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Re-Fueling L2 learners' Motivation: Exploring ESL Undergraduate Learners' Perceptions about the Re-Motivating Factors of a Public Sector University in Pakistan. The Qualitative Approach

Abstract

L2/Second (English) motivation plays a considerable role in the successful L2 learning. However, L2 motivation is equally fluctuating and unstable due to numerous distracting influences, commonly known as L2 de-motivation. This highlights the need of energizing L2 learners in their struggle to learn L2 successfully. This becomes more important especially in the under-researched context of Pakistan where the L2 learners' motivation along with L2 de-motivation has been noted, due to numerous reasons. For this purpose, data from 20 ESL undergraduate learners of the Department of English of a remote and under-researched Kohat University of Science and Technology, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan was collected through the semi-structured interviews. Applying the thematic analysis on the data, it was revealed that the L2 learners perceive that friendly and cooperative L2 teachers, L2 communicative and interactive methods, helping classmates, increasing their L2 self-confidence, use of information technology, room for correcting their L2 mistakes, and reducing their L2 speaking anxiety can re-motivate them towards learning L2. Moreover, they believe that learning L2 is important not only for their academic achievements but also for their personal and national growth/development, getting jobs and also de-motivated due to the L2 teachers and lower grades in L2. Another interesting and extremely noted finding of the study in the context of Pakistan is the underlying notion of resilience—the belief and consequent struggle to work hard in the face of numerous L2 de-motivational factors. Keeping in view such findings, there is a need to focus on the learners and especially their various individual variables. Moreover, it suggests to adopt interesting teaching methods and collaborative environment in the classroom so that L2 learning can be maximized in the context of Pakistan and also across the world.

Key Words: L2 Motivation; L2 Re-Motivation; L2 De-motivation and L2 Learners.

1. Introduction

The recent research and educational paradigm of learning and teaching in general and especially in language education have focused on what is commonly labeled as the learner-centered approach. Thus, it can be argued that L2 learners' choices, concerns and especially their individual variables such as L2 motivation, L2 de-motivation and L2 anxiety are believed to play a significant role in the successful as well as the unsuccessful L2 learning. Resultantly, many researchers such as Dornyei (2005), Garret (2010), Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) and Horwitz (2010, 2016) focused on the L2 learners' various individual variables of L2 motivation, L2 attitudes, L2 de-motivation and L2 anxiety respectively in various countries in the world. However, most of these studies like in the field of L2 de-motivation such as Chambers (1993), Dornyei (1998), Falout et al. (2009) and Krishnan and Pathan (2013) have focused on identifying various reasons

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only what are commonly known as L2 de-motivational factors. Additionally, studies such as Dornyei (1990), Clement et al. (1994), Lamb (2004), Akram (2007) and Ali et al. (2015) also noted that the L2 learners have high level of L2 motivation. So, these studies highlight that L2 learners are motivated but also feels demotivated while learning English, especially in their classroom setting due to numerous factors which result in the decrease and so the unsuccessful L2 learning. While on the other side, these studies also highlight the urgency to re-motivate the de-motivated L2 learners. So, it can be argued that there is a need of conducting more studies on exploring the learners' perceptions about suggesting ways of recovering their diminished or reduced L2 de-motivation in the shape of re-motivational factors in the fields of L2 motivation and de-motivation as also highly recommended recently by Song and Kim (2015) and Kim and Kim (2020). The need of exploring L2 learners' perceptions about L2 re-motivational factors becomes more critical in the context of Pakistan and especially Khyber Pakhtunkhwa which are under-researched in the field of L2 education (Ali, 2016).

2. Literature Review

Before highlighting the critical review of the existing literature on L2 re-motivation, a brief overview of the L2 motivation, L2 de-motivation is important. The main reason is that L2 learners while developing L2 re-motivating perceptions and strategies, may be significantly considering at the same, his/her L2 motivation as well as L2 de-motivational factors. Second, these three constructs are overlapping on the pendulum of L2 motivation and thus are also discussed together in L2 motivation literature. Ushioda (1998) and Dornyei and Ushioda (2011) and Akay (2017) are also of the same opinions that L2 learners can be at the same motivated, de-motivated and also thinking about regulating themselves to overcome the de-motivational factors in the shape of L2 re-motivation. For instance, studies such as Chambers (1993, 1999) and Yashima et al. (2009) while focusing exclusively on identifying L2 learners' de-motivational factors, also recommended to re-motivate the L2 learners. Similarly, Ushioda (1998) and Hamada (2014) while exploring the L2 learners' motivation also touched upon the L2 de-motivation and also put forward the ideas of how to re-motivate these L2 learners. L2 motivation in simple words is the L2 learners' desire, willingness and efforts to learn L2 as explained by Gardner (1985), Dornyei (1990, 2003, 2005), Lamb (2004), Islam et al. (2013) and Ali et al. (2015). All these studies reported that L2 learners are motivated towards learning L2 due to various reasons, including in the context of Pakistan. Among these are instrumental (learning L2 for getting jobs and passing exams), knowledge, extrinsic, intrinsic, international posture (willingness to interact with the global L2 users in various contexts), L2 national interest (learning L2 for promoting own country), L2 Islamic interest (learning L2 for promoting Islam and presenting its acceptable image to the world) and prestige.

In contrast to L2 motivation, L2 de-motivation as per Dornyei (2001:143) is the *"specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioural intention or an ongoing action"*. So, it can be argued that L2 de-motivation is the downside of the L2 motivation which can slow down and obstruct the L2 successful learning among the L2 learners. Studies such as Kikuchi (2009), Kim and Seo (2012) and Horwitz (2016) noted that there are numerous distracting L2 de-motivational factors in various contexts across the world, including Pakistan. Among those are such as L2 teacher's bad attitudes, boring L2 teaching methods, especially the grammar translation method, strict classroom environment and L2 anxiety, especially L2 speaking anxiety among the L2 learners. Interestingly, most of the L2 de-motivational oriented studies, strongly suggest to explore the ways of re-motivating these de-motivated L2 learners which the current study has targeted.

L2 re-motivation is what Ushioda (1998: 86) terms *"is the process of getting the motivation on-line again"* by the L2 learners. In short, L2 re-motivation is the idea or struggle of gaining the lost or reduced L2 motivation due to certain L2 de-motivational factors. Thus, L2 re-motivation like L2 motivation and L2 de-motivation can be equally and perhaps more helpful in the successful L2 learning and can also provide meaningful insights for both the L2 learners and L2 teachers for adopting relevant L2 learning and teaching strategies in the L2 classroom (Jung, 2011) and Kim et al. (2017). However, studies on L2 re-motivation as compared to L2 motivation and L2 de-motivation in general across the world and in particular in Pakistan are limited.

The critical review of the existing literature on L2 re-motivation highlights various L2 re-motivational factor by the L2 learners in various contexts in the world. Among those and perhaps the most frequent is the L2 learners' desire of having cooperative and competent L2 teacher as a vital source of their L2 re-motivation as

consistently noted in many studies such as Chambers (1993, 1999) and Ushioda (1998) in the UK, Trang and Baldauf (2007) in Vietnam, Jung (2011) and Shin and Kim (2017) in Japan. The main reason can be that L2 teacher has a dominant position in L2 education system especially in the non native countries including Pakistan as reported by Hafeez (2004) and Lamb (2017).

Another key L2 re-motivational factor is the practice of the L2 communicative and interactive methods in the classroom by the L2 teacher as highlighted by many studies such as Falout (2012) and Hamada (2014) in Japan, Sahragard and Ansaripour (2014) in Iran, Kim and Kim (2020) in Korea. Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) in Japan and Gopang et al. (2015, 2018) and Ali and Pathan (2017) in Pakistan also lamented the excessive mono-method of grammar translation method which slows down the successful L2 learning among the L2 learners. Closely connected to the use of L2 communicative methods is the acceptance and tolerance of the L2 learners' mistakes, especially while speaking L2 by the teachers and also other class mates as a L2 re-motivational resource among the L2 learners as noted by Falout (2012) and also recommended by Li and Zhou (2017) and Zhang (2020) in China and Iqbal and Yongbing (2018) in Pakistan. Similarly, the third L2 re-motivational factor as perceived by the L2 learners is the friendly and cooperative relation among the classmates as reported by Trang and Baldauf (2007) and Akay (2017). This becomes more relevant and also important in the context like Pakistan where the shared culture exists and thus can be potentially a key source of L2 re-motivation among the L2 learners.

Another L2 re-motivational factor is the use of information technology both inside and outside the classroom setting as recommended by Kikuchi (2009, 2017) in Japan and Ali (2016) in Pakistan. Keeping in view the extensive use of the information technology by the L2 learners in Pakistan, this can be a significant factor in re-motivating the L2 learners. Summarizing these various L2 re-motivational factors, it can be said that L2 learners perceive that the external factors like cooperative L2 teacher can energize their L2 learning. However, many studies highlighted many internal re-motivational factors of the L2 learners in various contexts in the world which are believed to be more powerful L2 re-motivational factors than the external L2 re-motivational resources (Akay, 2017).

Among the internal L2 re-motivational factors include increasing L2 learners' self-confidence in learning L2. Many studies, especially in the Asian context like Falout and Maruyama (2004), Falout et al. (2009) in Japan, Kim (2015) in Korea and Ahamd et al. (2017) and Samad (2014) in Pakistan noted that L2 learners are faced with the issue of lack/reduced and even loss of their belief in learning L2 successfully. Interestingly, other L2 self related construct such as L2 self-efficacy (Trang and Baldauf, 2007), Ushioda (1998) and Falout (2012) and L2 motivational orientations like L2 self-determination have been emerged in studies like Al et al. (2015) and Islam et al. (2013) in Pakistan. It is to mention that L2 teacher especially and other factors like using L2 in the classroom and also with the classmates can be a strong sources of L2 re-motivating the L2 learners.

Another key internal L2 re-motivating factor as perceived by the L2 learners is the reduction of their L2 anxiety, notably their frequent and also mostly worried L2 speaking anxiety as suggested by Samad (2014), Khattak et al. (2011), Gopang et al. (2015, 2019), Park (2014) and Temouri et al. (2019). L2 Anxiety (L2 learners' fear and apprehension in the use and learning of L2 can be addressed through encouragement from the L2 teachers, L2 classmates and accommodating their L2 mistakes and lack of vocabulary.

The last but not the least and perhaps the most recent and important but equally under-researched L2 re-motivation factor is the L2 learners' resilience. The L2 resilience is the L2 learners' conscious energizing cognition and the intentional and actual efforts to work harder in the face of many existing L2 demotivational factors (Kim and Kim, 2020) and Luthar et al. (2000). Various sub-components of the L2 resilience such as L2 self confidence, understanding the scope of learning L2 in academic and practical life, developing good social relations with others L2 users and learners are noted by Kim et al. (2017, 2018), Kim et al. (2019) and Kim and Kim (2020) in Korea and also by Li et al. (2020) and Liu et al. (2020) in China. Moreover, as concluded recently by Kim and Kim (2020) that L2 resilience have a considerable relation with and also impact on the L2 motivation, de-motivation and also indirectly on the L2 learners' L2 achievement. Quite recently, but only one study of Pathan et al. (2020) in the Baluchistan province of Pakistan also noted that L2 resilience existed among the L2 learners and is believed to be a powerful L2 re-motivating factor among the L2 learners. However, this study is limited to one province in Pakistan. Based on the critical review of literature on L2 re-motivation factors, this study has developed the following main research question;

3. Research Question

Q1. What are the ESL undergraduate learners' perceptions about the L2 re-motivational factors?

4. Qualitative Research Design, Data collecting and Analyzing Procedures

In order to investigate properly the research question, qualitative research design was developed as suggested and also practiced by many researchers such as Trang and Baldauf (2007) and Hamada (2014). We adopted the qualitative research method due to the complex nature of the whole field of L2 motivation including L2 re-motivation as strongly recommended by Dornyei and Ushioda (2011) and Silverman (2005). Second, we believe that qualitative method of inquiry would help in digging out some interesting and also in details not only the L2 re-motivational but also the L2 motivation and L2 de-motivational factors of the L2 learners as also emerged in Ali (2016) and Islam (2013) studies, conducted in Pakistan.

The semi-structured instrument as per Dornyei (2007) was developed based on the findings of some key and well quoted studies such as Trang and Baldauf (2007), Kim et al. (2017), Kim et al. (2018, 2019), Kim and Kim (2020) and Pathan et al. (2020). The participants were the L2 learners from the Department of English, KUST and the all the research protocols were followed.

5. Representation of the Findings of the Thematic Analysis

The findings of the study are broadly categorized into main L2 re-motivational factors and also sub themes of L2 motivation, L2 de-motivation and interestingly into cluster of these three themes which clearly reflects the complex nature of L2 motivation field as pointed out by Dornyei and Ryan (2015).

5.1 L2 Teacher's Related L2 Re-Motivating Factor

17 out of total 20 participants revealed their L2 teachers' as a L2 re-motivational factor. The most frequent L2 re-motivational factor is the L2 learners' desire of having accessible, flexible and cooperative teacher. As revealed by the participant (L13) in this way; *"I become very much active and energetic when my teacher welcomes my every question which I ask and answer me. So, such behaviour, I would like in every teacher in my department."* This quote reflects teacher with cooperative teaching can re-motivate the participant as also noted by Trang and Baldauf (2007). Similarly, another participant (L04) attached L2 re-motivation with the L2 teacher's cooperation and competency. *"Teacher's willingness to respond quickly and friendly to my questions, will definitely encourage me to work hard. Second, when I see that my teacher is well prepared in the topic and provides every details of the topic, inspires me"*. This quote also represents that the participant not only attaches L2 re-motivation with the L2 teacher but his competency in teaching the topic also inspires the participant to work hard in learning English.

5.2 Use of L2 Communicative Methods as a L2 Re-motivating Factor

Total 15 out of 20 participants expressed their desire of using the L2 communicative methods while teaching and learning English in classroom as revealed by the participant (L02) in this manner; *"We are exposed to watching the board and writing all the time what our teachers write on it. We learn the written things by our heart and cannot use what we learn.... We want that teachers should make us to speak English"*. The participant gives hints about the focus on the practice of grammar translation method where the L2 learners are supposed to note the grammar rules and memorize the same as lamented by Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) and Alrabai (2014).

5.3 Cooperative Relation with the Classmates as a L2 Re-Motivating Factor

To our surprise, 17 out of 20 participants in the study, perceive that their class mates cooperation considerably contribute towards their both L2 re-motivation and L2 de-motivation in learning English as expressed by the participant (L07); *"We are facing problems from our teachers, but sir, we are cooperating with our classmates.... studying together and sharing our notes and ideas in our groups. We are motivated in this way a lot."* Interestingly, the participant (011) communicated that; *"Some classmates sometimes laugh at my English.... and have tensed me too much. Still, I am part of our classmates and we are learning and using English together. Sir, English I like and is used in the world, so everyone must learn it"*. This quote shows that the participant is facing L2 anxiety, L2 re-motivation and L2 motivation at the same time as also noted by Samad (2014) and Ali (2016).

5.4 Use of Information Technology as a L2 Re-Motivating Factor

Similarly, 16 out of 20 participants are using information technology for keeping themselves re-motivated both inside and outside the classroom in learning English as expressed by the participant (L01) in this manner; *"Sir, our teachers just give brief lectures. Therefore, we use internet to get more information and so we learn more English materials. We need more information technology like computers in our class for easy learning"*

of English". Additionally, another participant (15) also shared the views like; "Sir no problem if I can't learn English in the classroom whatever the reasons are. I got internet facility and learn so many things and quite happy about it. I am also using internet for my enjoyment of learning English too". This quote throws light not only on L2 de-motivational factors but also the use of information technology by the participant as a L2 re-motivational resource for learning L2 successfully. Importantly, the participant also has the intrinsic type of motivation towards learning English as also noted by Ali et al. (2015) and Shahbaz and Liu (2012) in Pakistan.

5.5 Increasing L2 learners' Self-Confidence as aL2 Re-Motivating Factor

Total 13 out of 20 participants expressed that they need to boost up their belief in the successful English learning as told by a participant (L09); "Most of time, I think that I cannot learn English, sir. I think learning English is not so easy. While, English is important language. My teachers if appreciate my English and also help me, I start feeling to work hard". This quote guides us not only the lack of the L2 learners' self-confidence, but also her awareness about the importance of English and also how to reduce the lack of L2 self-confidence as also suggested by Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) and Iqbal and Yongbing (2018).

5.6 Reducing L2 learners' Anxiety as a L2 Re-Motivating Factor

Total 11 out of 20 participants expressed their feelings of L2 learning and L2 speaking Anxiety and are believing to be re-motivated with couple of suggestions as expressed by a participant (13); "I am afraid of saying something in English in front of my friends, class fellows and sir specially in front of teachers in classroom". This quote is clearly focused on the participant's L2 Anxiety due to some factors, notably due to L2 teacher as also noted by Samad (2014), Khattak et al. (2011) and Horwitz (2017).

5.7 L2 learners' Resilience as aL2 Re-Motivating Factor

To our surprise, interesting L2 re-motivating factor in the shape of L2 learners' resilience (15 out of 20 participants) emerged in the data, though there were some blurred prints of the same re-motivating in other factors as noted in the above findings. For instance, the participant (L05) expressed as; "Learning English is not so easy. So, I am making efforts to learn English by being with friendly classmates and any student like my junior and also seniors to help me". This quote indicates on one side that L2 learners have the challenge of the difficult nature of learning English, yet on other side, it is in line with the social related L2 learner's resilience as a kind of L2 re-motivating resource by the participant as also noted by Li et al. (2020), Liu et al. (2020), Kim et al. (2018, 2019) and Pathan et al. (2020). Similarly, another participant (19) expressed; "I have many issues, for example, cannot speak fluently, having less vocabulary. But, sir, English is an international language and its learning is very important for me and for my family too and for global use. That is why, I am loving and learning with my great steps." This quote represents that the participant have positive attitudes towards English as an International Language and also learning English for instrumental and international posture (Yashima, 2002). Moreover, being motivated and also having positive attitudes (Dornyei, 2005), the participant is determined to learn English which is the representation of the participant's resilience as also noted by Kim et al. (2017). Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) also lamented that the negative attitudes can demotivate the L2 learners.

5.8 L2 learners' L2 Motivation and De-Motivation Factors

The data revealed the L2 learners' L2 motivational and L2 de-motivational factors (18 out of 20) as expressed by participant (06); "I like English, I am interested to learn English, my parents also want to learn English. English is an important and global English". This small quote shows a number of L2 motivational factors such as the positive attitudes towards English, parents' support and also awareness about the global status of English as also noted by Sonda (2011) and Ali et al. (2011). Similarly, another participant (08) also expressed; "Learning English will give me confidence, knowledge, information, make more valuable person in society and promote me, my religion and also my Pakistan". This quote is the summary of the many L2 motivational orientations such as knowledge, prestige, L2 national and Islamic Interests as also noted by Bradford (2007), Yashima (2002), Lamb (2004), Islam et al. (2013) and Ali et al. (2015).

Last but not the least, another participant have the recent conceptualization of L2 motivation what is called as the Ideal L2 self (Dornyei, 2005, Islam et al. 2020) but at the same time, has L2 de-motivation too as expressed; "My better future, my better personality and my success, I am watching are associated with learning English". But, sir, English has disturbed me...English is difficult and I am not getting good marks in it". However, the idea of L2 de-motivational factors such as bad L2 teachers, class fellows, strict marking and mono-method of grammar translation in teaching as also lamented by Samad (2014), Ali and Pathan (2017), is expressed clearly by the following quotes of the participants (L09, L20) respectively; "Teachers are very strict, my class

fellows sometime are not helping as they consider me weak in English. There is too much noise in English. English exams are also tough. So, I can't study English, sir". "I am not going to learn and use English to my university. I am going to learn some grammar and has to use in few sentences. Sir, my teachers are just giving lectures and we are silent like machines'. sir do something regarding this".

5.9 Frequency of the Various Emerged L2 Re-Motivating Factors

Now, the frequency of the emerged various L2 re-motivational factors is presented in the following table which was done manually.

S.NO	Emerged L2 Learners' L2 Re-Motivational Factors	Percentage
01	L2 Teacher's Related Re-Motivating Factor	17/20= 85%
02	Use of L2 Communicative Methods as a Re-motivating Factor	15/20=75%
03	Cooperative Relation with Classmates as Re-Motivating Factor	17/20=85%
04	Use of Information Technology as a Re-Motivating Factor	16/20= 80%
05	Increasing L2 learners' Self- Confidence as a Re-Motivating Factor	13/20=65%
06	Reducing L2 learners' Anxiety as a Re-Motivating Factor	11/20=55%
07	L2 learners' Resilience as a Re-Motivating Factor	15/20=75%

As it can be noted from the above table that the L2 learners' perceive their L2 teachers and also use of information technology as the highest L2 re-motivational factors, which are followed by the use of L2 communicative methods and L2 learners' resilience as the second top most L2 re-motivational factors in their learning English.

10 Discussion

The main purpose of the current study was to explore the L2 learners' perceptions about the L2 re-motivational factors. The study revealed that the L2 learners have the positive perceptions and also exploit in most case various L2 re-motivational factors to regain their affected L2 motivation while learning English. These emerged L2 re-motivational factors in this are: friendly and cooperative teacher, L2 communicative and interactive methods, helping classmates, increasing their L2 self confidence, use of information technology, room for correcting their mistakes in L2, reducing their L2 speaking anxiety and their L2 resilience to learn English. These findings are in line with other well referenced studies such as Kim et al. (2017), Trang and Baldauf (2007), Falout et al. (2009), Jing (2011), Falout (2012), Akay (2017) and Kim and Kim (2020), Li et al. (2020) and Pathan et al. (2020). However, in contrast to these studies, many L2 re-motivational factors were identified by the L2 learners in the study. This may be due to the reason that the L2 learners are mature, having much exposure to use and learning of L2 and also may be highly motivated as noted recently by Ali (2016) in the same university. However, it will be interesting to further explore such numerous L2 re-motivational factors in the context of world and especially in the context of Pakistan.

Another interesting finding is the emergence of both L2 motivational and L2 de-motivational factors. Among the L2 motivational factors are the various orientations such as L2 instrumental, global status of English, the positive attitudes, prestige orientations, L2 national and Islamic Interests and Ideal L2 Self. These various L2 motivational orientations are also emerged across the world including in Pakistan such as Lamb (2004) and Bradford (2007) in Indonesia, Dornyei (1990, 2005) in Hungary, Yashima (2002) in Japan, Islam et al. (, 2013, 2020) and Ali et al. (2015) in Pakistan and in same University. Similarly, L2 de-motivational factors emerged in the study are related to the strict attitudes of L2 teachers, L2 anxiety, specially speaking anxiety and not getting the expected marks in English which are also noted by Sakai and Kikuchi (2009), Kim (2015), Horwitz et al. (1986) and Ali (201) in the same university and also by Samad (2014).

On the basis of findings, it can be recommended that though L2 learners are motivated, but at the same need more L2 re-motivational strategies. Among them, includes enhancing their L2 self-confidence, using L2 communicative methods, reducing their L2 Anxiety, be cooperative and also adopting positive attitudes towards the L2 learners by the L2 teachers. Similarly, both external and internal L2 re-motivational factors may be considered in teaching English to them so that they can regain their L2 motivation which will definitely contribute in their successful English learning. However, it may be noted that this study is limited to a department and also to one university. Thus, such findings cannot be generalized, though this study can stimulate further research in L2 re-motivation. Similarly, there is a need of including many participants in further studies.

11 Conclusion

This study targeted the very less but very important L2 learners' re-motivational factors in the under-researched context as well as the under-explored public sector university of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Adopting the qualitative research method and applying thematic analysis on the data collected through the semi-structured instrument, it was noted that L2 learners have clear cut perceptions and also exploit various L2 re-motivational factors for the purpose of the successful English learning. However, this study is limited due to targeting one university and also adopting the qualitative research methods only.

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