

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS IN DIRECTING CONVERSATION

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Abstract

The sources of motivation in directing conversation are analysed. A primary responsibility of the teacher in reviving motivation is shown..

Keywords: motivational factors, mastering new language material, to provide a feeling of confidence.

Most students study English because they believe it will benefit them in one way or another. They see English as a means to earn more money, to fulfill certain education requirements, to travel abroad, to gain access to the culture of English-speaking nations, or simply to meet more people. But even though students' initial motivation may be quite strong, under the strain of learning a new language with all its complexities of pronunciation, syntax, and vocabulary, motivation may wane.

A primary responsibility of the teacher is to revive motivation. Without strong motivation students will fail in their attempt to bridge the gap between the manipulative and the communicative phase of language learning, and their hopes of speaking English fluently will never be realized.

Teacher's own personality and outlook may provide students with fresh motivation. If you have a genuine interest in the students and their welfare, if you give praise where deserved, if you are responsive to students difficulties and if you show faith in their abilities, they will try harder to succeed in speaking English.

Earl Stevick discussed these sources in a lecture he gave a few years ago at the Foreign Service Institute in Washington. He pointed out that there are four major classroom sources of motivation:

1. The joy of discovery. Students find it thrilling to discover something about a new language by themselves. If you direct the students to the point where they make a discovery about English rather than having it all explained to them? The benefit is more lasting. Not only are they apt to remember the point better, but they are stimulated to make further discoveries.

2. The satisfaction of control. Mastering new language material provides the students with feeling of confidence and accomplishment which is of paramount importance in sustaining their enthusiasm.

3. The joy of remembrance. When you occasionally have students return to material from an earlier stage of their language program, you give them a chance to do something they already know well with its resultant psychological rewards. In addition they have an illustration of how much progress they have made.

4. The elation of use/ If you can provide some way for students to use English outside the classroom, whether through contact with native speakers or writing to a pen pal in English, you will provide them with the best source of motivation of all – the elation that comes from truly communicating with native speakers.

Motivation is what makes the students want to converse. Students cannot be set down in groups, or sent off in pairs, and told to interact in the foreign language... but mostly it will need to be fostered by the intrinsic interest of the task proposed for the students concerned. Such interest will make the interaction which follows autonomous, a genuine communication from one person to another.

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