



## RESEARCH ARTICLE



## MOTIVATION TO LEARN ENGLISH AND USE OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

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### ABSTRACT

The paper is a part of the researcher's Ph. D. research work in the area of interaction analysis. Motivation, as a state of mind, plays an important role in the learner's performance in a second/ foreign language. The concept, motivation, has been categorized by Gardner and Lambert (1972) under two labels, namely, instrumental and integrative motivation. The researcher, as a part of her main study, examined the types of motivation to learn English among the non-native Indian learner participants in the study and analysed the correlation between their levels of motivation and their use of communication strategies while they participated in the group tasks devised by the researcher for this purpose. The paper, based on the findings of the study, concludes with an emphasis on a need on the part of teaching fraternity to elevate the levels of learners' motivation by providing them more opportunities for exposure to the language and building on their own needs for developing ability in English.



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## INTRODUCTION

The English language in India has strongly rooted itself in the socio-cultural life of people in the country and has become the lingua franca in modern times. It enjoys an official status and one of its uses is "as a library language for knowledge of Science and Technology, Trade and Commerce" (Veeranna, 2013).

Introduced almost two centuries ago with a purpose of creating a class of English-speaking clerks, "Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect" (Bailey 1991 cited in Veeranna: 2013), English in India has undergone various stages. The present times witness the status of English language as a medium for Indians not only to communicate with their professional counterparts in the West but also to integrate with them at the socio-cultural level. The advent of globalization and computerization, has thus opened a new horizon of career opportunities for Indians in the global market and has given even more impetus to learning of English, as a means of bridging the linguistic and cultural gap created by the national boundaries.

There has been a major motivational shift from instrumental to integrative approach towards the acquisition of English language among a major section of Indian society. There is an increasing number of people preferring to educate their children in an English medium school rather than opting for regional medium education. In addition to this, the arrival of international schools facilitates the process of integration of the higher middle-class population in the country with Western culture.

Thus, in spite of being a product of the nation's colonial past, the English language acquires an

essential status in the multilingual reality of India.

The researcher therefore found it necessary to analyse the motivation of the students for speaking in English. As a part of her Ph. D. research work that analysed the evolution of communication strategies and interactional skills of learners when they were provided with maximum possibilities for interaction in English through group work tasks, the researcher examined the relationship between the learners' level of motivation to speak in English and their use of communication strategies.

## LITERATURE REVIEWED

Learners' motivation to learn a second language is one among several factors that influence his/her performance in second language. Gardener's socio-educational model (1982 cited in Norris, 2001), in its second phase, defines motivation relating to language performance as consisting of 'Effort' (signifying the inner drive of the learner), 'Desire' (signifying willingness to be proficient in the language) and 'Affect' (signifying emotional reactions relating to language study).

The researcher wanted to know about the extent of priority and importance given by the learners to the objectives /outcomes of fluency such as: passing examinations, being a part of social events, earning money, getting a good proposal for marriage, getting good and respected status in society etc. This was because, as Crookes and Schmidt (1991) put it, motivation stands for the learner's orientation relating to his/her goal of learning a second language.

It is necessary to discuss what exactly Gardener and Lambert (1972) meant by the



distinction between instrumental and integrative motivation to learn a foreign language. According to them, learners driven by instrumental motivation have a concrete purpose to learn a language but those driven by integrative one, wish to integrate culturally with the native speakers of the language.

Instrumental motivation is characterized by a more utilitarian purpose of language acquisition (Hudson: 2000). India being a former colony of England where the English language was introduced for imperial purposes, the motivation of Indians to learn the language was specifically instrumental at the initial stage such as passing examinations and getting a job, etc. Integrative motivation, on the other hand, is formed by an influence of the culture and a desire to be familiar with and to integrate into the society where the language is used. (Falk: 1978 cited in Norris, 2001).

In case of English in India, there has certainly been a shift in the L2 motivation of Indian learners from instrumental to integrative, e.g., socializing, etc. The technological advancement and the advent of globalization has opened new horizons of job opportunities across the world which has further led to the need to integrate with speakers of this global language. Lucrative global job opportunities at the doorstep due to the advent of globalization form one of the factors motivating the learners in the context of study to learn English. The researcher's initial informal discussions had revealed their desire to be able to speak fluently and to interact efficiently in English.

The study being located in the metropolis of Mumbai, culturally the learners are exposed to the cosmopolitan environment which tends to be

influenced by Western culture and linguistically more inclined towards the use of English. Their socio-cultural background thus definitely serves to nourish an integrative motivation among the learners. However, their financially as well as academically poor background quite naturally also orients them towards instrumental motivation.

## METHODOLOGY

The main objective was to know whether Indian learners, especially those in the context of study, were driven by

- instrumental,
- integrative,
- or both types of motivation

The researcher, knowing about their type of motivation, also wanted to examine the likelihood of their use of communication strategies to their level of motivation. Thus, the following hypothesis was formed:

*The learners' use of communication strategies is likely to be related to their level of motivation to speak in English.*

A questionnaire was developed as a part of the study to probe information on the learners participating in the study. Apart from questions framed to know their socio-cultural context, proficiency and self-confidence in using English, a part of the questionnaire was also attempted to capture information on their level of motivation for using English as well as type of motivation (Please refer to Appendix B). This section of the questionnaire was drawn from Varghese (2002) who used a measure developed by Baker (1992) consisting



of 16 items; these items measure the extent of importance that the English language holds for various purposes. The learners' responses were measured on a 4-point scale ranging from 'important' to 'unimportant'.

The 16 items in this section of the questionnaire could be divided into two sections measuring a) instrumental motivation: (items no. 2,3,4,5,6 and 10) focusing on learning of English for a specific utilitarian purpose b) integrative motivation: (items no. 1, 7, 8, 9, 11 to 16) focusing on learning of English for social interaction leading to their integration with the culture of the educated speakers of English.

The researcher had devised group work tasks to be conducted throughout the academic year, taking into account the interest of the learners and the relevance to the course for which they were enrolled.

Adapting from the existing research and on the basis of the researcher's preliminary observations of actual group work sessions, a classification system for categorizing and analysing communication strategies was developed, to reflect the concerns of the present study. For this purpose, the researcher undertook an exploratory approach to identify and classify instances of communication strategy use as described in Faerch (1984). Instead of applying a pre-determined framework for classification, the researcher preferred to examine the data as it existed, and to note down every single communication strategy that occurred. Following this, a category system of these communication strategies was developed that was divided into the following sections:

A. Interpersonal Communication Strategies

B. L1/L2 Based Communication Strategies

C. Sociolinguistic Communication Strategies

(Please Refer to Appendix A for the detailed category system of communication strategies).

A batch of F.Y.B.Com. learners consisting of 40 learners formed the sample for the study.

In order to examine the communication strategies used by the learners, initial and last sessions were recorded and transcribed and applying the category system of communication strategies, the use of strategies was then analysed. The data from the questionnaire administered to the learners was analysed adopting the frequency percentage method. Each question was analysed following this method and a report was prepared discussing trends in the entire class. A separate analysis was undertaken in order to prepare detailed profiles of each individual learner.

## FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The data as described in Table 1 and Table 2 revealed two broad patterns of responses. Under pattern A (Table1), most learners felt that English is very important for certain purposes. These include the ability to **Earn Plenty of Money, Read, Write, Get a Job, Become Cleverer, Bring up Children Well, Pass Exams, Talk to Teachers in College**. All these items reflect a very strong instrumental motivation for using English for very practical purposes. One other item falls under this pattern, which is **Be Respected in Society**. Although this item appears to reflect integrative motivation, the finding is in some way also related to instrumental motivation because



being respected in society is often an outcome of material success in society. Apparently, this was the learners' interpretation of this item.

The data under pattern B (Table 1) reflects a different distribution of responses. The distribution of responses tended to move more towards the centre of the continuum; a slightly lower proportion of learners felt that these items were extremely important, and proportionately more learners felt that these were "Somewhat Important". These items included the ability to **Make Friends, Be Liked, Talk to Friends in College, Talk to People out of College, Attend Parties and Social Functions and Get a Good Proposal for Marriage**. All these items reflect a more integrative motivation on the part of the learner. One other item referring to the ability to **Go Shopping** falls into this pattern; although this item appears to be instrumental in nature, in the Indian setting where most individuals would automatically use the L1 in local shops, people do not normally require English for shopping in such places, for instance, the local grocery store or the local vegetable vendor. It is only when learners aspire to shop in high end stores/malls that they would feel motivated to use English in what is apparently a higher socio-economic context than their own. Thus, this item also represents more of an integrative motivation than instrumental motivation for using English.

These tables thus analysed trends across the class in the learners' motivation to use English. It is important to note that the findings in these tables reveal high levels of motivation in the learners both for instrumental as well as integrative purposes. In all the items the responses cluster around the two categories- important and somewhat important. The

only difference between the instrumental and the integrative items is the proportion of responses. The items referring to instrumental motivation showed a much higher percentage of learners who felt that these purposes were extremely important.

The data was also additionally examined to identify learner-wise differences in motivation to use English. Table 3 analyses the distribution of scores of each learner for instrumental versus integrative items. The table reveals that there is not much difference between instrumental and integrative scores. The scores for instrumental and integrative motivation are very often identical or the difference is usually only around one to three points. There were only four learners who had a slightly larger difference of between five to seven points; all these four learners had a somewhat higher instrumental score than the integrative score. Thus, for the sample of learners in this study, the instrumental and the integrative motivation appears to be almost equally strong. The findings are thus clearly indicative of this dual motivation. On the one hand, English plays an important role in the field of commerce, is a very important indicator of eligibility for employment, and is hence important for all the activities that are associated with financial/economic development, including academic achievement. On the other hand, it is equally important to recognize that a large proportion of the learners also feel that integrative needs are important. This reflects the reality of the context in India where English as a second language also serves social purposes and is a means of moving upwards along the social ladder.



(TABLE 1)

## MOTIVATION

## PATTERN A

	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Unimportant
Earn Plenty of Money	65.7%	21.05%	7.8%	00%
Read	76.3%	23.6%	00%	00%
Write	86.8%	13.15%	00%	00%
Get a Job	84.21%	15.7%	00%	00%
Become Cleverer	68.42%	18.42%	5.2%	00%
Bring up Children Well	71.05%	23.68%	2.6%	00%
Pass Exams	92.10%	5.2%	00%	00%
Be Respected in Society	71.05%	18.4%	5.2%	00%
Talk to Teachers in College	84.2%	10.52%	00%	00%

(TABLE 2)

## MOTIVATION

## PATTERN B

	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Unimportant
Make Friends	36.84%	52.6%	10.52%	00%
Be Liked	50%	42.10%	5.2%	00%
Go Shopping	44.7%	31.5%	21.05%	00%
Talk to Friends in College	55.2%	34.2%	5.2%	2.6%
Talk to People Out of College	55.26%	34.21%	7.89%	2.6%
Attend Parties and Social Functions	55.26%	34.21%	7.89%	2.6%
Get a Good Proposal for Marriage	57.89%	28.9%	10.52%	2.6%



(TABLE 3)

## LEARNER WISE SCORES FOR MOTIVATION

Name of the Learner	Motivation		
	Instrumental	Integrative	Total
Sagar	--	--	--
Amar	20	24	44
Prashant	31	30	61
Niranjan	17	18	35
Vikesh	24	24	48
Ritesh	31	32	63
Vivek	31	32	63
Sameeksha	27	25	52
Sneha	29	28	57
Rutuja	29	29	58
Dimple	29	26	55
Vitthal	28	23	51
Ashish	27	25	52
Chetan	31	32	63
Priyanka	28	28	56
Vicky	23	26	49
Akshay	28	25	53
Siddhesh	23	23	46
Pravin	--	--	--
Maya	30	27	57
Yogita	26	31	57
Sushama	32	32	64
Rohit	31	27	58
Nikita	31	26	57
Nitesh	30	23	53
Deepali	32	32	64
Pankaj	32	31	63



Jyoti	28	28	56
Maheshwari	30	29	59
Suvidha	31	32	63
Gaurav	31	32	63
Gautam	30	24	54
Jaya	25	25	50
Siddhi	32	31	63
Anit	26	25	51
Meghana	31	31	62
Manali	30	29	59
Vishal	32	31	63
Nikhil	32	30	62
Neha	32	32	64

The scores for motivation of the learners to learn English were spread between 35 and 64; most learners (24) showed a high level of motivation scoring above 55. 14 learners displayed average /low motivation (scoring between 50 and 55 and below 50 respectively).

#### **A: Motivation as Related to Total Communication Strategy Use:**

In the group of learners with low/average motivation, 5 learners displayed minimal/low total use of communication strategies, 5 of them used average number of communication strategies and 4 of them used high/very high number of communication strategies. It can thus be interpreted that the low/average level of motivation of the learners has not impacted their use of communication strategies.

From among the learners with high/very high scores on motivation, 2/3 of them (15 learners) used high/very high number of communication strategies. Only 5 of them displayed minimal/low use of communication strategies.

#### **B: Motivation as Related to Category Wise Communication Strategy Use:**

Out of 14 learners with low/average levels of motivation, three fourth of the learners (11) displayed maximum use of strategies from Category B and very minimal use of strategies from Categories A and C. Three of these learners displayed high use of communication strategies from both Categories B and C.

In the group of learners with high motivation, 12 learners displayed extensive use of strategies from category B and minimal use of strategies from Categories A and C. 11 learners from this group displayed a reasonably high use of





strategies from both Categories B and C. Thus, all the learners from this group used strategies from Category B extensively; about half of them also used Category C to a large extent.

This indicates that more of the learners with high motivation used strategies from Category C, as compared to those with low motivation.

A possible explanation for this finding could be that the more motivated learners were more focused on maintaining the interaction and hence drew upon the shared socio-linguistic background as a resource for communication.

#### **C: Motivation as Related to Individual Communication Strategy Use:**

The level of motivation of the learners in the study appears to correlate minimally with communication strategies and more with interactional skills. This could be explained by the fact that interactional skills are not specific to the learners' ability in the TL, but are wider communication skills. Hence it is more likely that a stronger motivation to learn English would be related to a greater use of interactional skills. Communication strategies, on the other hand, are more closely related to the learners' ability in using the TL English; hence even though they display a high motivation for learning English, this may not yet translate into actual communication strategy use.

The findings reveal almost no strong positive correlation with any of the communication strategies except for one. There was, however, one communication strategy, i.e., **B1i-Description** (0.694) which showed quite a high correlation with the level of motivation of the learners. This can be interpreted

as an attempt by the more motivated learners to compensate for other problems in using the TL by providing a description of the idea they wish to convey. The more motivated learners thus seem to be attempting to extend their resources by making such an attempt.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Motivation plays an important role in the learners' acquisition of the target language. Considering the non-native background of the learners and their willingness to develop their own communication skills in English, it is necessary to elevate their levels of motivation. This would be possible by providing them with more and more exposure to the language as well as building on their own needs for developing ability in English.

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#### APPENDIX A

Sr. No.	Category No.	Name of Strategy
1.	A1	Expressing Lack of Comprehension
2.	A2	Appeal for Help
3.	A3	Appeal to Authority
4.	A4	Asking for Clarification/Confirmation
5.	A5	Extending Help
6.	A6	Interpretative Summary
7.	A7	Eliciting Response
8.	A8	Directing Discussions
9.	B1a.	Use of Filler
10.	B1b.	Retrieval
11.	B1c.	Waffling
12.	B1d.	Topic Avoidance: Complete Silence
13.	B1e.	Topic Avoidance: Change of Topic
14.	B1f.	Message Abandonment
15.	B1g.	Restructuring/ Repetition



16.	B1h.	Circumlocution
17.	B1i.	Description
18.	B1j.	Word Coinage
19.	B2a.	Prefabricated Patterns
20.	B2b.	Transliteration
21.	B2c.	Message Reduction: Avoidance/Economy
22.	B2d.	Formal Reduction: Avoidance/Economy
23.	B2e.	Rule Extension/Overgeneralization
24.	B3a.	Semantic Contiguity
25.	B3b.	Use of Super Ordinate Term/ Subordinate Term
26.	B3c.	Use of Coordinate Term
27.	C1a.	Avoidance: Task Related/ Language Related
28.	C1b.	As Filler
29.	C1c.	Foreignizing
30.	C1d.	Language Switch in Reverse
31.	C1e.	Solidarity
32.	C1f.	Accommodation
33.	C1g.	Personal Expression/Anecdote
34.	C1h.	Humour
35.	C2a.	Avoidance: Task Related/ Language Related
36.	C2b.	Mumbling
37.	C2c.	Accommodation
38.	C2d.	Solidarity
39.	C2e.	Personal Expression/ Anecdote
40.	C2f.	Humour
41.	C2g.	Filler



## APPENDIX B

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS

## SECTION III

There are no right or wrong answers. How important or unimportant do you think the English language is for people to do the following? Choose one of the following answers:

Important

Somewhat Important

Not Very Important

Unimportant

For People To:

	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Unimportant
1. Make Friends				
2. Earn Plenty of Money				
3. Read				
4. Write				
5. Get a Job				
6. Become Cleverer				
7. Be Liked				
8. Bring up Children Well				
9. Go Shopping				
10. Pass Exams				
11. Be Respected in Society				
12. Talk to Friends in College				
13. Talk to Teachers in College				
14. Talk to People Out of College				
15. Attend Parties and Social Functions				
16. Get a Good Proposal for Marriage				

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