EFL Student's Motivation in Learning English in Langsa, Aceh

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Abstract

The research deals with the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of EFL learners in learning English. This research used the qualitative design to find out the EFL learners' motivation in learning English, specifically to their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The participants consist of 40 senior high school students in Langsa. The questionnaire was the instrument used in collecting data. The questionnaire consists of 35 items, in which they are divided into two parts. The first part, numbers 1 until 20, is to collect the information about intrinsic motivation and inquires about interest, need, hobby and goal. Meanwhile, the second part, numbers 21 until 35, is to collect information about extrinsic motivation and inquires about teachers, parents, and the environment. The results showed that the component in the extrinsic motivation that gave the biggest impact to the students are the teachers; who are the student's biggest influence in learning English. Meanwhile, the biggest component of intrinsic motivation is the students' own learning goals. The paper further describes each of these factors in relation to their motivation. The implication of this study related to the teachers' efforts and capability in motivating their students to learn English is also discussed.

Keywords: Motivation, intrinsic, extrinsic, EFL students, Langsa, Aceh.

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1. INTRODUCTION

English is the first language of over 300 million people. Most of them live in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Then, about 54 million use English as a second language. For countries that do not use English, they still study it as a foreign language and become one of the compulsory subjects to be taught in schools from the primary to the tertiary levels of education. Consequently, one estimate is that over 150 million children are currently studying English as a foreign language in primary or secondary schools. Its popularity lies in its value as an international language. This is the case in Indonesia. A knowledge of English is perceived in most parts of the world as essential for international communication in commerce and tourism, in economic and military aid, and in scientific and technological literature (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002).

Motivation is an influential factor in the teaching and learning process. The success of learning depends on the high or low motivation of students. Hinson et al. (2000, p. 28) define motivation "as an important component or factor in the learning process". Learning and motivation have the same importance in order to achieve something. Learning makes learners gain new knowledge and skills and motivation pushes or encourages them to go through the learning process.

In language learning, students need more than instruction and command from their teachers. This is a challenge for the teachers to be able to motivate their students to pay attention in class. In view of that, Jefiza (2017) states that success in learning English will depend on motivation. In other words, learning and motivation are closely bound to each other and profoundly influence one another. Of course, due to individualities and different backgrounds, each student has different difficulties and problems in learning English. They can make different mistakes in English pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary usage. This can affect the student's motivation to learn English (Achmad & Yusuf, 2016). In this case, the students themselves or the teachers must have some ideas to build the students' motivation in learning English.

In learning, there are typically two types of motivation, they are intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation comes from within an individual. According to Harmer (2001), a person might be motivated by the enjoyment of the learning process or desire to make themselves feel better. Motivation comes from inside an individual rather than from any external or outside rewards, such as gifts. Students who have intrinsic motivation would have the pleasure of one gets from the task itself or from the sense of satisfaction in completing or even working on a task. An intrinsically motivated student will work on a math equation, for example, because she enjoys it.

Harmer (2001) says that besides intrinsic motivation, the students also have extrinsic motivation in learning English. Extrinsic motivation is the result of any number of outside factors. An extrinsic motivation will motivate the students to learn on a task even when they have little interest in it because of the anticipated satisfaction they will get from some rewards. The rewards can be something as minor as a smiley face to something major like fame or fortune.

From the explanation above, the researchers of this study are then interested to find out the motivation behind their students in learning English at a private university in Aceh. By understanding the students' motivation, then teachers can make efforts to taking actions on what to do to increase the students' motivation in learning if needed.

2.   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Definition of Motivation

Harmer (2001, p. 51) states that "motivation is some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something". The word motivation is accepted for most fields in learning as an essential aspect to reach success. Without such motivation, people can fail to make necessary efforts in achieving their goals. There are many undertakings that depend on motivation, such as in learning English for learners who learn it as a foreign language in their country. Gardner (2001) states motivation is an essential element along with language capacity in shaping success in learning a new language in a classroom setting. The motivation here is very influential in the success of learning English. When learners are not motivated, they will not take risks in learning or even pay any attention to learn it.

2.2   Types of Motivation

2.2.1 Intrinsic motivation

Harmer (2001) states that intrinsic motivation comes from within the individual. It means motivation is a desire which comes from inside to do something. Santrock (2004) also states that intrinsic motivation involves the internal motivation to do something for its own sake (an end in itself). So, intrinsic motivation is the natural tendency to seek out challenges as we pursue personal interest and exercise capabilities. This statement implies that motivation will be active without stimulation from the environment of an individual. Below are some facets that cause intrinsic motivation.

1. Interest: students with an interest in a subject tend to pay attention to it (Achmad & Yusuf, 2016). They feel that it makes a difference to them. They want to become fully aware of its character. They enjoy dealing with it either for what it can lead to or for its own sake. The learning process will run well if students have interests. They will study regularly or effectively and they will be a success if they have a high interest in the subject being learned.
2. Need: according to Vandenbos (2016, p. 612), need is "a condition of tension in an organism resulting from deprivation of something required for survival well-being, or personal fulfillment a substance, state or any other things". It means that need is a circumstance in which something is necessary. Ciccarelli and White (2009) divide the characteristics of need into three types:
   - Need for achievement: involves a strong desire to succeed in attaining goals, not only realistic ones but also challenging ones.
   - Need for affiliation: people high in this need seek to be liked by others and to be held in high regard by those around them.
   - Need for power: power is not about reaching a goal but about having control over other people. People high in this need would want to have influence over others and make an impact on them.
3. Hobby: this is an activity or interest that is undertaken for pleasure or relaxation in one's spare time. So, hobby is an activity which is done for pleasure and enjoyment. For example, 'John's hobby is reading', and so he always tries to read a book in his free time.

4. Goal: Gage and Berliner (1984) also say that motivation is closely bound with a person's desire to achieve a goal. The learner is very aware of the goals of learning, or of specific learning activities, and directs his or her efforts towards achieving them. Every individual, before they do what they want to do, they usually have a goal first. In the teaching and learning activity, the students should have goals, because it can be a great motivation for them and they will prepare everything that can help them to achieve their goal.

2.2.2 Extrinsic motivation

According to Ur (1996), extrinsic motivation is derived from the influence of some kind of external incentive, as distinct from the wish to learn for its own sake or interest in tasks. Extrinsic motivation is active and functions if there is stimulation from the outside. For example, a person studies because he knows that tomorrow morning there will be a test, and so he studies in the hope of achieving a good score.

There are many sources of extrinsic motivation, and these are such as receiving incentives, social pressure or punishment. Gage and Berliner (1984) also say that this motivation can also appear or come from teachers, parents, and the environment. They are explained below:

1. Teacher: a major factor in the continuous motivation of a student is the teacher. Teachers have an important role in the teaching and learning activity. They are not only people who transfer knowledge to students, but also as a motivator who can motivate or support the students in the learning activity.
2. Parents: a part from the culture of the world around students, their attitude to language learning will also be affected by the influence of people who are close to them. Harmer (2001) adds that the attitude of parents and older siblings are crucial. Students who are encouraged by their parents will try new things and try to give high performance to get rewards from their parents. As a result, they can get a better achievement.
3. Environment: outside any classroom, there are attitudes to language learning and the English language in particular. The learning of English is considered important by society. According to Gage and Berliner (1984), in a school situation, language learning is part of the curriculum and the cultural images associated with English are positive. The environment is everything which exists around people and has correlation influences in them.

According to Harmer (2001), these views of language learning will affect the students' attitudes to the language being studied, and the nature and strength of this attitude will, in its turn, have a profound effect on the degree of motivation the students bring to class and whether or not that motivation continues. Even when adult students have made their own decision to come to a class to study English, they will bring with them attitudes from the society they live in and have been developed over the years. And these attitudes can be positive or somewhat negative.

Students who are motivated by their environment to learn English will have the encouragement to learn it. In other words, if their home environment, the atmosphere of the classroom, and also the quality of facilities is good, they will do their best to achieve better English. Therefore, determination and motivation in learning do not only come from the individual factor but also the environmental factor.

2.3   Sources of Motivation

According to Harmer (2001, p. 52), "the motivation that brings students to the task of learning English can be affected and influenced by the attitude of a number of people". Harmer (2001, p. 52) also explained that there are some sources that affect the students' motivation in learning English:
1. The society we live in: outside any classroom, there are attitudes to language learning and the English language in particular. All the views from the society such as learning language for low or high status will affect the students' attitude to the language being studied, and the nature and strength of this attitude will, in its turn, have a profound effect on the degree of motivation the students bring to class and whether or not that motivation continues.
2. Significant others: the attitude of students to language learning is also affected by the influence of people who are close to them. The attitude of parents and older siblings are crucial. The attitude of students' peers is also crucial. If they are critical of the subject or activity, the student's own motivation may suffer. If they are enthusiastic learners, however, they may take the students along with them.
3. The teacher: The teacher is a major factor in the continuance of a student's motivation. The teacher's attitude to the language and the task of learning is vital. An obvious enthusiasm for English and English learning, in this case, would seem to be prerequisites for a positive classroom atmosphere.
4. The method: it is vital that both teachers and students have some confidence in the way of teaching and learning. When either loses this confidence, motivation can be disastrously affected. But when both are comfortable with the method being used, success is much more likely to happen.

2.4   The Role of Motivation

Motivation is crucial in learning other languages. Pinter (2006, p. 36) states that "when we learn our first language, it is all a natural part of growing up". People who learn a new language, their motivation to learn are related to wanting to fit in with people in their new community. An interesting study by Nikolov (1999), a Hungarian teacher, trainer, and researcher, shows that children as they get older typically draw on different sources of motivation to learn English. Some of the children are intrinsically motivated which means that they want to learn because they enjoy the process of learning English for its own sake.

3.   METHODS

In order to describe the students' motivation in learning English, the researchers used descriptive qualitative research. The researchers wanted to find the differences in the students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in learning English. The participants consist of 40 senior high school students in Langsa.

To collect data, there are two kinds of questionnaires, they are open ended and closed ended questionnaire. In the questionnaire, there were 35 statements that were written in Indonesian to ease students' understanding in providing the response for each item or statements. To inquire on the state of the students' intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, the statements were constructed based on the theories

discussed in the Literature Review section. Statements number 1 until 20 are questions to collect information about intrinsic motivation. It consisted of 5 questions about interest, 5 questions about need, 5 questions about hobby and 5 questions about goal. The statements number 21 until 35 are questions for extrinsic motivation. It consisted of 5 questions about teacher, 5 questions about parents and 5 questions about the environment.

In the questionnaire, the participants were asked to choose one answer that suits their characteristics by giving a tick (√) on a category for each item. There are four categories for each item: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD). Each response was assigned a point value, and an individual's score was determined by adding the point value of all the statements. The scores are 1 for SD, 2 for D, 3 for A, and 4 for SA. Finally, in classifying the students' motivation in learning English, the total scores of motivation were labeled or coded and they were divided by the number of the items of the questionnaire.

4.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the results of the questionnaire. There are 35 questions related to seven components in the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as mentioned in the Method section.

Table 1. Results of the questionnaire from 40 participants.

Motivation	Indicator	The number of questionnaire	Categories			
			SA/4	A/3	DA/2	SDA/1
Intrinsic	Interest	5	12	57	28	3
	Need	5	21	59	19	1
	Hobby	5	5	30	50	15
	Goal	5	23	64	13	0
Extrinsic	Teacher	5	39	56	5	0
	Parent	5	3	55	4	0
	Environment	5	21	72	7	0

Meanwhile, in Table 2, it shows that both of the motivation play roles in the students' interest to learn English. From the statements, it was found that the teacher gave much influence to the students in learning English, in which 86.2% were attained for this influence.

Table 2. Factors that influence student's motivation in Learning English.

Motivation	Components	Score				Total	IP	%
		4	3	2	1			
Intrinsic	Interest	12	57	28	3	62	3.1	77.5
	Need	21	59	19	1	67	3.4	83.7
	Hobby	5	30	50	15	26.3	1.3	32.9
	Goal	23	64	13	0	68	3.4	85
Extrinsic	Teacher	39	56	5	0	69	3.5	86.2
	Parents	3	55	37	5	55	2.8	68.7
	Environment	21	72	7	0	68	3.4	85
	Range					59.3	3	74.1

From the results, it can be said that there are two factors that influence students' motivation in learning English, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. The extrinsic

motivation consists of three-factor components, and the biggest factor is from the teacher at 86.2%. The students believed that teachers really influence them in learning English, and thus the way of teaching, the media and the attitude of teachers influence the students to learn and know more about English. This finding is in line with what Gage and Berliner (1984) have said that teachers are the foremost component that can continuously motivate students to learn.

Following teachers, the extrinsic motivation is followed by the environment at 85% and parents at 68.7%. Seeing that the world is now 'borderless' due to the use of the Internet where people can search and view other places, people and events at real time. Green and Ruhleder (1995) and Farazmand (1999) view that the common wisdom today is that the IT revolution has reduced the importance of geographical proximity, creating a "borderless society," and a "global village". Thus, much information from the Internet is English. The curiosity to search more on global matters intrigued students to learn more about English.

In intrinsic motivation, the biggest component was the students' own goal at 85%. This is followed by need (83.7%), interest (77.5%) and hobby (32.9%). These results indicate that the students' own goal was the biggest component that pushed them to learn English. The study by Achmad and Yusuf (2016) found that university students in Aceh who are studying at the secretarial program also had a bigger intrinsic motivation to learn English compared to extrinsic motivation. The intention was to be able to converse and associate with foreigners from other countries who speak English. In a world where English is now a global language, the students agree that learning English is very important to ease communication with other people from other countries.

Meanwhile, hobby at 32.9% received the lowest selection from the students to learn English. Perhaps to learn a foreign language that is very different from their first language (Achmad & Yusuf, 2014), is not as easy as pie but requires hard work and patience. And therefore, this sort of task is not considered as hobbies to the students.

5. CONCLUSION

There are two factors that influence students' motivations in learning English. They are intrinsic factors and extrinsic factors. The biggest factor that influenced the students' motivation in this study to learn English was because of their teachers. This is included as one of the components of the extrinsic motivation. Meanwhile, in intrinsic motivation, students' own goal received the highest selection. It can be concluded that these students learn English because they have good encouragement from their teachers and also because they want to achieve certain goals after learning the language.

From these results, it is suggested that English teachers should always give positive motivation to their students in learning. They must make efforts to build the students' motivation and this can be done by applying and improving their methods and strategies in teaching English, provide comfortable and good teaching and learning atmospheres to activate, motivate and make the students have better progress in learning English.

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