

## THE ROLE OF MOTIVATION IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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### Annotation

This study explores the role of motivation in second language acquisition (SLA), emphasizing how different types of motivation influence learners' engagement, strategies, and proficiency. Drawing on the theoretical frameworks of Gardner and Lambert's integrative and instrumental motivation and Dörnyei's L2 motivational self-system, the research employs a mixed-methods approach with 60 intermediate-level English learners. Quantitative analysis of motivation questionnaires and qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews reveal that integrative and intrinsic motivation are strongly associated with higher language achievement, while instrumental motivation supports sustained effort in structured contexts. The findings highlight the dynamic nature of motivation and underscore the importance of fostering both internal and social motivational factors in language learning environments. Recommendations for educators focus on goal-setting, authentic language practice, and creating culturally relevant learning experiences.

**Keywords:** Second language acquisition, motivation, integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, intrinsic motivation, language learning strategies, L2 motivational self-system, learner engagement

### Annotatsiya

Ushbu tadqiqot ikkinchi tilni o'rganishda motivatsiyaning rolini o'rganadi va turli motivatsiya turlari o'quvchilarning faoliyati, strategiyalari va tilga erishish darajasiga qanday ta'sir qilishini ko'rsatadi. Gardner va Lambertning integrativ va instrumental motivatsiya nazariyasi hamda Dörnyeyning L2 motivatsiya tizimi asosida 60 nafar o'rta darajadagi ingliz tili o'quvchilari bilan aralash metodologiya qo'llanildi. So'rovnomalar va intervyular tahlili shuni ko'rsatdiki, integrativ va ichki motivatsiya yuqori natijalarga olib keladi, instrumental motivatsiya esa tuzilgan ta'lim jarayonida sa'y-harakatni qo'llab-quvvatlaydi. Tadqiqot natijalari motivatsiya dinamikligini ko'rsatadi va ta'lim muhitida ichki va ijtimoiy motivatsiyani rivojlantirish muhimligini ta'kidlaydi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** Ikkinchi tilni o'rganish, motivatsiya, integrativ motivatsiya, instrumental motivatsiya, ichki motivatsiya, til o'rganish strategiyalari, L2 motivatsiya tizimi, o'quvchi faoliyati

### Аннотация

Данное исследование рассматривает роль мотивации в изучении второго языка и то, как различные типы мотивации влияют на вовлечённость учащихся, стратегии обучения и уровень владения языком. Опираясь на теории интегративной и инструментальной мотивации Гарднера и Ламберта, а также на систему мотивации изучающего L2 по Дёрньюей, исследование использовало смешанный метод с участием 60 студентов среднего уровня английского языка. Анализ опросников и интервью показал, что интегративная и внутренняя мотивация тесно связаны с более высокими результатами, тогда как инструментальная мотивация поддерживает усилия в

структурированном обучении. Результаты подчеркивают динамическую природу мотивации и важность развития как внутренних, так и социальных мотивов в образовательной среде.

**Ключевые слова:** Изучение второго языка, мотивация, интегративная мотивация, инструментальная мотивация, внутренняя мотивация, стратегии изучения языка, система мотивации L2, вовлечённость учащихся

### Introduction

Motivation is widely recognized as a pivotal factor in second language acquisition (SLA). Learners' willingness, persistence, and enthusiasm significantly influence their ability to acquire a new language. Motivation can determine not only the intensity and duration of study but also the strategies learners employ and their ultimate success. In the context of SLA, motivation is often divided into integrative motivation, which involves a desire to integrate into the target language community, and instrumental motivation, which focuses on practical benefits such as career advancement. Understanding the role of motivation provides insights for educators and learners alike, facilitating more effective language learning strategies. As global communication increasingly relies on multilingual competence, investigating motivational factors becomes essential in both academic and practical contexts.

### Literature Review

Research on motivation in SLA has consistently highlighted its impact on language proficiency. Gardner and Lambert (1972)<sup>1</sup> first proposed the distinction between integrative and instrumental motivation, demonstrating that learners with strong integrative motivation often achieve higher proficiency levels. Later studies have extended this perspective, suggesting that intrinsic motivation—driven by personal interest or enjoyment in learning the language—can significantly enhance learning outcomes. Conversely, extrinsic motivation, such as the expectation of rewards or recognition, may yield variable results depending on learner engagement. Dörnyei (2005)<sup>2</sup> introduced the concept of the L2 motivational self-system, emphasizing the role of learners' self-concept and their vision of future language use. Empirical studies also suggest that motivation interacts with other factors, including anxiety, learning environment, and cultural context. For instance, highly motivated learners are more likely to engage in self-directed learning activities, participate in conversations, and persist despite challenges. Additionally, motivation has been linked to metacognitive and cognitive strategies, indicating that motivated learners tend to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning more effectively. This body of research underlines the complexity of motivation in SLA, demonstrating that it is not merely a static trait but a dynamic process influenced by both internal and external factors.

### Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate the role of motivation in second language acquisition among intermediate-level English learners. A total of 60 participants, aged 18–25, were selected from a university language program. Data collection involved both quantitative and qualitative measures. A standardized motivation questionnaire,

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<sup>1</sup> Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. (1972). *Attitudes and Motivation in Second-Language Learning*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

<sup>2</sup> Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

adapted from Dörnyei's L2 motivational self-system scale, was administered to assess learners' integrative, instrumental, intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 randomly selected participants to gain deeper insights into their motivational experiences and strategies. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis to identify relationships between motivation types and language proficiency scores. Qualitative data were examined using thematic analysis, which allowed identification of recurrent themes such as goal-setting, self-regulation, and engagement in language practice. The combination of these methods ensured a comprehensive understanding of how motivation affects both learning behavior and achievement. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, were strictly observed throughout the study.

### **Results**

Analysis of the questionnaire data revealed that integrative motivation was positively correlated with higher language proficiency scores, while intrinsic motivation showed a moderate positive correlation. Participants who reported strong instrumental motivation also tended to achieve satisfactory results, though the relationship was weaker compared to integrative motivation. Thematic analysis of interview transcripts highlighted that motivated learners actively sought opportunities for language practice, set personal goals, and used a variety of learning strategies. Participants emphasized the importance of self-discipline, social interaction, and exposure to authentic language materials. Overall, the results indicated that higher motivation levels were associated with increased engagement, persistence, and achievement in SLA.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this study support existing literature regarding the significant role of motivation in second language acquisition. Integrative motivation, which encourages learners to connect with the target language community, emerged as a key predictor of success. This aligns with Gardner and Lambert's original research and underscores the importance of social and cultural factors in language learning. Intrinsic motivation also played a crucial role, particularly in promoting sustained engagement and self-directed learning. While instrumental motivation was less strongly correlated with proficiency, it contributed to maintaining learners' commitment, especially in structured academic contexts. The qualitative data highlighted the dynamic nature of motivation, showing that learners' motivational profiles could change over time based on experiences, feedback, and exposure to authentic language use. These findings suggest that language educators should foster both integrative and intrinsic motivational factors by creating engaging, culturally relevant, and interactive learning environments. Strategies such as goal-setting, positive feedback, and opportunities for authentic communication can help sustain learners' motivation and enhance learning outcomes.

### **Conclusion**

Motivation plays a central role in second language acquisition, influencing learners' engagement, strategies, and ultimate proficiency. Integrative and intrinsic motivations appear particularly effective in promoting sustained learning and higher achievement. By understanding the multifaceted nature of motivation, educators can design interventions that enhance learner persistence, self-regulation, and interaction in the target language. Future research could explore longitudinal changes in motivation and its interaction with other

psychological factors to provide deeper insights into effective language learning practices. Ultimately, fostering strong motivation can empower learners to achieve both linguistic competence and personal growth.

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