

Motivating EFL Learners: using TED Talks in English classrooms

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Introduction

- Purpose of today's talk: to report on a study which investigated the effects of a content-based intervention on EFL learners' motivation for learning English.
- Outline:
 1. Background
 - Theory of Motivation: Self-determination theory (SDT)
 - Content-based instruction
 - TED Talks
 2. The study:
 - Method, intervention, results, implications

I. Why Motivation?

1. Motivation provides vital energy in the learning process.

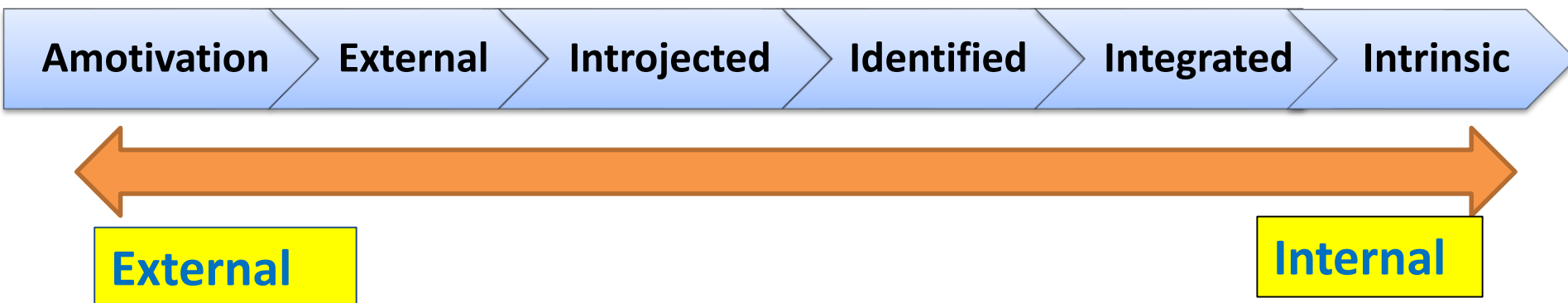
- If motivated, learners spend longer time in studying
- Resilience in facing difficulty
- Higher achievement and performance
- Contributes to the achievement of immediate satisfaction in one's life (Edvalda, Gilberto, & Carles, 2012)

2. Motivation is not static: it is “a Psychological process in which personality traits interact with perceived environmental characteristics” (Lend, Matos, & Vansteenkiste, 2008)

- Motivation is affected by changes within students themselves and their learning environments.

Self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985)

- SDT: **widely applied to educational contexts to show how motivation can affect students' learning, and conversely how learning can affect motivation** (Shunk, 1991)
- **Intrinsic and extrinsic**, depending on where the **locus of control**
- These two types of motivation were conceptualized not as bipolar, but as a **continuum of different subtypes of motivation**
- **Organismic integration theory**: classifies motivation into six categories depending on the locus of determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000)



II. Pedagogical approaches which foster motivation for learning

- **Content-Based Language Instruction**

- the integration of the four traditional language skills
- use authentic materials which students have to interpret and evaluate
- Provides a forum where students can discuss materials
- interesting materials motivate students (Brinton, Snow, and Wesche, 1989)
- Grabe and Stroller (1997) stated “interest in content information, and the successes students attribute to content learning, can lead to powerful intrinsic motivation” (p. 12)

II. Teaching approaches which foster motivation for learning (2)

- **Cooperative learning (CL)**
 - work in groups to accomplish particular learning tasks or activities
 - provides **peer support for learning and build self-efficacy** (Quinn, 2006)
 - create communities for learning
- **Communicative language teaching (CLT)**
 - “an approach to language teaching methodology that emphasizes authenticity, interaction, student-centered learning, task based activities, and communication for the real world, meaningful purposes” (Brown, 2007, p.378).
 - use L2 as the main tool of classroom communication
 - Promote real and meaningful communication in L2
 - Create an environment in which language is personally meaningful to the student while simultaneously providing structural support

CLIL: positive influence on learners

- An approach to language teaching which focuses **not only language instruction but also specific content, including academic subjects and various social issues.**
- In a typical CLIL program, **learners gain knowledge of the subject while simultaneously learning and using the language** in authentic communicative environments (Marsh, 2008).
- Among numerous advantages of CLIL, **one of the special effects is learners' changes in their attitudes: they become more positive towards learning a language, and towards themselves as language learners** (Marsh, 2008).
- **There is a strong relationship between the CLIL approach and motivation** (Lasagabaster, 2013). Students with CLIL instruction were more motivated (Doiz, et al., 2014).

TED Talks as teaching materials

- TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) Talks, founded in 1984, are broadcast on the Internet by a non-profit organization under the slogan “Ideas Worth Spreading”.
- To date, high quality presentations on diverse topics have been available for free viewing online and millions of people around the world have watched them.
- In L2/EFL educational contexts, an increasing number of teachers have reported success with using TED Talks as classroom materials (Takaesu, 2017).

The study (1): Impact of music-related TED talks on music majors

- Objective of the study:
 - To investigate longitudinal effects of the content-based intervention with Japanese college students.
- Research Question

How does motivation for learning English change during one academic year (Time 1 and Time2) with the intervention with TED Talks on music-related topics?

The study (2): Method

1. Participants

- 32 music majors at a private college in Tokyo, Japan, enrolled in a two intact classes
- English levels: Eiken pre 2nd degree ~ 2nd degree

2. Materials of the course

- Textbook (grammar and vocabulary)
- TED talks about music and music related issues

3. Instrument and analysis

- A 30-item English Learning Motivation questionnaire (MQ) based on self-determination theory, measured with a 1-4 Likert scale
- Measured twice (Time 1: at the beginning of the spring semester and Time 2: at the end of the semester)
- Analyzed with descriptive statistics, one way repeated measures ANOVA with SPSS

4. Procedures

- The questionnaire were administer during the class time, spending about 10 minutes.

Intervention (1): Teaching TED Talks in 2 phases

1. Content: Music because students are music majors who already have knowledge about and interest in it.
2. Phases: 1) learning from TED talks; 2) giving presentations

Phase 1 [8 weeks]:

Learn English, Content, and presentation skills from

3 TED Talks on music

- Time: about 40 minutes each week
- Transcripts in Japanese and English provided.

Phase 2 [4 weeks]:

Presentation project
“Talk like a TED speaker”

Give a 5-minute presentation on a topic students chose using Google slides.

Timeline: TED Talks and Project

Weeks	TED Talks/Project
2~4 Talk 1	“Transformative Power of Music” by Benjamin Zander
5~6 Talk 2	“How frustration can make us more creative” by Tim Hartford
7~9 Talk 3	“Lead Like the great conductor” by Itay Talgam
10~13 Project	Presentation “Talk like a TED Speaker”

Phase 1: Ted Talks. Teaching Procedures

- 1. Pre-watching activities**: warming-up discussion, and checking vocabulary
- 2. While-watching activities**: reading subtitles in English, and taking notes, focusing on the main ideas
- 3. Post-watching activities**: reading the transcripts of the talk aloud in pairs, answering comprehension questions, and checking answers in groups and then with the whole class
- 4. Reflection activities** (assignment): writing a **summary** and **reaction** to the talk
- 5. Discussion: Sharing ideas and evaluating the talk**: sharing the summary and reaction in groups, discussing what they learned from the talk
- 6. Submitting the summary and reaction to the teacher for comments and individual feedback from the teacher.**

“Transformative Power of Music” by Benjamin Zander (Time: 20:43)

<i>Synopsis of the talk</i>	<i>Reasons for the selection</i>
<p>Benjamin Zander, a conductor of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra shows how music can transform people’s lives by conducting an experiment. He plays a piece of prelude by Chopin and demonstrates how everyone can appreciate and enjoy classical music.</p> <p>Furthermore, he talks about a touching episode of a woman who survived Auschwitz.</p>	<p>Since students practice classical music and aspire to become professional players, it was considered that this talk would give them an opportunity where a) they could reflect on their own music practice; b) contemplate on the role of classical music in today’s world; and c) think about how they will be able to contribute to making classical music more popular.</p>

CBI Lesson Plan for Transformative Power of Music (1)

- I. Title of the lesson:** Transformative power of music
- II. Student level:** intermediate college (Eiken 2nd degree or CEFR B1)
- III. Content area:** classical music
- IV. Teaching material:** a TED Talk (*Transformative power of music* by Benjamin Zander) from the Internet, a worksheet, and the transcript (in English and Japanese)
- V. Learning objectives** (SWBAT – Students Will Be Able to:)
 1. Make predictions and inferences about the content of the talk
 2. Understand the implication of the opening episode of the talk
 3. Learn new vocabulary and conversational expressions
 4. Share interpretations and reflections of the talk in collaborative situations
 5. Reflect on the role of classical music in today's world as well as their own future goals as music performers

CBI Lesson Plan for Transformative Power of Music (continued) (2)

VI. Motivation support based on self-determination theory

- Autonomy: interesting and engaging content for students
- Competence: comprehension questions that facilitate the understanding of the main idea; transcript in English; Japanese translation (optional); a list of useful phrases for discussion
- Relatedness: sharing ideas in group/pair work

Phase 2: Presentation Project:

“Talk like a TED speaker”

[Instruction]

- Give a presentation (5 minutes) on a topic you want to talk about.
- Topic: free choice
 - Talk about something you have been thinking about and you feel you want to share with your classmates. You need to have one thesis statement and you explain what you mean by giving examples, reasons, or citing some sources.
 - Choose a topic which listeners will feel worth listening to, learn something new and interesting and offer something they can take home like “おみやげ”.
- Use **Google Drive** and makes **slides** and “**Share**” the slides with me. Use a PC or a smart phone to make slides.
- Preparation: two weeks, 1 class in a computer room.

The study: Results

Students' positive perceptions of the TED intervention

Students' Perceptions of TED Talks	<i>n</i> (%)
1. The content was fun so it was very interesting to study the talks.	48 (53)
2. My English skills improved.	24 (27)
3. The knowledge and wisdom I gained from the talks are very useful.	24 (27)
4. I learned presentation skills.	14 (16)
5. I got used to listening to native speakers' English.	12 (13)
6. I came to study English using TED Talks in my free time.	8 (9)
7. I can understand English easily because I can watch the speakers and read the transcripts at the same time.	6 (7)
8. Because the talks contain interesting content, I became more engaged than the time I study ordinary textbooks.	4 (4)

The study: Results (4)

Students' negative perceptions of the TED intervention

Students' perceptions of TED talks

The speed was too fast so I couldn't understand.

I couldn't understand the content. I had to depend on the Japanese.

I wanted to translate the sentences in class.

Vocabulary was too difficult.

I wanted the class to move more slowly.

TED Talks as materials: Teacher's view

Good!

- It takes time to make worksheets, but TED talks are effective for enhancing students' motivation, English skills, and presentation skills.
- In particular, if it is used right, students may become autonomous learners who listen to the talks on their own in their free time outside the classroom.
- Presentations were effective for creating an atmosphere where students were able to learn from each other.

But remember!


- It is necessary to assist students with careful scaffolding, considering support for competence.
- Those who feel less confident about their English may hesitate to study with TED, but if easy talks are introduced with careful guidance, they may start to enjoy studying with it.

Final words

- The intervention with the TED Talks seems to have been successful in getting music majors more engaged in learning not only English but also music-related content.
- The presentation project seems to have given rise
- The students seemed to learn from each other, giving positive influences on each other.
- Content-based instruction seems to be an effective approach for fostering EFL learners' motivation if their interests, experiences, and backgrounds were taken into consideration.

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Thank you for listening! If you have any questions, please send an email to Chiyo Hayashi, hayashi.chiyo@Kunitachi.ac.jp

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