Exploring Student Motivation: Adult Learners in a Private EFL Program

(1)

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Introduction

Motivation is a somewhat dark and mysterious area as far as observing and studying is concerned. Obviously, most people are not aware of, or at least not fully able to explain and elaborate on, their own source(s) of motivation. Also, motivation is a constantly evolving entity, reacting to and interacting with the world we become involved with.

To research, map, and assess all of the motivators of an individual and compare these with other individuals may appear to be a daunting task. Accurately assessing such a group of individuals fairly and comparing their motivators in a logical and understandable manner would require the establishment of a universal set of common denominators. However, as yet, such criteria for assessing and comparing an individual’s motivation with regard to their personal set of life circumstances has yet to be convincingly established.

As teachers, we have all experienced a multitude of classroom situations in which we have pondered, questioned, been confused about, or come to a realization regarding motivation in the classroom, either of the class as a whole, or of a particular individual. Approaching this theme of motivation in the classroom has often brought up ethical dilemmas for the instructor. For example, as an instructor, should I spend most of my time and energy on the students that appear most outwardly motivated, even if they are greatly outnumbered by the remainder of the class, or should I focus more of my energy on the students that do not appear motivated, even if it involves extra time outside of the classroom? Should I attempt to give equal time to each student, and potentially allow those that may be less motivated to possibly fall through the cracks? Is motivation from a teacher more effective for students who are already motivated, thus adding the ‘icing on the cake’ and furthering their success, or for students who possibly, due to situations perhaps unknown to the teacher (therefore being difficult to ascertain and evaluate), lack self-motivation techniques and skills, and are desperately in need of them? How can I create material that is seen as relevant and important by the student? “The best way to create interest in a subject is to render it worth knowing” (Bruner, 1960).

In spite of a fair amount of research material available regarding motivation in the classroom, it has usually focused on young learners, who would identify their occupation as ‘student’. I felt
there was a void in this field of research, specifically involving the motivation of adult learners in the classroom. In this study, we will first take a look at what present literature can tell us about motivation and the previous research that has been covered regarding motivation in the classroom, and also take a look at the methodology of this project. The data that emerged from this study will appear in the next issue of this journal.

"The factors... that contribute to school success: family relationships, supportive peers, the perceived link between education and future success, as well as caring teachers, contact with other adults, and previous success to build on, all may drive or be driven by what we call will. Psychological factors such as intelligences, impulse control, trauma effects might also override, underride, or be part of such constellations. Will, however, should not be seen as one other factor in the varying constellations of success; it is rather... a process." (Farrell, 1994)

**Literature Review**

Through the literature revealed within this section, I want to show that motivation is a topic covered in a wide variety of areas, including many areas outside the realm of education, and that while motivation has been a topic in many ESL/EFL research studies, the studies have usually involved ESL learners studying within the target language community, or with young learners studying in an EFL setting.

During the search for background literature, a variety of topics emerged including various learning theories, hierarchical structures of learning and motivation, theories of management, workplace efficiency, child education, language-minority education, the use of transfer, self-motivated achievement and achievers, factors affecting success in the classroom and the workplace, internal and external motivators, and tips for teachers to assist in the motivational process.

"People work in order to satisfy some need. The need may be to achieve fame or power, to serve other people or simply to earn the money to live. It may even be the rather negative need to avoid punishment." (Everard and Morris, 1996) Examining human needs, and how these needs are satisfied, has been the primary concern of motivational theorists for some time. One of the earliest and most ground-breaking needs analyses was created by Maslow (1970). His *Hierarchy of Needs* has since gone on to be widely used in psychology, sociology, business, and consumer theory. The hierarchy contains five regions, beginning with physical needs, and extending to more emotional and intellectual needs. (In later writings, Maslow introduced a sixth, and even higher level, form called **SELF-TRANSCENDENCE**, which describes a being's inner grace felt when "...called to serve a cause above and beyond oneself, such as a deity." (Everard and Morris, 1996) The principle of this hierarchy is that once you start (at the bottom), you cannot advance upwards until each level has been satisfied. Also, if an individual is deprived
at a lower level, he or she may lose in pursuing activities found in the upper regions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs</th>
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<tr>
<td>SELF REALIZATION:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Achievement, Psychological growth</td>
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<tr>
<td>EGO:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Status, Respect, Prestige</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCIAL:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friendship, Group Acceptance, Love</td>
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<tr>
<td>SECURITY:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freedom from danger, Freedom from want</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHYSIOLOGICAL:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food, Drink, Shelter, Sex, Warmth, Physical Comfort</td>
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Instrumental and Integrative Motivation

One of the most referred and often quoted studies in ESL/EFL language learning is that of Gardner and Lambert published in 1972, *Attitudes and Motivation in Second-Language Learning*. They stated that one’s success in learning a language will be influenced by the learner’s degree of ethnocentricity, one’s attitude toward the members of the group whose language is being studied, attitudes towards foreign people in general, and one’s orientation towards the learning task (Gardner and Lambert, 1972).

In this study, they also introduce the concept of *instrumental* and *integrative* motivation. Instrumental motivation refers to some utilitarian purpose one may have for wishing to learn a language, whether it be for work, a school test, travel, etc., while integrative motivation refers to one who wishes to learn a language in order to assimilate into a target language community.

Without the benefit or opportunity of reading this study, a teacher could easily make an assumption as to which form of motivation, integrative or instrumental, might be most visible in their particular classroom environment. For example, a teacher in an ESL classroom in the United States or United Kingdom to a classroom full of recently arrived immigrants would probably want to employ an integrative style of motivation, while EFL learners studying in their home country might benefit more from an instrumental approach, especially if they have no plans to leave their home country.

Depending on which type of motivation is dominant within a particular class, different types of support would be meaningful towards fulfilling the goals within each type of motivational scheme. For example, in regard to integrative motivation, Tingbjorn (1988) feels that society’s needs are the primary motivator towards a learner becoming bilingual: “While a person, or a group of people, is grateful for language and cultural support, as it improves the life situation of the individual, the family and the national group, what makes one’s own language and cultural experiences really important is that they are sought after and of value for other people and for society.”
This concept is not without its critics however. Peirce (1995) believes that the concepts of instrumental and integrative motivation fail to adequately explain the language learner’s situation: A learner may have more than one reason to study a language and those reasons, and their relative importance, may change over time. A learner moves through the world dynamically, not through a static environment. In order to more accurately describe the human condition, with all of its complexities and potential inconsistencies, and account for the change in attitude that learners sometimes feel in the language learning process, Peirce introduces the concept of ‘investment in the target language’ as a useful complement to language learner theories, an investment that “...describes the complex dynamic relationship between the learner and the social world.” (Ullman, 1997)

Expanding on the concepts of instrumental and integrative motivation, Benson (1991) performed a study involving 311 first-year students in a private Japanese university, and as a result of his findings, which involved the presence of a gap in student motivation that could not be adequately explained by either instrumental or integrative motivation, introduced the term personal motivation. This concept of personal motivation incorporates the “…pleasure at being able to read English, and the enjoyment of entertainment in English”, even if the student sees no instrumental benefit in studying the language, and has no plans to integrate into a community where the target language will be the primary language used. Many teachers may encounter this type of motivation, especially when students talk about wanting to understand music or movies in the target language without having to depend on translated lyrics or subtitles respectively.

Belmechri and Hummel (1998) conducted a survey of francophone high school students studying English in Quebec, Canada, and found that students were motivated by the following factors: school (instrumental), career (instrumental), travel, friendship, and understanding. As no apparent integrative motivation was displayed by the students in this study, the terms ‘travel’, ‘friendship’, and ‘understanding’ were considered as motivational factors themselves, and not as parts of a bigger motivational force.

Also expanding on the instrumental/integrative motivation concept, Crookes and Schmidt (1991) and Gardner and Tremblay (1994) explored four other bases of motivation:

- A reason for learning
- A desire to attain the learning goal
- A positive attitude towards the learning situation
- An effortful behavior

Other Motivational Theories

Oxford and Shearin (1994) analyzed a total of twelve motivation theories or models, including
those from socio-psychology, cognitive development, and socio-cultural psychology, and identified six factors that affect motivation in the language learning process:

- Attitudes (sentiments towards the learning community and the target language)
- Beliefs about self (expectancies about one's attitude to succeed, self-efficacy, and anxiety)
- Goals (perceived clarity and relevance of learning goals as reasons for learning)
- Involvement (the extent to which the learner actively and consciously participates in the language learning process)
- Environmental Support (the extent of teacher and peer support, and the integration of cultural and real-world support into the learning experience)
- Personal Attributes (aptitude, age, sex, and previous language learning experience)

Keller (1987) introduced a model which highlights the features of motivational instruction, called the ARCS model. It focuses on the following:

Attention:
- Perceptual Arousal (provide novelty, surprise, incongruity, or uncertainty)
- Inquiry Arousal (stimulate curiosity by posing problems or questions to solve)
- Variability (incorporate a range of methods and media to meet students' needs)

Relevance:
- Goal Orientation (present the objectives of the instruction and specific methods for successful achievement)
- Motive Matching (match objectives to students' needs and motives)
- Familiarity (present content in ways that are understandable and related to the learners' experiences and values)

Confidence:
- Learning Requirements (inform students about performance requirements and assessment criteria)
- Success Opportunities (provide challenging and meaningful opportunities for successful learning)
- Personal Responsibility (link learning success to students' personal effort and ability)

Satisfaction:
- Intrinsic Reinforcement (encourage and support intrinsic enjoyment of the learning experience)
- Extrinsic Rewards (provide positive reinforcement and motivational feedback)
- Equity (maintain consistent standards and consequences for success)

Smith (1992) believes that in order to motivate an audience, you must first make them interested. She states that the following points should be considered by the instructor in regards to audience awareness, interest, and motivation:
• What does your audience need or want to know?
• What does your audience already know and what do they need to add to that knowledge?
• To what level of detail will your audience be receptive?
• How can the information be presented in an interesting manner?
• Can the audience learn the information in any way other than your telling it to them?
• How can you make clear what you want the audience to learn?
• How can the information be related to your audience’s own experiences?

Trueba, Cheng, and Ima (1993) mention the importance of family in the motivational process: “Motivation to achieve is related not only to the use of authority by family members, but also to the nature of rewards offered...achievement motivation is deeply rooted in family values and the commitment to help one’s own relatives.”

Ngeow (2000) makes a connection between transfer and motivation, claiming they are “mutually supportive in creating an optimal learning environment.” Ngeow suggests that if a learner feels that what one is learning is relevant and transferable to other situations, the learner will be more motivated. For transfer to take place, the learner must be properly motivated to do two things; to be able to recognize learning situations that have the opportunity of transfer, and to take advantage of these opportunities. Ngeow suggests three potential strategies for increasing both learner motivation and the number of opportunities to transfer language skills:

• Encourage learners to take ownership in learning by letting students identify and decide on relevant learning goals. Identifying their own goals should potentially maximize students’ motivation towards those goals.
• Promote intentional cognition or mindfulness to learning in various contexts: Learners must be able to practice language in a variety of contexts. This will help learners recognize the relevance and transferability of different learning skills or knowledge.
• Increase the authenticity of learning tasks and goals: Learners should recognize a real need to accomplish learning goals that are relevant and realistic. This prepares the learners for the real world, where there will be a need for the ability to continually transfer language skills according to the situation.

Everard and Morris (1996) also stress the importance of students setting their own goals: “A fundamental mistake is to forget that people are best motivated to work towards goals that they have been involved in setting and to which they therefore feel committed. If people do not feel committed towards a given result or activity, the only motivations at our disposal are those of the carrot and stick—reward and punishment. We therefore have to be prepared to modify our own initial perceptions of what is required.”

—(53)—
The Learner in Literature

As a teacher, it is necessary to look at motivation according to what type of learner you have. Teachers may find themselves constantly in the struggle of trying to determine what types of motivation may or may not work for each student or student type. Many reports have hinted that extroversion may be one indicator of a student's inclination towards being motivated, but this may or may not be the case. A quiet student may be misinterpreted as uninterested or possessing a lack of understanding of the material at hand, when in actuality they may possess an extremely high level of knowledge and interest in the subject and may also be very confident of their level of understanding. Those that appear unmotivated may be the most gifted or talented students in the class. The following are two examples of research that focus on the learner.

McClelland (1961) identified three major characteristics of the self-motivated achiever:

- Achievers like to set their own goals.
- Achievers tend to avoid extremes of difficulty in selecting goals, and prefer attainable, moderately difficult goals.
- Achievers prefer tasks which provide them with more or less immediate feedback.

McClelland, however, believes that this 'self-motivated' achiever is in the minority: In only about 10% of the population would we find this type of learner. McClelland also believes that for these self-motivated achievers, supervision may not be necessary and may in fact disturb their performance.

Kolb (1981) hypothesized that there are four distinct types of learners:

1. The Practitioner: This type of learner gets excited by new experiences, enjoys taking risks, and adapts well to change. This person tends to focus on learning by doing and by integrating application with experience.
2. The Facilitator or Motivator: This type of learner gets excited by working with people and enjoys generating and sharing ideas with others. This person also tends to become very involved in the learning process.
3. The Applied Scientist: This learner gets excited by things rather than by people and wants concrete answers to questions. This person enjoys hands-on experiences and wants quick answers.
4. The Theoretical/Basic Scientist: This learner gets excited by working with ideas, such as the theoretical aspects of problems, creating conceptual models, and combining diverse ideas. This type tends to be analytical and enjoys inductive approaches to learning.

Purpose of the Study

This study's aim is to reveal and assess motivation of adult learners studying at a private
language school in Tokyo. This assessment includes:

1. The students’ reasons for studying English.
2. How students view themselves in regard to language learning and how this view may affect their internal motivational processes. (This includes certain elements such as guilt, a sense of competitiveness, and a sense of wanting to participate with others.)
3. The importance of activities that may stimulate students’ motivation. (This includes activities such as watching movies or television in English, listening to music performed or radio stations that broadcast in English, reading books or magazines in English, etc.)
4. How students feel about the teacher in regard to the motivational process. This portion will be looked at both from the student's and the teacher's perspective regarding the perceived role of the teacher in the motivational process of the adult learners at this particular language school.

Methodology

The background to this study involved a curiosity regarding student involvement in their own motivation process, in and outside of the classroom. As mentioned previously, it may be nearly impossible to grasp all of the variables that are involved within an individual’s motivational process without performing a full psychological evaluation of the individual with specialized testing. With this said, we can only spare the time and energy to look for particular traits or variables within a given set or group.

Another element regarding motivation that should be considered is the teacher, and how the teacher may have some influence on the student motivational process. In this sense, classroom time is seen as extremely valuable, and what the teacher says or does within that short amount of time may affect the students’ behavior and motivation greatly, in and out of the classroom. These findings may hopefully shed a little light on the teacher’s role in the classroom regarding motivation.

The group that I used for the study comes from a cross-section of students that attend a ‘culture school’ (similar to what I would think of in America as an ‘adult continuing education center’) located in Shibuya, one of the main arteries of Tokyo. Along with English as well as a dozen or so other languages, the school also offers courses in dancing, music, sculpture, painting, history, etc. In the language classes offered, class sizes range from a minimum of two students to a maximum of eight students, except for special group or private lessons, or various workshops or seminars occasionally offered. Tuition, when broken down per class, usually is about 3,000 yen (approximately US$33) per one-hour lesson, and the majority of the classes are offered once a week for this one hour lesson. The entire student body numbers around 650 students, while the majority of the students, especially in the morning and afternoon class sessions, are homemakers and retirees. As the day progresses into the late afternoon and evening sessions, the students
tend to be younger, many of them being company employees who come to study after work.

Many of the English classes, which range from pre-beginner to advanced level courses, offer a specialized branch of study within English, focusing on such areas as listening, writing and composition, vocabulary, TOEIC or TOEFL preparation, pronunciation, current news and events, grammar, business English, and children's classes. My initial goal was to gather information from a wide variety of these classes, comprising a wide variety of students with a wide variety of needs. To gather my information, I decided to use a questionnaire format. Questionnaires were left in each classroom, and each instructor was asked to pass them out to their students at the end of each class. I allowed one month for the questionnaires to be answered and returned. A total of 249 questionnaires were handed out by the teachers to a total of 45 classes (This is a sample of about 30% of the English classes offered at the school.), and 176 questionnaires were received, a return rate of 70.68%.

The questionnaire was designed to be answered relatively quickly, with a total of 38 questions, separated into four major sections. The questionnaire was originally written in English, and then translated into Japanese in order to be fully comprehended by the students involved. Before distribution of the questionnaire to the students, no pilot study was done to determine the comprehensibility of the questionnaire.

The Questionnaire in Detail

Part One: What are your reasons for studying English?

The first section regards the student's current reasons for studying English. Five categories were listed: school, job, hobby, social reasons, and other. Within the category of school, two sub-categories were available: school examinations and TOEIC/TOEFL. Within the category of job, two sub-categories were available: intra-office/inter-office communication and work-related travel.

Initially, I was planning on separating intra-office and inter-office communication, but the actual reasons applied regarding the study of English for these purposes is nearly identical, with just the outlet being slightly different; whether you may have more direct communication with someone using English, or whether it may involve less direct forms of communication such as e-mail, faxes, etc. Also, in trying to be as economical as possible, combining certain question forms seemed necessary.

Within the category of hobby, two sub-categories were listed: on my own and with friends. After working at this particular school for a couple of years, I noticed that many of the students came to school by themselves, while others would arrive in packs and often continue to take a variety of classes together as a group. Many of these students have studied at this school for ten years or more together as a cohesive group. I myself taught a group of five retiree students, who were
friends before joining the school, came to the school together as a group, and have continued to study together for over ten years. At times, this group dynamic becomes extremely noticeable and sometimes problematic. For example, if there is a group that has been together for a long time and a new student enters the class, this student may often be ignored and essentially ostracized from the group, often resulting in this new student wishing to change to a different class, or quitting the school altogether.

Within the category of social reasons, two sub-categories were listed: traveling and groups/clubs/meetings held in English. Many of the students travel abroad often, sometimes as much as three or four times a year. Also, many of the students are involved in women's groups, volunteering, and other social functions in which English often appears to be necessary.

In regard to these four categories, the students could simply check which one applied to them, while a fifth category, named other, was an open ended question where the student could simply fill in the blank with their reason for studying.

Part Two: In regard to improving your English, are there any internal motivators that 'push' you?

The second section's goal is to hopefully reveal some of the internal motivators that affect a student in regard to studying and improving their English. It involves a series of statements in which their purpose is to disclose some possible motivational orientation on behalf of the student, specifically including integrative, instrumental, and personal motivation. Again, integrative motivation, according to Gardner and Lambert (1972), is often found when one is attempting to become a member of a target language community, while instrumental motivation reveals some utilitarian purpose for studying, whether it is for school, job, traveling, and so on. Finding an English speaking target language community in Tokyo may not be easy, and common sense may dictate that integrative motivation may not be present in an English language school attended by Japanese students in Tokyo.

However, many students may actually seek out these English language target groups, whether it be for volunteering, socializing, or just wanting to practice their English (I personally have been approached more than once with the opening line “Will you be my friend? I want to practice my English!”). One perhaps could argue that even in an integrative motivational situation, instrumental motivation could also be present: One may wish to ‘integrate’ into a target language community in order to further their own needs, whether it be for their survival, their ego, to make money, etc.

Also, in this particular learning situation, we will see if any personal motivators are present. Benson (1991) saw that many motivators could not easily be slotted into either instrumental or integrative motivation. These motivators involved the seeking of pleasure, enjoyment, and
entertainment, while not incorporating any integrative or instrumental forces. However, one may perhaps argue that the seeking of pleasure and enjoyment is in itself a form of instrumental motivation, but for the purpose of this study, it will not be.

Within the statements in my questionnaire, I nested the idea of integrative motivation within the following statements: “Learning English will help me understand foreign people and their way of life” and “Learning English will help me meet, converse with, and make friends with more and varied people.” The concept of instrumental motivation was embedded in the following statements: “I need to learn English in order to get a job” and “The knowledge of English is a sign of being an educated person and is important for social recognition.”

Other statements in the second section of the questionnaire which might reflect the student’s motivation for studying English included the following: “I want to perform to the best of my ability”, “Once I have started something, I can’t stop”, and “Other people’s English is better than mine, and I want to be the best.” These three statements will hopefully reveal a type of personal motivation that may be based on some form of inner drive, where the focus may be seen strictly on the self (competing with oneself), or on the self in relation to others (competing with others). All of the statements in the second section were implemented with a Likert scale, with a seven point range, from ‘not at all’ (corresponding to a numeric value of ‘0’) to ‘very much’ (corresponding to a numeric value of ‘6’).

Part Three: Do any of the following activities stimulate your motivation in regard to learning English? If so, how much do they motivate you?

The purpose of the third section of the questionnaire is to reveal any activities that stimulate student motivation in regard to learning English. As with the second section, an identical Likert scale was used. Activities stated in this section included English instruction radio programs, English television news, movies with English dialogue, language learning CDs or cassettes, English newspapers, magazines, books (fiction or non-fiction), and diaries or journals kept in English (In class, I have often promoted the idea of a student keeping a diary, to be checked on occasion by the instructor.).

The third section may disclose some valuable information, as most of these activities may be actively and passionately pursued without the teacher’s knowledge, and may never be revealed by the student. Only occasionally have I seen students give some hint as to their study activities outside the classroom, especially if not prompted by the teacher or another student. On one occasion, a particular student mentioned to me in passing that he had been getting up at 5:30 a.m. for the last forty years just to listen to a fifteen minute English language instruction program on the radio.

This information could potentially be used directly by the teacher, incorporating various forms of
media in the classroom including movies, novels, television news, radio, newspapers, and so on. Depending on a teacher's work environment, many of these tools could become a vital part of their lesson plan. Issues of resource availability may be a primary concern, as many schools may not have the budget, or simply not wish to provide funds towards purchasing video decks, CD players, close-captioned machines, etc. Also, certain schools may have a very specialized or restricted program which may include the censoring of certain material which has been deemed unsuitable for use in the classroom.

If the environment is supportive of such resource use in the classroom, upon discovering what outside learning activities are pursued by their students, teachers can simply begin to infuse their own enthusiasm into the learning scenario by using materials that the students are most interested in, and can incorporate the students' outside interests into the classroom, thus adding to their overall enthusiasm towards the often short amount of time that students and teachers spend together in the classroom.

Part Four: What can teachers do to motivate you?

The fourth section reveals some insight into the input of the teacher regarding the motivational processes of English language students. The first category simply allows the student to elaborate on an open ended topic: “What can teachers do to motivate you?”, and gives them space for five possible answers. The second category involves five points, measured by the same Likert scale used previously, and is designed to disclose some information regarding to what degree various things done by the teacher may or may not assist the student’s own motivation. The points are:

- clearly explaining new grammar and vocabulary
- correcting grammar, pronunciation and/or intonation
- assigning homework
- promoting a ‘stress-free’ classroom environment
- providing immediate feedback when the student does something correctly, such as “That's right!” or “Good job!”

In regards to the question involving a stress-free environment, an extra line has been inserted under the question to allow the student to elaborate on what this type of strategy actually may be. I did this fully knowing that each teacher-student and teacher-classroom relationship is unique, and a particular type of behavior that may be conducive towards promoting a stress-free learning environment may actually be quite difficult to predict without at least observing that particular classroom.

Of course, all of the points mentioned in the fourth section may be seen quite subjectively. For example, in regard to assigning homework, some students may vehemently be against the idea,
others may say they don’t want it but will tolerate it, others may show indifference but are actually happy to receive it, and even others may pursue it. If all of these student-types are present in the same class, could the teacher make a broad-sweeping statement that giving homework actually motivates that class’s students? It appears doubtful.

These questions in the fourth segment are a result of observing semi-annual questionnaires that are regularly distributed to the students, and the feedback provided has been quite valuable for both teachers and staff of the school. These questionnaires give the students ample opportunity to supply feedback regarding the teacher’s use of materials, punctuality, enthusiasm, and overall ability. These questionnaires also provide feedback regarding various aspects of the school itself, such as the amount of class tuition, and the courteousness and helpfulness of the staff. Information from these questionnaires have led me to believe that, in regards to the many roles of the teacher, effective classroom management and harmony is extremely precarious and often very difficult to maintain.

I have seen that within the same class, many students’ opinions about the teacher may be extremely different: Student A may really enjoy the teacher because the teacher allows Student A to speak freely without interruption (focusing on fluency), while Student B may have a less flattering opinion of the same teacher because Student B wishes to be corrected every time a mistake is made while speaking (focusing on accuracy). An additional problem that may occur is that Student B may never voice a request or complaint to the teacher and this problem may go unnoticed.

Hopefully, the feedback provided in this study will give teachers some clues as to what students may or may not actually respond to.