International Journal of Research in English Education

Motivation to Read in a Second Language: A Review of Literature

*Tahir Jahan Khan[1] , Azlina Murad Sani[2] , Sarimah Shaik-Abdullah[3]

[1] School of Education and Modern Languages, Universiti Utara Malaysia

[2] School of Education and Modern Languages, Universiti Utara Malaysia

[3] School of Education and Modern Languages, Universiti Utara Malaysia

E-mail: tjniazi2015@gmail.com

Received: September 6, 2017 Accepted: November 6, 2017 Online Published: December 20, 2017

Abstract

Reading motivation is a well-researched topic in relation to first language literacy development due to its influence on both reading processes and outcomes. In second language reading, the role of motivation has not been as thoroughly explored. The aim of this review of literature is to highlight established studies as well as recent explorations in some recurring areas of first and second language reading motivation research. Focusing on reading in the English language, it provides an overview of the underlying components of reading motivation, and discusses internal and external factors that relate to students' motivation to read. The article concludes by suggesting directions for further research in second language reading motivation, including conducting more qualitative studies, and exploring sociocultural influences and instructional practices that motivate or demotivate readers. The review is mainly intended for potential second language reading researchers and practitioners who are relatively new to the topic.

Keywords: ESL, literature review, motivational factors, reading motivation

1. Introduction

Motivation is associated with the idea of impetus, or being moved to take action (Ryan & Deci, 2000). People who are motivated pursue activities positively, whether it is to perform a task, pass an academic subject or achieve a personal goal. In motivational processes, there are elements of choice, persistence, and effort; individuals may decide whether or not to follow a particular goal, how long they will sustain in related activities, and how hard they will work towards the achievement of their goal (Dornyei, 2000). Research has shown that various factors contribute in dynamic ways towards one's motivation to accomplish a particular task. These motivational factors stimulate individuals with energy, interest, and effort to fulfill their own desires, needs, goals and self-expectations, as well as the expectations of others (Dornyei & Otto, 1998).

Reading, on one level, is concerned with the skills and strategies needed in order to perform related tasks proficiently, such as phonemic awareness, decoding skills, word recognition, vocabulary, and comprehension. On another equally important level, it is concerned with motivation, i.e., the impetus to fully learn and make use of the above skills and strategies (Wigfield, Gladstone, & Turci, 2016). Cambria and Guthrie (2010) point out that a student may have the skills to read, but without the will to read, he or she is not likely to become a good reader. Hence, motivation should not be ignored, regardless of whether a learner is developing reading skills in the first language (L1) or second language (L2).

In this article, we provide a review of studies regarding motivation to read. We begin with a brief theoretical overview of reading, followed by details on motivational aspects. As L1 reading motivation theory and research have in many ways informed the work conducted on L2 reading motivation, L1 studies are reviewed first, followed by L2 studies. We conclude by suggesting among others, that qualitative studies on the influence of socio-cultural factors would be a potentially fruitful direction for future research on L2 reading motivation.

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[DOI: 10.29252/ijree.2.4.41]

2. Reading: Basic Tenets

While reading is generally understood as making meaning from written texts, it is more comprehensively defined as a complex synergy of processes that skilled readers perform when they read (Grabe, 2009). Reading involves a coordination of lower level processes such as word recognition and applying knowledge of vocabulary, grammar as well as discourse features, and higher level processes such as interpretation, inferencing, comprehension monitoring, and critical evaluation (Grabe, 2009).

Numerous general reading models have been developed since the 1970s to explain what skilled reading entails. Top down models such as Goodman (1976) and Smith (1971) argue that effective reading is conceptually driven, and that a dependence on contextual information leads to more fluent reading (Stanovich, 1984). In contrast, bottom up or data driven models, for example, LaBerge and Samuels (1974) emphasize decoding skills and maintain that lower level processes must take place before higher level processes. Later models such as Stanovich (1984) and Bernhardt (2011) explain reading from an interactive compensatory perspective, which proposes that lower level data driven processes and higher level concept driven processes co-occur, facilitating each other towards reading comprehension.

At least two general reading models incorporate elements of affect. Ruddell and Speaker's (1985) interactive model postulates that affective factors such as interests, attitudes, and values help to set reader expectations and boost attention and perseverance in reading. Mathewson's (1994) affective model of reading specifically identifies motivation as an affective variable that could influence reading. This model locates motivation alongside attitude and other emotions as elements affecting a reader's decision to read, which further influences attention and comprehension processes as well as recall, reflection, and application of reading. However, neither model focuses on motivational factors in particular. Frameworks that specifically describe reading motivation are summarized below.

3. Components of Reading Motivation

Reading motivation is usually explained from an educational psychology perspective rather than a language learning perspective, and primarily involves concepts and processes drawn from motivation theories (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). These include goal orientations, competence beliefs (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000) and task value (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996). Readers seem to have an inclination towards either a task mastery (intrinsic) orientation or a performance goal (extrinsic) orientation. An intrinsically motivated reader would be driven by reading for its own sake, while an extrinsically motivated reader would be driven by external demands and values (Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Wang & Guthrie, 2004). With regards to reading outcomes, a desire for task mastery combined with a belief in one's personal capability to read is expected to result in persistence and effort to read (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). In addition, motivation may also be influenced by expectations of success or failure that a reader has when approaching a reading task, as well as the value he or she places on the task (Gambrell et al., 1996).

A large number of reading motivation studies have applied the multidimensional taxonomy of reading motivation proposed by Wigfield and Guthrie (1997). In this taxonomy, the concept of reading motivation has eleven underlying components or factors: efficacy, challenge, curiosity, reading involvement, importance, recognition, grades, social, competition, compliance, and reading work avoidance. A later framework proposes eight factors, under two major motivational components, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Wang & Guthrie, 2004). Wang and Guthrie (2004) suggest that intrinsic motivation comprises three underlying factors: curiosity (wanting to read on a specific topic due to interest); involvement (experiencing pleasure from reading); and challenge (gaining satisfaction from deciphering complex ideas). Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, has five underlying factors: competition (wanting to outdo others in the activity of reading); compliance (wanting to adhere to rules and instructions given), recognition for reading (wanting to receive recognition and gratification for success in reading), grades (expecting good academic evaluations for reading) and social (wanting to share readings with one's social network). The well-established Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997), which incorporates the above factors, has been adopted and adapted extensively in reading motivation research to date.

Taking a slightly different perspective, Gambrell et al. (1996) propose that the central components of motivation pertinent to reading are self-concept and task value. Their Motivation to Read Profile (MRP), which comprises both qualitative and quantitative components, was developed primarily for teachers to assess students' motivation for particular types of reading by evaluating their self-concept as a reader and the value they placed on reading. A useful

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discussion on the definition of motivation constructs and their use in developing instruments to measure reading motivation is found in Conradi, Jang, and McKenna (2014).

4. Studies on First Language Reading Motivation

A vast body of research now exists on L1 reading motivation (Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2006; Guthrie, McRae, & Klauda, 2007; Klauda, 2009; LaCroix, 2014; McGeown, Norgate, & Warhurst, 2012; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997; Wigfield, Guthrie, & McGough, 1996, among others). These studies, which have been conducted mainly on primary school children, affirm that the underlying structure of reading motivation is multidimensional, and that some types of motivation are stronger than others (De Naeghel, Van Keer, Vansteenkiste, & Rosseel, 2012).

Based on research conducted in both western and eastern contexts, L1 reading motivation appears to have universal underlying factors, with some variations found in the interrelationships between factors. For example, Wang and Guthrie (2004) compared American and Chinese fourth grade students and found an integration of both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation to read in both groups, and a deeper level of processing of meaning by intrinsically motivated students. Huang (2013) used a Chinese version of the MRQ and the interview component of the MRP to compare high and low achieving students' motivation to read. He found many similarities with western study findings, despite the collectivist nature of Chinese culture. However, extrinsic motivation, which tended to be a negative motivational factor in western studies, was a positive factor for Chinese students, who read in a highly competitive learning environment. Social motivation, i.e., a pursuit of social goals (Wentzel, 1996), emerged as an important factor in the qualitative findings, consistent with collectivist social norms.

Self-efficacy, which is a belief in one's own personal ability, may motivate or demotivate individuals to perform a task (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, self-efficacy is frequently researched in relation to reading motivation. Motivated readers with strong self-efficacy beliefs are expected to exhibit better performance in reading activities (Guthrie et al., 2007) if they possess a belief that they can comprehend well, and are ready to accept challenges in reading as an encounter with a difficult task (Coddington & Guthrie, 2009). Reading experts who were interviewed in a mixed method study (Hedges & Gable, 2016) concur that reading motivation and self-efficacy are issues that should be addressed concurrently in order to promote reading achievement. This may include addressing textbooks and other academic preferences and students' access to them, in order to motivate students to engage in reading activities (Pitcher et al., 2007). Children, however, tend to associate reading self-efficacy with word reading rather than reading comprehension (Carroll & Fox, 2017) which suggests that these two forms of reading should be distinguished in research on motivation and self-efficacy.

Biological differences and gender roles may also relate to reading motivation. Girls generally exhibit higher levels of reading motivation than boys (Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). Girls also possess higher autonomous reading motivation levels, which appear to be associated with their home and peer involvement in reading (De Naeghel & Van Keer, 2013). However, it is possible that gender roles or traits could be more relevant than sex in explaining reading motivation. McGeown, Goodwin, Henderson, and Wright (2012) researched primary level British children, and found firstly that girls had higher intrinsic reading motivation and secondly that feminine traits were more closely related to various dimensions of reading motivation.

Other studies have ventured beyond researching underlying factors in order to gain a deeper understanding of reading motivation. They include exploring specific types of motivation, as well as situational factors. For example, a study on Flemish school children (De Naeghel et al., 2012) distinguished between autonomous and controlled motivation for reading, and found that both reading behaviour and performance were better associated with recreational autonomous reading motivation. Katranci (2015) developed and validated an instrument that focuses only on motivation for book reading. Barber and Buehl (2013) studied teachers' perception of autonomy and found that it enhanced reading motivation among students from diverse cultural contexts. Guthrie, Wigfield, and VonSecker (2000) also highlight that motivational levels would be high if the context is in accordance with learner's desires and vice versa. However, studies conducted have mostly been quantitative in nature. Neugebauer (2014) suggested supplementing questionnaire surveys with other qualitative instruments such as daily logs to gain a more complete picture of context-specific motivation.

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Another aspect of motivation that has been well researched in L1 reading is the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, reading amount and text comprehension (Anmarkrud & Braten, 2009; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Gottfried, 1990; Guthrie et al., 2007; Law, 2005; Taboada, Tonks, Wigfield, & Guthrie, 2009; Wang & Guthrie, 2004; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). In particular, intrinsically motivated readers are found to spend more time engaged in the activity of reading. Engagement is an important consideration because an engaged reader would feel pleasure and a sense of dignity in the accomplishment of a reading task (Guthrie et al., 2007; Wang & Guthrie, 2004), which would consequently result in higher levels of motivation to read. Hence it is not surprising that intrinsic reading motivation appears to be more highly correlated with reading comprehension achievement than extrinsic motivation (Coddington & Guthrie, 2009; Wang & Guthrie, 2004). Wigfield et al. (2016) provide a review of research on relations between reading motivation and reading comprehension.

To address 21st century learning, the impact of reading formats on motivation has also been studied. While the reading of electronic texts seems to positively affect motivation among older readers (Parker, 2017), no differences have been identified in the reading motivation, attitudes, or comprehension of younger students who read digital and paper text formats (Long & Szabo, 2016). However, the latter appeared to be motivated by the features of digital formats such as colour and real pictures, which contributed to the overall enjoyment of guided reading. Picton (2014) provides a concise review of the impact of e-books on reading motivation and reading behaviour among children and adolescents. It reveals that while e-books could increase motivation to read, a mix of both electronic and print reading would optimize reading achievement.

Teachers play an influential role in comprehension instruction as well as in increasing motivation for L1 reading (Zentall & Lee, 2012). Consequently, classroom-based models of reading instruction that incorporate motivation have been developed to assist teachers. One such model that has been well-examined empirically is Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI), which is an instructional programme to facilitate engagement and comprehension in reading (Guthrie et al., 2007). Another model with an emphasis on teaching is Guthrie, Wigfield and You's (2012) model of reading engagement processes within classroom contexts. It identifies motivation as a major construct towards achieving reading competence. It also proposes that effort and motivational processes occur simultaneously and that when books are interesting and or perceived as important, motivation to read affects cognitive proficiency over time.

5. Studies on Second Language Reading Motivation

Research on L2 reading motivation is a relatively recent development compared to L1 studies (Komiyama, 2013). Unlike L2 *learning* motivation research, which has been guided by various L2-based theoretical models (Csizer & Dornyei, 2005; Dornyei, 2000, 2009; Gardner, 1985, 2001; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993), reading motivation research seems to lack a definitive L2-based model. Consequently, empirical work on the latter are clearly influenced by theory and instrumentation from L1 reading motivation literature. These L2 studies have attempted to identify and validate components of L2 reading motivation and explore motivation for specific types of reading. They have focused on student readers from one or more L1 backgrounds, mainly in higher education. Many of the studies have used quantitative methods, mainly adapting instruments or items from L2 learning motivation research or L1 reading motivation research. Below, we provide a selection of studies to illustrate the nature of L2 reading motivation research, focusing on motivation to read in English L2 (English as a second or foreign language).

Most of the research conducted to identify underlying components of L2 reading motivation have emerged from Asia (Dhanapala & Hirakawa, 2016; Komiyama, 2013; Mori, 2002; Takase, 2007, among others). One of the earliest attempts to identify the underlying structure of L2 reading motivation was by Mori (2002). Four underlying factors were found in the English L2 reading motivation of Japanese learners: intrinsic value of reading, extrinsic utility value of reading, importance of reading in English, and reading efficacy. Another Japanese study (Takase, 2007) discovered that integrativeness, a concept widely associated with L2 learning motivation (Gardner, 2001), did not emerge as a single factor in L2 reading motivation. Instead, integrativeness appeared to be a sub-factor of extrinsic motivation, associated with the utility value of reading.

In a Sri Lankan English L2 study (Dhanapala & Hirakawa, 2016), curiosity, involvement, challenge for reading, positive behaviour of reading, and utility value of reading emerged as sub-factors of intrinsic motivation, whilst recognition, social sharing, and grades were sub- factors of extrinsic motivation. In contrast, a study involving

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[DOI: 10.29252/ijree.2.4.41]

academic English L2 reading among a mixed group of foreign students in the USA (Komiyama, 2013) extracted a 5-factor model of L2 reading motivation, with only one intrinsic factor and four extrinsic sub factors, i.e., drive to excel, academic and test compliance, and social sharing. As a whole, L2 study findings are consistent with L1 research in that they also identify extrinsic and intrinsic motivation as the major components relevant to L2 reading. At the same time, they suggest that the sub- factors underlying L2 reading motivation may vary according to contexts of reading and possibly according to sociocultural influences.

Several L2 reading motivation studies have been conducted in relation to extensive reading (ER). They have been able to consistently support the idea that language proficiency and amount of extensive reading positively relate to students' reading motivation. Early research found that ER programs in English L2 did not seem to significantly improve learners' motivation to read (Apple, 2005). Instead, reading amount seemed to be associated with study habits and task specific needs (Mori, 2004). Recent work, however, has shed more light on connections between ER and motivation. Ro (2013) conducted a single case study involving observations, questionnaires, and interviews to discover how ER could possibly change reading anxiety and reading motivation levels of an unmotivated female adult English L2 learner. Positive changes occurred in anxiety and motivation levels over the duration of the study. It was found that ER was able to contribute positively to L2 reading motivation through providing the convenience of reading time and pace, the satisfaction gained from finishing books, and a personal realization that extensive reading was useful for personal language learning and reading proficiency development. A study by Pirih (2015) suggests that EFL students with low opportunities for ER in school would have a stronger extrinsic motivation for language learning compared with intrinsic motivation.

Studies conducted in EAP contexts complement ER studies by providing insights into motivation for intensive forms of reading. They highlight the role of teachers and materials in increasing motivation to read, regardless of level of study. EFL teachers are found to influence motivation to read in EAP through their instructional practices (Salikin, Bin-Tahir, Kusumaningputri, & Yuliandari, 2017), as well as their presence to support English L2 learners in overcoming reading difficulties (Hosseini, Hosseini, & Rasti, 2014). These findings are consistent with a qualitative study involving elementary school English L2 learners undergoing a reading intervention program in an English L1 environment (Cho, Xu, & Rhodes, 2010). The researchers found that teacher guidance promoted motivation to complete reading tasks.

The role of materials in enhancing motivation is also gaining clarity. Materials for EAP should be interesting yet challenging in order to motivate readers (Cho et al., 2010). In addition, they should also possess reader-friendly characteristics, including illustrations, organization and appropriate vocabulary level to facilitate comprehension (Hosseini et al., 2014). However, there is still a lack of L2 studies that address motivation in relation to e-reading issues despite the increasing use of electronic reading materials and technology as tools for learning and teaching.

Studies that have compared L1 and L2 reading among English L2 learners are able to illustrate how sociocultural environments may influence motivation to read. Dhanapala (2008) investigated relationships between reading motivation and the amount of reading Japanese and Sri Lankan students did in their L1 and English L2. Both groups read for extrinsic and intrinsic reasons, and were more motivated extrinsically. However, amount of English L2 reading correlated with comprehension achievement only in the Sri Lankan group. It was suggested that the sociocultural factors which could account for the differences between the Japanese and Sri Lankan readers include perceptions of rewards as incentives, competition and compliance with and living up to the expectations of their parents and teachers. In a similar study, Takase (2007) found that although family factors were not significant predictors of L2 extensive reading amount among Japanese students, there was a tendency for some students to be motivated to read in English to impress peers.

Other findings also suggest that readers' interactions in the social environment could influence their L2 reading motivation. For example, a young English L2 learner in the USA may be motivated to read for social integration with English L1 peers. However, motivation will be greatly reduced if the chosen peer group does not see the value of reading (Protacio, 2012). These findings highlight the possibility that social support from peers, family and teachers, which are known to positively affect learning motivation in general (Wentzel, 1998), may influence English L2 reading motivation in different ways. Although social integration with native speakers is an unlikely issue outside English L1 countries, motivation to read in this case could be influenced by a willingness to engage with the global English speaking community (Apple, 2005).

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As a whole, English L2 studies suggest that motivation to read in an L2 is achieved in unique ways which may differ from those that influence motivation to learn a second language. The underlying components and influencers of reading motivation are not necessarily the same as those of L1 reading, or language learning motivation in general.

6. Contribution of Findings to Learning and Teaching

Reading motivation studies have numerous implications on L2 literacy learning as well as teaching. Overall, research has shown that motivation supports the cognitive processes of reading and that teachers play an important role. Hence, teachers should attempt to incorporate motivational elements in their efforts to enhance students' L2 reading skills. Drawing from past findings, an important means of enhancing motivation during the teaching and learning process is by promoting readers' engagement with teacher-assigned reading tasks. Existing literacy instruction models that emphasize student engagement such as the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) (Echevarria & Vogt, 2010) or Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI) (Guthrie, Wigfield, & Perencevich, 2004) provide some pointers on how teachers can do so. Both models recommend the use of interesting and relevant materials, hands-on tasks that involve thinking closely about ideas, authentic discussions and connections with real life. They also suggest that teachers can help struggling readers to reach higher levels of reading by having positive relationships with students, incorporating scaffolding and instructional modification techniques, and making judicious clarifications, using the students' L1 if necessary. These kinds of classroom practices nurture three aspects of motivation, i.e., confidence, dedication, and interest (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010). In addition to engaging students, such practices would provide social support as well as tools to increase reading self- efficacy, which should help L2 learners sustain in their reading tasks and become better readers in the short and long term.

7. Conclusion

Theoretically, factors that underlie motivation may include goals, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, values, self-efficacy, and social aspects (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Much of the research in both L1 and L2 have concentrated on identifying what factors work together or separately to motivate readers. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation seem to be established as the core factors, while sub-factors would show slight contextual variations. By focusing on cognitively driven aspects of motivation, past studies have contributed valuable insights on the psychology of reading. However, reading is not just a cognitive process, but an activity that is linked to social groups and cultural practices (Wigfield, Eccles, Schiefele, Roeser, & Davis-Kean, as cited in Huang, 2013). If the ultimate aim of reading motivation research is to improve student attainments, then it is important to take into consideration environmental and contextual influences on literacy processes (Wood & Jocius, 2013).

Pintrich and Jarvela (as cited in Hosseini et al., 2014) caution that a focus on the cognitive process reveals motivation from the inside out, and that social contexts and cultures, which can inform about motivation from the outside in should not be ignored. Sociocultural influences on motivation; therefore, is an area that could be more thoroughly researched in L2 reading. Drawing from Grabe (2009), social and environmental factors that could influence L2 reading include the family unit, students' socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds and related expectations and resources, school settings and school cultures, as well as social expectations of the wider culture. How and why they help or hinder students' reading efforts and persistence could be better understood. In addition, the dynamics between the L1 and L2 in society potentially impact on L2 learners' motivation to read as well. These aspects could also be explored further.

Research on L1 reading motivation has focused mainly on elementary and middle school readers to support literacy development at this critical foundation stage. In English L2 contexts, studies seem to concentrate on readers in higher education. This could be attributed to the importance of English L2 reading for study purposes. However, in many parts of the world, exposure to English L2 literacy may begin at a much younger age. Knowledge about L2 reading would be further advanced by exploring motivational factors among this group of learners.

As instructional practices may increase motivation, L1 reading researchers have suggested that classroom-based approaches, materials, and evaluations that motivate or demotivate reading warrant further exploration (Wigfield et al., 2016). L2 studies could also explore these elements, in relation to both young and adult L2 readers. Local case studies would be useful because teaching and evaluation styles and preferences, as well as teacher behavior are likely to have a socio-cultural element.

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Finally, it is observed that past research which utilized qualitative or mixed methods have been able to enrich findings by going beyond the 'what' to enlightening 'how' and 'why' different factors motivate students to read. Therefore, more qualitative investigations should be conducted in future towards a deeper understanding of problems and issues, as well as concrete theory building on L2 reading motivation.

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