF Q2 OF THE 3RD RUBRIC

<b>What type of English you need more in your study?</b>	
Business English	60%
General English	10%
Business and General English	30%

Results of Question 3:

TABLE VI: REPLY OF Q3 OF THE 3RD RUBRIC

<b>Where are you going to work when you finish your study?</b>
Banking
Marketing
Technology
Sonatrach (Algerian oil company)
Immigration to Qatar or USA
I have not yet decided I do not know

Results of Question 4:

TABLE VII: REPLY OF Q4 OF THE 3RD RUBRIC

<b>Do you see that you are going to use English in your future work?</b>	
Yes 87	No 10
Especially if I work abroad It is the world's language All the managers that I will work with speak English Foreign countries accept only English speaking managers I will be able to read documents and to speak with my clients I will meet people from all the world corners I will work in USA Yes because we are in a globalised world therefore companies exchange information, data and even workers	No I will go to France I will use only French I will work in Algerian companies, I will need only French

3) Suggestions of students about what motivates them

Results of Question 1:

TABLE VIII: REPLY OF Q1 OF THE 4TH RUBRIC

<b>What do you want to study exactly from the English course?</b>
I want to study business English I want to improve my speaking of English Grammar mainly tenses and reported speech I want to study English needed in the preparatory school All the terminology related to my field of study Pronunciation course Vocabulary related to commerce I want to study everything in English because I love it so much I want to study English that I will really need in the future

Results of Question 2:

TABLE IX: REPLY OF Q2 OF THE 4TH RUBRIC

<b>How do you want your teacher of English to teach you?</b>
We want him to translate to Arabic and French the difficult words We want him to be patient with us We want him to speak and write I want him to teach us in good way to love English more We want him to speak slowly and in Arabic also I want my teacher to be gentle, helpful, and cool so that we do not hate his course Explain the lesson and apply by exercises Teach me conversation and using business terms Speak English slowly and interact with all students We want him to be kind, friendly and lovely with us Sometimes he should explain in French We want him to put us on potential professional situations like job interviews, negotiation with a customer I want him to speak just English and to use video I want him to write the lesson on the board I need him to be open minded and speak well English in order to learn how to pronounce correctly We want him to be serious and honest We want him to teach us reading and correct our mistakes

Results of Question 3:

TABLE X: REPLY OF Q3 OF THE 4TH RUBRIC

<b>What do you want from the administration to provide you in order to be more motivated?</b>
I hope that the administration changes the time of the English course, it is at the end of the day when we get tired We want from the administration to add time the English course We want from the administration to provide us with English language laboratory in order to listen to native speakers and to study phonetics To change the shape of tables in the class to a circle like the developed countries We from the administration to organize games between students

#### IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

##### A. *Personal Information about the Participants*

The age of participants ranges between 18 and 20. This indicates that this population is young and not mature enough as far as their replies on questions about their needs after finishing their study are concerned. But what can be seen good as for the age of this population is the homogeneity. Having a homogenous group helps a lot in teaching.

The sex of this population is 78% female and 22% male. This indicates that the teacher should be gentle and not tough with them because the female sex is the majority.

##### B. *Previous Course of English*

###### **Have you been happy with the English course?**

69% of this population has been happy with the English course at the grammar school and 31%

It is crucial for the current teacher of English to take into consideration what made this population feel happy and what made her feel unhappy about the English course. A good teacher should keep the reasons that made this population feel happy and should avoid or repair what made them feel unhappy. For example and as stated by them the teacher should avoid working only with excellent students and neglecting the weak ones.

###### **Have you been happy with the environment of the course mainly time and place?**

53% of the population has been happy with the environment of the course and 32% have not been happy. Whereas 15% have not replied on this question.

Those who have not been happy about the environment of the course cited noise in the class, over crowdedness of the class and the time that was not suitable as the main reasons.

###### **Have been happy with the way of teaching of your teacher?**

65% have been happy with the way of teaching, 33% have not been happy and 2% have not replied.

We believe that the current teacher should sustain and keep the reasons that made this population feel happy about the way of teaching of their teacher of English at the grammar school like explaining well the lesson and making them all participate. The current teacher should also avoid what caused their unhappiness about the way of teaching like being too rapid and working only with excellent students.

##### C. *Importance of English for Study and for Work* *Importance of English for Their Study*

99% of the population declares that the mastery of English is helpful for their study; they say that English is an international language, it will help them understand the economy of the developed countries like USA and China.

1% of the population sees that English is not needed in their study but rather French which is helpful.

###### 1) *The type of English needed for their study*

Three types of English have been declared as needed by the population for their study:

**Business English:** 60% of the population declares that business English is needed and helpful for their study.

**General English:** 10% of the population declares that general English is needed for their study

**Business and General English:** 30% of the population sees that both business and general English together are needed for their study.

###### 2) *Work after finishing their study*

20% of the population expresses their wish to immigrate and work in USA, UAE or QATAR.

30% wish to work in banking sector.

25% declare having the hope to work in one of the Algerian companies like SONATRACH

25% of the population declares that they have not yet decided about their work because they have no idea at the moment. We can justify this by the fact of being young and new student who have just joined the university.

###### 3) *Importance of English for work later*

85% of the population replies that they will use English at their future work. They justify that the multinational environment obliges us to use English, English will be everywhere and that foreign countries accept only English speaking workers.

15% of the population says that they will not use English at their future work. They justify their reply by the fact of working in France and here in Algeria where according to them there will be no need to English.

##### D. *Suggestions of Students about What Motivates Them*

###### 1) *Lessons demanded by the students*

In order to arrive at an effective teaching that targets the urgent needs of students we included in our questionnaire this question related to the lessons that they need and that motivate them to learn.

85% of the population replied on this question. The lessons that motivate them more to learn according to them are:

- All what is related to business
- Grammar mainly tenses and the reported speech
- Pronunciation activities including speaking and listening
- Conversations.

Among this population, some students have declared, "we want to study everything in English because we love it so much". We see that these students are intrinsically motivated so their level of motivation is already high.

###### 2) *The way of teaching wanted by the students*

We believe that the way teaching can either motivates the students to learn or demotivates them, that is why we included in our questionnaire this question related to the way of teaching wanted by the students to be applied by the teacher of English. This population wants from their teacher of English:

- To translate to Arabic and French
- To speak slowly and write
- To contact all the students and to make them all participate
- To put us on potential situations like job interview
- To speak good and correct English so that we learn from him good pronunciation
- To let us read and correct our mistakes
- To be honest and patient with us

###### 3) *The want of students from the administration*

We believe that the teacher is not the only factor affecting the level of motivation of students, the administration also has

a role to play in motivating students to learn. In our study the participants want from the administration:

- To change the time of English course from the afternoon to the morning
- To increase the number of hours of English course
- To provide them with language laboratory so that they speak and listen to native speakers of English
- To organize competitions between groups.

## V. CONCLUSION

Many conclusions can be drawn from this study. In fact, the task of motivating students to learn English is not an easy one. Many factors should be gathered in order to succeed in enhancing the students' level of motivation. These factors according to our study are but not limited to:

### A. The Teacher

We believe that the teacher is a big stakeholder in the teaching process. He has a big role to play in order to raise the level of motivation of his students.

The teacher of English should be flexible and should apply different ways of teaching and adapt them with the different groups of students he has to teach. Every group of students has a preferred way of learning; a group may like the teacher to translate to Arabic and French. Another group may like the teacher to speak only in English and in a good accent that looks like native speakers.

In our study we tried to identify the good and bad practices of teachers of English and this according to the experience of students during their previous course at grammar school.

The current teacher of English should avoid these bad practices like working only with excellent students as stated by students.

He should rather maintain and develop the best practices like giving more examples and exercises for explaining the lesson and treating the students like their father or mother because they are still young.

### B. Needs Analysis

In fact, teaching is like medical science where the doctor cannot give a prescription to his patient without making a thorough diagnosis to his case. In teaching, the teacher of English should not start teaching before analyzing the needs of his students. Needs analysis helps identify the necessities, lacks and wants of a given group of students and then elaborating a course that satisfies these needs. Hence when a student feels that he is getting what he needs or wants he will be motivated to learn.

In our study, we tried to identify the necessities and lacks of our population by focusing on the different breakdowns and difficulties, they have with all the skills speaking, listening, reading and writing. We tried also to identify their wants by focusing on the way of teaching they want to find in their teacher of English.

### C. Increasing the Students Level of Awareness

In English for Specific Purposes, there is no need normally to talk about the level of awareness about the importance of English either in English for Academic Purposes or in English for Occupational Purposes because normally the population is mature enough and fully aware of their purpose from the English course.

In our case of study, our population is young and new who has just joined the university. The students are given English because the decision makers are convinced about the importance of English for their study and work later on. At this level and age if they are given the choice between English and another foreign language they may not all of them opt for English.

We believe that the teacher of English should be patient with them because it is only when they go deeper in the other modules of economics where they will notice the frequent use of English that their level of awareness will go up. We believe also that when they go up to the final years of study and they start thinking of where to work they will find out that the majority of companies prefer mostly English speaking competences, it is at this level that they will be highly aware of the importance of English.

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