

Newsletter No. 7

Workshop in November

Date: November 10, 2018, 10:30-14:30

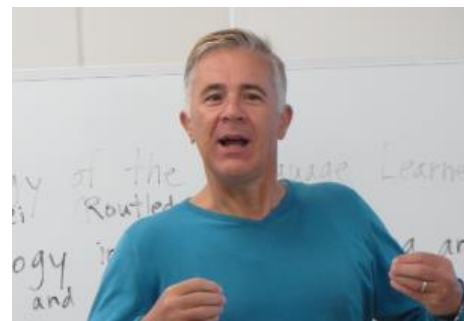
Venue: NSC College, Room 31

Presenter: Stephen Ryan (Waseda University)

Title: “Motivation in English Language Learning”

Abstract:

Recent years have witnessed a huge surge in research into the motivation to learn a foreign language, with Japan-based research being at the forefront of this trend. In this workshop, we will look at some of the ways in which thinking about motivation and language learning is changing, with a particular focus on the relationships between theory and practice. Much motivation research, especially in the Japanese context, starts from the underlying premise that motivation is a problem but in this workshop the aim is to reframe language learning motivation in a more optimistic, educationally friendly light.



The number of participants: 26

1. Interesting activities you might want to use in your class. Why?

- I'd like to talk about what our motivation and benefits of doing activities are with students. They will recognize they are motivated to work with the activities.
- I will try to be more aware of my own motivation as a main focus, rather than the students' motivation. If a lesson does not work out how I thought, I need to step back and review my own motivation and effort I put into my work.
- I want to ask my students ‘What is your goal in your life?’ and ‘What kind of person do you want to be?’ to have them a goal to study.
- I'm still a student now, but I will be careful when I praise students.

2. What you learned from today's workshop

- It was very helpful to examine external vs. internal motivation and what affects each. As a teacher, I assumed my role was to motivate students, but looking at the model of Domyei's L2 motivational self-system made me realize that my thoughts were a little too simplistic. I got the most out of the indirect ways that students can motivate students.
- Motivation is very important in learning language and it is the center of learning. They have bright motivation and dark motivation.
- I was able to have a deep insight about motivation. I notice that there is a dark, negative side of motivation. I want to motivate my students more. So I will improve my way of



teaching English and be more attractive person for my students.

- I learned the nature of motivation and the ability to assess it and its application in my teaching context.
- I always think about what kind of activities make students excite. In addition, I have to think about what motivation means to students.

3. Questions and Answers

Q (1): I'm really curious about the development of self-system and how our own self-systems influence our perception of our students' self-system. Moreover I'm wondering if teachers may have a tendency towards similar vision of ideal self.

A: This is an important area that is just starting to attract serious attention. If you google the work of Magdalena Kubanyiova, you should find a lot of work on this topic. An interesting Japan-based study is: Kumazawa, M. (2013). Gaps too large: Four novice EFL teachers' self-concept and motivation. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 33, 45-55. Here is another one from Korea:

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.1023.1282&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.

The consensus seems to be that ideal selves are very important for language teachers too.

Q (2): Can you visualize MSS as a model?

A: Another good question, and my honest answer is “No”. I think that rather than as a model it is better to think of the L2MSS as a useful metaphor. I think the important thing about the L2MSS is that it is dynamic, always changing. Older models tried to describe motivation as something fixed and ordered. The L2MSS starts from the point that motivation is constantly changing, often unpredictable, therefore it's not really a model. In my view, the L2MSS should not be considered as a scientific model but as a helpful starting point for discussing and understanding learner motivation.



Q (3): I couldn't understand the L2MSS. Could you explain once again with an example of this system?

A: A simple explanation of the L2MSS is that language learners are balancing their dreams with their responsibilities and when these are in harmony the motivation to learn increases. Everybody has dreams, responsibilities and interpretations of the past. For example, imagine if I were learning Japanese. I might have various images of myself speaking Japanese well in different situations. Some of these may motivate me but others won't. Perhaps, I also have professional responsibilities to use Japanese more, and maybe some of my colleagues expect this of me. Now, some of my visions of myself using Japanese are tied to responsibilities that I feel to other people; the motivation becomes more powerful. It is a part of myself, of who I am. Finally, I may think of experiences of using Japanese professionally from my past. Some interpretations may support my efforts to learn while others may discourage me.

These visions of the future, these responsibilities to others, these interpretations of the past, are always changing.

Q (4): As a researcher, how do you measure motivation? In my opinion, self-rating is too subjective to generalize theories and modelings.

A: I really don't think you can measure motivation, but this requires a huge shift in our basic approach to theory and research. In the early part of my career, I spent a lot of time trying to work with generalizable models and measurements of motivation. However, one day I received the following in an email. This changed my thinking:

We are not doing science, we are doing the difficult stuff. Science was developed for the physical world. We deal with the symbolic world of abstract conceptualizations such as motivation, intention, goals, rewards, wishes, imagined futures. So we don't do science; we explore phenomena of interest.

(Schumann, cited in Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015)

My belief now is that the scientific model just does not work with the internal worlds of language learners. I think that broad patterns and types are more suitable to this kind of investigation. This is difficult, but exciting.



Q (5): Which is more effective and long-lasting, mastery goal orientation or performance goal?

A: According to the literature, mastery goals are believed to be far more effective in long-term activities such as language learning. However, the problem is that these orientations can be very deep within individuals and difficult to change. As teachers we can have a lot of indirect influence on how learners' goal orientations develop. Performance goals are very easy to set but they often have very negative long-term consequences; performance goals often cause us to give up when we fail.

Q (6): How can we make our students more productive in our class?

A: There are many ways and some things will work with some students but not others. I think that an important concept to consider is 'engagement'. Engagement refers to the 'psychological investment' learners make in their classes. This may be more practical or meaningful than motivation, especially in cases where learners are not learning languages through their own individual choice.

Q (7): I heard the words 'inner-reward' and 'outer-reward'. I want to know more about 'inner-reward' activities.

A: There are many different terms for what is basically the same distinction; the distinction between being directed by an internal sense of well-being and efforts being directed by external concerns. However, I think all of these distinctions have three points in common: people need to feel in control of their actions and that they have made their own decisions; people need to feel connected to other people; people need to feel competent, that they are doing something they are capable. 'Inner rewards' occur when we feel all of these.

Q (8): Reward will be messed up. What do you think about the posters on rewards to unarrested criminals? Effective?

A: Actually rewards for wanted criminals is a great example of some of the problems with trying to direct

human behavior through incentives. Firstly, the police often complain that rewards create an extra workload that prevents them from doing the necessary work to find the wanted criminals. Secondly, it is quite common for people who give the police important evidence to refuse any financial reward. It seems that one of the main reasons that rewards are still used is to attract media attention rather than to get important evidence by paying for it.



Q (9): I want Dr. Ryan’s books. Please let us know more information.

A: Here are two suggestions. The first is aimed at practicing teachers: *Exploring Psychology in Language Learning and Teaching*

https://www.amazon.co.jp/Exploring-Psychology-Language-Learning-Handbooks/dp/0194423999/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1542160679&sr=8-1&keywords=Exploring+Psychology+in+Language+Learning+and+Teaching

The second is more theoretical: *The Psychology of the Language Learner Revisited*

https://www.amazon.co.jp/Psychology-Language-Revisited-Acquisition-Research/dp/1138018740/ref=pd_bxgy_img_2?encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=1138018740&pd_rd_r=bacb3533-e7b0-11e8-827b-5bd42fc1c9b6&pd_rd_w=IHCVG&pd_rd_wg=L5pi1&pf_rd_i=desktop-dp-sims&pf_rd_m=AN1VRQENFRJN5&pf_rd_p=56bff0e8-7153-4d12-8b93-74fd26aa20e1&pf_rd_r=VNA673RWAC348AFV1VF7&pf_rd_s=desktop-dp-sims&pf_rd_t=40701&psc=1&refRID=VNA673RWAC348AFV1VF7

Action Research Session

Date: November 10, 2018, 14:30-17:00

Venue: NSC College, Room 41, 51

Advisers: Kazuyoshi Sato, Duane Kindt, Juanita Heigham (NUFS)

The number of participants: 12



Next Workshop (scheduled)

Date: December 8, 2018 10:30-14:30, 14:30-17:00

Venue: NSC College, Room 31

Presenter: Darren Elliot (Nanzan University)

Title: “Technology for the EFL Classroom”