

Review on “The effect of Chinese EFL students’ learning motivation on learning outcomes within a blended learning environment”

In the article, “The effect of Chinese EFL students’ learning motivation on learning outcomes within a blended learning environment”, Renzhong Peng and Rongrong Fu seek to investigate the connection between the learning motivation and success of EFL students in a mixed learning situation. The research problems being addressed are what are the Chinese EFL students’ main learning motivations and learning outcomes in a blended learning environment and in what way does the learning motivation of EFL students in China in a blended learning setting affect learning outcomes.

It is evident from the abstract that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation will be examined in relation to the results, and that this study will have consequences for EFL instruction in China.

The blended learning strategy, which combines traditional face-to-face learning with distributed learning, is supported by both students and instructors, according to previous research (Graham, 2012). Peng and Fu extensively cited studies to support this claim. As one of the most fundamental components of learning in any context, learning motivation is a crucial element influencing learning outcomes in a blended learning environment. Studies on learning motivation have examined the internal structure of learning motivation, the degree of students' learning motivation, and the link between learning motivation and variables such as gender and geographic location, as well as the impact of learning motivation on academic accomplishment in conventional learning contexts (Carreira, 2011; Saito et al., 2016; Tokan & Imakulata, 2019). Students with integrative motivation had greater proficiency in English. Successful students prefer learning activities that are both enjoyable and obligatory. There was no significant difference between the instrumentally and integratively motivated English learners with regard to their favourite learning activities. (Pratiwi, 2015)

Peng and Fu also poll a sample of students in order to compare their findings to the research they cites. They assume that learning motivation comprises of internal and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is associated with both integrative and instrumental tendencies that are autonomous and self-reliance and allow individuals to receive enjoyment and fulfillment from the activity they are involved in; extrinsic motivation refers to performance carried out for external factors such as grades and rewards rather than for interest and pleasure, which can cause pressure and stress (Peng & Fu, 2021). Therefore, the research questions essentially support the hypothesis that a structural relationship model integrating learning motivation and learning outcomes has been constructed and evaluated.

Peng and Fu used a sample of 960 students of College English from six Chinese institutions (including 461 males and 499 females). Among these participants, ten students were selected for an interview. Before completing the questionnaire and conducting interviews with students, the participants were reminded of the goal of the research and that the collected data would be used only for academic reasons. They volunteered to fill out the form and participate in the interview.

In the course of learning English, the participants have experienced blended learning by getting classroom teaching and engaging in web-based learning. Students received twice-weekly classroom training as well as engaged in online English learning out of the classroom learning by using a variety of online resources and approaches, namely English learning platforms, online programme, and social networking apps.

Before designing the questionnaire, Peng and Fu interviewed ten students to determine their motivation for studying English in a blended learning environment. By summarising and categorising the comments based on the important terms they highlighted, they were able to identify two primary motivating qualities: the integrative and instrumental goals of learning English in the mixed environment. After that, the researchers designed the questionnaire based on the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) proposed by Gardner, and the theories of learning outcomes. 960 college students were given the questionnaire during a class

break. 91.5 percent of the 878 replies were legitimate. Participants required roughly eight minutes to complete the survey.

This research gathered two sorts of data through the questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire-collected data were analysed by using SPSS 19.0 and AMOS 19.0. It is reasonable and rigorous to test EFA (exploratory factor analysis), reliability, descriptive analysis and correlation analysis, and structural equation modelling in the research to refer to the internal consistency of the redesigned questionnaire as well as the correlation between S's learning motivation and learning outcomes in blended learning.

Critically speaking, although the interview is used as a research method prior to the formulation of the questionnaire, the research methodology is predominantly quantitative rather than mixed. The interview served two aims in this study: design of the questionnaire and analysis of its data results. In order to determine the items and validity of the questionnaire, it is prudent to conduct a pre-test interview with the subjects to clarify their beliefs about the blended setting and motives for learning English. The adopted interview is a typical structured interview that ten students were selected at random to participate in the interview and answer five what and how questions to clarify their comprehension of the blended setting and English-learning motives.

However, the question is whether ten respondents are adequate to create a comprehensive map of the important components of blended environment and motivation. Commonly speaking, 15-20 interviewers from various age groups, subjects, English competence, etc. are more suited. Thus, it is recommended to collect further qualitative data. For instance, when the data has been analysed, the post-test interview might be used to investigate the practical performance of respondents' English learning and also the reasons for the relation between the motivation and the outcome that the data interpreted. Based on the results of the data analysis of the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational aspects, the post-test interview may include 20 respondents of varying ages and subjects, and the questions may be more why-oriented questions. In this approach, the qualitative interview data can provide an

explanation for the positive link between motivations and growth in English language proficiency.

Using EFA (exploratory factor analysis) analysis and reliability analysis, the researcher examined the internal structure of the item of the original questionnaire. According to the data, four latent factors were recovered by orthogonal rotation, which converged by using eigenvalues, and the value is more than 1.0 and factor loading is greater than 0.4. Cronbach's alpha values for the four retrieved factors range from 0.77% to 0.83%, which exceeds the minimum value of 0.7% (Peng & Fu, 2021). The results imply that the questionnaire's reliability in measuring latent factors is satisfactory. In order to make the questionnaire more impartial and comprehensive, the researcher reduced the initial 23 items to 20. The items are designed to test on intrinsic motivations like autonomous and independence, interest and curiosity, pleasure and satisfactory, and extrinsic motivations like job and career, teacher's requirements and grades. The questionnaire also includes the items about learning outcomes, namely linguistic performance of English and cognitive improvement of English learning in the compound learning setting.

Using structural equation modelling, the path analysis examined the distinct connection between students' learning motivation and learning effects under compound environments. The results of the goodness-of-fit tests demonstrate that the structural model is well-suited to the data (Peng & Fu, 2021).

Peng and Fu found significant results in their study that extrinsic learning incentive is more powerful than intrinsic learning motivation among Chinese college students. Extrinsic incentive involves completing English curricular duties and finding a better career. Intrinsic motivation includes having a curiosity in English, maintaining cultural awareness of the culture of English, and interacting with international individuals. In addition, the advantages of blended learning for Chinese college students are related to the development of English language proficiency and the psychological growth in English learning.

It is also unexpected to see that blended learning results in the greatest increase in students' English vocabulary, which can partly suggest that both intrinsic and

extrinsic motivations of students are definitely tied with advance in English language proficiency and intellectual extension of English acquisition. The two most essential factors of intrinsic learning motivation are engaging in English learning and enclosing with English culture. Students who are fascinated in the English language and culture have a tendency to be more concentrated in self-controlled learning and are capable to successfully in charge of their offline courses and online learning in blended learning situation. The results of a descriptive analysis of learning motivation indicate, however, that the intrinsic motivation of Chinese EFL students is deficient than their extrinsic drive. Thus, additional emphasis must be paid to the establishment of students' intrinsic motivation, and teachers of foreign languages must employ ways to increase students' intrinsic curiosity and interest.

Overall, the data analysis and the results of the research support the theoretical approaches that in a blended learning environment, the learning autonomy, self-assurance, persistence, and achievement of EFL students are consolidated, which is in accord with research implying that college students have higher degree in self-determination in blended learning and are contented with this specific learning pattern, which in turn stimulates extensive student dedication and self-sufficiency. Related to the results of the research, however, there are still certain questions that need to be clarified. To begin with, is there any correlation between the independent variables? For example, do the student's age, life experience, and the subjects they study have an effect on the degree of intrinsic motivation? As we know, sometimes personal experience can affect personal initiative, and then at the same time influence the extrinsic initiative. Consequently, when conducting research on learning motivation, it may be possible to account for some independent variables.

Second, as to the learning outcomes, in what aspects does the research proposed on? The researchers did not specify the outcomes of the Chinese EFL learners' English ability, including listening, speaking, writing, and reading, as well as interpreting and translating. They just mentioned that the vocabulary has improved significantly, but there must be additional outcomes in a blended learning environment.

Third, can the survey and the results truly reflect the actual learning situation and effect of the Chinese college students? Sometimes, the quantitative research method sometimes cannot figure out the nature and trend of the human issues. The data collected in this research can well reflect the relevance between learning motivation and learning effect, but it is difficult to reflect the real performance of the subjects.

Overall, Peng and Fu found significant results in their study that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation have a favourable correlation with learning outcomes in blended learning, although intrinsic drive is more influential and crucial. The two most significant determinants of learning outcomes in terms of intrinsic motivation are intrinsic interest in English and the intrinsic objective of knowing English culture. As regards of the enlargement of intrinsic motivation in a mixed learning environment, the research can also offer advice to English educators regarding the inspiration of students' inherent concern in foreign language and culture, as well as the development of innate stimulus.

It is an outstanding quantitative investigation that the sample size is large enough to test the significant relationship between the motivation and the outcomes of the English study in blended learning. The data collected are also well analysed that the EFA, reliability analysis, descriptive analysis, and correlation analysis, a structural relationship model are precisely tested and analysed.

As mentioned above, the research also has some limitations. The research is quantitative, however qualitative data would have provided further evidence to confirm the beneficial association between students' learning motivation and learning effects. Qualitative data supplement quantitative data to reveal the nature of things, such as the post-test interviews, the action research on students' academic practises and learning journals, or blogs. In addition, The way of arising students' intrinsic motivation to enhance learning effects in blended learning will be a focus of future study.

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