A “DIRECTED MOTIVATIONAL CURRENT” (DMC)

What Is it?

A "Directed Motivational Current" (DMC) is an **intense motivational drive**. It might occur when a variety of time and context-related factors come together in a person or a group to generate a strong momentum to pursue a significant **goal** along a set **pathway** (hence the adjective “directed”).

**FOR EXAMPLE, IMAGINE …:**

- ... an **overweight person** who would like to live a healthier lifestyle but, however often he might tell his friends and family of his desire to get fit, his job means he spends the whole day sitting in front of a computer and he lacks any real impetus for change. One day, however, something changes: he enrols at the local gym, arranges regular gym dates with friends and surprises colleagues with decisive shifts in his eating habits, swapping from a chocolate biscuit to an apple mid-morning and to salads at lunch. As a result, he loses over 20 lbs. in four months.
- ... a **group of students** enjoying preparing for a joint project which will be exhibited for the local public, and of course for friends and family. Imagine them willingly devoting after-class time and all their energy to complete with their friends to produce an outstanding final product, the best on display.

These are both examples of strong DMCs.

A LANGUAGE LEARNING EXAMPLE:

A language class is preparing for a **study-abroad trip**. They become embroiled in the process to such an extent that their L2 learning intensity soars and they spend a lot of their free time practising the language, as well as reading guidebooks and surfing the net to familiarise themselves with the host culture and environment. Thus, the project becomes one of the most significant parts of their lives.

What is a DMC NOT?

**DMC ≠ simply high motivation or a good student**

- A DMC is a relatively short-term, highly intense **burst** of motivational energy.
- It is **over and on top** of the steady motivation which a good student will exhibit on an on-going basis.
- A DMC does not replace everyday classroom motivation; it can be viewed as a possible **boost** of motivation to transport a person or a group towards a special destination.
How long does a DMC last?

- DMCs can vary from short engagement (e.g. a project) to longer periods (e.g. preparation for a special event).
- In some special cases, a DMC can continue throughout a whole course (e.g. a class preparing for a study-abroad).

How to recognize a DMC:

- A DMC is a special process – both the people involved and the observers recognise it as being unique.
- It might be described as being “in the zone”.
- It involves:
  - focused sustained activity towards a goal.
  - real enthusiasm and commitment.
  - high hopes shared by the participants.
- It propels people forward so that the achieve something more than they (or their teachers) expected they could.

What are we Looking for?

- We would like to ask you to think of any past experiences where a group of your students made a dramatic shift (change) from a normal or low state (with no or little interest or motivation) to a heightened level of work, interest and motivation, in pursuit of a personally valuable goal.
- Also, if you yourself have had such an experience, we would be very grateful if you could share it with us.
- Last but not least, do you think you are currently teaching students who are experiencing such a Directed Motivational Current? If so, we would love to hear from you!