

# The Pedagogic Application of a Process-Oriented Model of L2 Motivation

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## Abstract

This article contemplates the Dornyei-Otto process model of second language (L2) motivation (Dornyei & Otto, 1998) and relates it to a Japanese tertiary L2 classroom context. L2 motivation has been considered by numerous applied linguists as the cause célèbre of learner individual differences over the past four decades. The construct's recent re-conceptualisation (Dornyei, 2005) has attempted to marry the antecedent literature to a theory with direct pedagogical applications which re-situates learners' L2 motivation temporally in relation to their in-class proclivities. Specific pedagogical strategies for maximizing L2 motivation in action, by generating, maintaining and protecting it, are discussed.

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**Key terms:** second language acquisition; L2 motivation; process-oriented; pedagogical application; Japanese tertiary L2 classroom

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## Introduction

Over the past four decades motivation has held a significant position in the research of second language acquisition (Ellis, 2008). As Ellis elucidates, “no single individual difference factor in language learning has received as much attention as motivation” (2008, p. 677). Despite motivation being an internal concept that is problematic to measure and delineate, the affective factors of L2 motivation on learning outcomes seem indisputable (Dornyei & Schmidt, 2001). Dornyei (1998) affirms the validity of the relationship between L2 motivation and achievement when he states that “motivation has been widely accepted by both teachers and researchers as one of the key factors that influence the rate and success of second/foreign (L2) learning” (1998, p. 117). The ongoing theoretical re-conceptualisation of L2 motivation's roles, components and its ramifications, confirms its enduring importance in L2 attainment as well as its inherent multi-faceted disposition (Dornyei, 1998, p. 114). The article explicates how the Dornyei's-Otto's (1998, p. 48) process model of L2 motivation and its further elaboration (Dornyei, 2005, p. 85) can be effectively applied by the L2 teaching practitioner to enhance L2 motivation and in turn, L2 achievement before, during, and after the learning process (see Figure 1 for more details).

## L2 Motivation

The concept of motivation is one that is complex, eclectic and dynamic and not easily defined (Gardner, 1985; Crookes & Schmidt, 1989; Dornyei, 1998). Dornyei asserts that although there is a general consensus among researchers as to *what* motivation is; “determining human behaviour by energizing it and giving it direction”, there are multifarious frameworks and models of *how* motivation does this (1998, p. 117). The wealth of theories and frameworks provide varying interpretations of the different aspects of motivation for didactic contemplation. Therefore, the question for language teachers is which framework or model should be selected for maximizing motivation in their L2 learners.

## How did we get here?

Ellis (2008) argues that the development of the study of L2 motivation over the past forty years has been enriched by its alignment with the constructs of motivation in the psychological and educational disciplines. The exploration of motivation as an achievement variable in L2 learning has been greatly influenced by the seminal work of Gardner's socio-educational model (1985) and his subsequent quantitative research based upon the Attitude Motivation Test Battery (Ellis, 2008). Gardner's 1985 model sought to bring together the four elements of; the social and cultural milieu, individual learner differences, the setting, and learning outcomes to account for how and why L2 learners learn in classroom settings (Ellis, 2008). Some researchers in the past have regarded the

implications of this model as almost a “dichotomy” of motivation: instrumental orientation; a utilitarian learning goal, and integrative orientation; a learner’s identification with the L2 culture (Matsuaki-Carreireira, 2005, p. 42). However, as Dornyei also argues, this view is a misrepresentation and “the popular interpretation has been rather different from the actual theory” (2005, p.70), insofar as L2 motivation is a much more dynamic concept than being either a extrinsic or intrinsic trait.

In 1989, Crookes & Schmidt re-ignited the pursuit of the interpretation of L2 motivation, as well as correlating the antecedent L2 motivational research to the reality of the learning and teaching processes it influences. They articulated the need for task and classroom components to be considered in any further research or re-conceptualisations of L2 motivation and that researchers should provide “a more satisfactory connection to language learning processes and language pedagogy” (Crookes & Schmidt, 1989, p. 245). Furthermore, they contended that the L2 motivational concept should be considered “in terms of choice, engagement, and persistence, as determined by interest, relevance, expectancy, and outcomes” (Crookes and Schmidt, 1989, p. 245).

In the years that have passed since the publication of Crookes and Schmidt’s appeal, an abundance of aspects of L2 motivation have been extensively examined, and its pedagogical implications in the language classroom have come more to the forefront of these investigations. Therefore, Crookes & Schmidt’s (1989) intention of “re-opening the research agenda” of L2 motivation was indeed productive (Dornyei, 1998). However, most researchers did not disregard the influential existing paradigms, but instead extended them (Dornyei & Skehan, 2003). As Dornyei (2005) attests “a growing amount of research examined the motivational impact of the main components of the classroom learning situation, such as the teacher, the curriculum, and the learner group” (p. 74). This association of motivation and contextual factors in L2 motivation was one that Dornyei (2005) describes as “fruitful” in the application of applied linguistics theory for the benefit of pedagogical practice and developing learner’s L2 identities (p. 75).

As Dornyei (2005) has reiterated “all other factors involved in SLA presuppose motivation to some extent” (p. 65) He also asserts that the key components in language learning such as aptitude and “appropriate curricula and good teaching” are not enough to override motivational factors to ensure student achievement (2005, p. 65). Conclusively, for language teachers, a motivational framework that they can use as a starting point to facilitate appropriate motivational strategies in their learners, needs to consider a range of some of the essential components in L2 motivation. Therefore the re-conceptualisation of motivation being a changeable construct with a temporal dimension that is affected by the varying gravity of situation-specific factors must also be considered (Dornyei, 2005).

### **Motivation as a process**

Convincingly, the Dornyei-Otto Model of L2 motivation, (Dornyei, 2005, p. 85) which is a process-orientated model, is one that could be effective for language teachers whose intention is to increase L2 motivation in their students. The fact that it encapsulates “some aspects of motivational evolution”, (Dornyei, 2005, p. 84) and breaks down the motivational process into temporal segments, justifies it as an appropriate choice for teachers who accede that the temporal dimension of L2 motivation is “an ongoing process shaping and sustaining learner involvement in learning” (Ushioda, 2001, p. 94).

Dornyei & Csizer assert the importance of the process aspect of motivation when they state that it “provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process” (1998, p. 203). The metaphor of the driving force advocates L2 motivation as a continuum and not a static construct, and asserts the inclination of motivation to be an oscillating concept (Dornyei, 2005). The temporal dimension of motivation is therefore fundamental when applying motivational strategies to pedagogic practice, as the majority of L2 acquisition seems to take place in the micro-context of the classroom. That is, what occurs to an individual in the learning group, and within a learning group as a whole, varies considerably throughout a course, a lesson and a task itself. As cited in Dornyei (2001), Ushioda notes that “within the context of institutionalized learning [...] the common experience would seem motivational flux rather than stability” (p. 21).

Although Dornyei has argued the process model is a “good starting point in understanding motivational evolution” for SLA

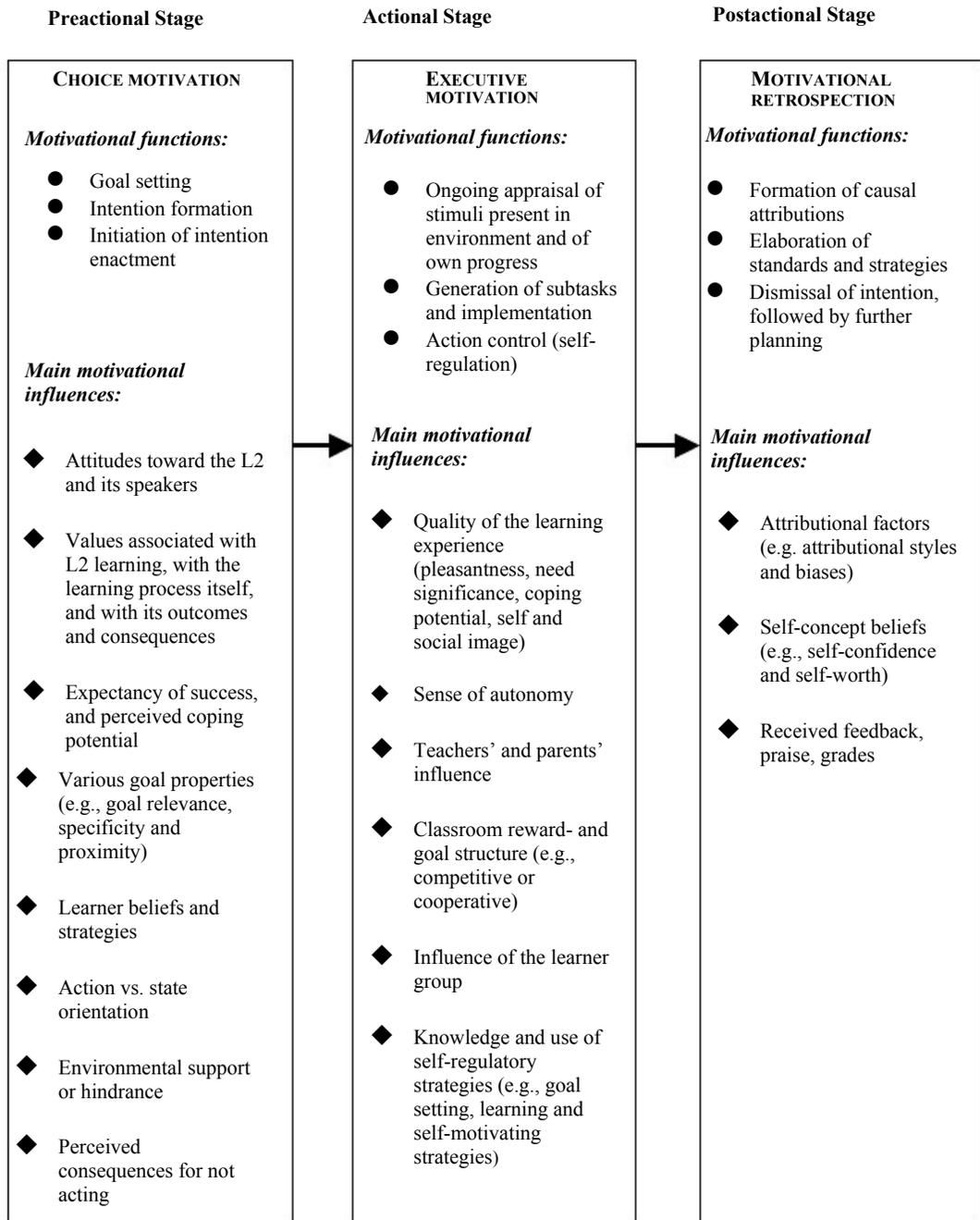
researchers (2005, p. 86) it could also be a useful starting point for teachers whose aim is to maximize motivation in their learners. Dornyei states that “there is a need to adopt a process-orientated approach paradigm that accounts for the daily ups and downs of motivation” (Dornyei, p. 83, 2005).

Since, as Dornyei (2005) affirms, the “key tenet of the process-orientated approach is that [...] three motivational phrases are associated with largely different motives” (p. 86) it allows for the consideration of the flux of L2 motivational factors that can be viewed as affective in the L2 learning process. Such factors include attributes and other motivational factors, tasks and curriculum, the teacher’s role, the attitudes toward the L2 community, and the direct influences that the learner encounters in the situational context of the classroom as both a social arena and an academic sphere. It is also imperative to promote awareness that the learners, as Ushioda as cited in Dornyei argues, are “agents of their own learning” (2005, p. 92). Dornyei summarises the tripartition of the process model (Dornyei & Otto, 1998, p. 48) as follows:

This model [...] broke down the motivational process into several discrete temporal segments, organized along the progression that describes how initial *wishes* and *desires* are first transformed into goals and then into operationalized intentions, and how these *intentions* are *enacted*, leading (hopefully) to the accomplishment of the goal and concluded by the final *evaluation* of the process. (Dornyei, 2005, p. 84)

Although this model succeeds in incorporating a wide range of the motivational factors that affect the process of motivation within a temporal framework, the main drawback for pedagogical application would be the inaccessibility of its discourse for the average language teacher. However, Dornyei formulated a framework (Dornyei, 2005, p. 85) that “classroom practitioners can apply to promote their motivational teaching practice and to create a motivating classroom environment” (2005, p. 111) that is based upon the Dornyei -Otto process model (See Figure 1)

Figure 1: A Process Model of L2 Motivation (adapted from Fig.4.3; see Dornyei, 2005, p. 85)



### **Application to a learning context**

In considering the specific strategies that language teachers could action to accommodate the process model and maximize motivation, a group of first year university Japanese learners of English was considered. As Japan is a monolingual society English does not fulfill a communicative role outside the language classroom. Japanese learners of English are considered part of the “expanding circle” of English users where the value attached to English is one that enables the students to participate in the global community where English is acknowledged as the global language (Kachru & Nelson, 1996). Also, the role of English in Japanese society often functions as a “gatekeeper” to opportunities and employment (Pennycook, 1995, p. 80). Therefore, English courses are a mandatory requirement in nearly all university programmes. Unfortunately, for many students, due to past educational experiences, English is a source of anxiety (Kimura, Nakata, & Okumura, 2001). Hence in the Japanese university EFL classroom context, the main concern of most language teachers is how to motivate their students effectively, and how to sustain motivation during a task, a single lesson and over the time frame of the course.

Dornyei’s framework for the temporal components of motivational L2 pedagogical practice (2005, p. 85), based upon the 1998 process model, allows teachers to break down L2 motivation and consider it as a process in relation to their selection and use of teaching materials and tasks, lesson and curriculum planning (2005, p. 113). Apart from strategising the teacher’s pedagogical tools, the framework also allows the teacher to consider their crucial role in the motivational process in each of the three stages; the Preactional Stage, the Actional Stage and the Postactional Stage (Dornyei, 2005).

The teacher has a vital role in creating a motivational learning environment, which has been comprehensively discussed (Dornyei, 2001). Kubanyiova (2006) also illustrates the importance of a motivational teaching practice in her argument that “to enhance students’ motivation to engage in learning, creating sufficient opportunities for cognitive development (by, for example, promoting autonomy [...], and providing informative feedback) seems to be equally important as creating a caring classroom climate” (p. 2).

The L2 motivational teaching practice framework allows teachers in the Japanese tertiary context to clearly relate the factors presented in the process-orientated model as specific strategies for a motivational pedagogical practice. The implications of the three temporal dimensions of the framework will be discussed under the component subheadings henceforth (Dornyei & Otto, 1998, Dornyei, 2005).

#### **Preactional Stage: Creating the basic motivational conditions and Generating Initial Motivation**

As Dornyei states, teachers need to be “empathic, congruent and accepting” in their role as a facilitator in the classroom (1994, p. 282). From a cultural perspective, these are roles that Japanese students will appreciate and positively respond to (De Mente, 1992). Dornyei’s (2005) description of the function of the classroom as both a social and academic arena is very fitting to characterize the context of the Japanese university EFL classroom. For the majority of students, after years of cram school and studying for university entrance exams, the university classroom is seen as the former domain rather than the latter as after entering a university tests and learning outcomes are generally no longer high stakes. For most first year students it is their first time to interact in a classroom environment in an interpersonal way and, as Dornyei elucidates, they definitely “go through some of the key developmental experiences in their lives [...] experimenting with increasingly elaborate personal identities.” (2005, p. 86-87). Therefore if the tasks selected are personally relevant, interpersonal and engaging, the social element of Japanese EFL classrooms could be advantageous in generating and maintaining motivation to fulfill task expectancies and goals. In addition a good student-teacher rapport is essential not only in achieving teaching aims but also in maximising motivation.

Dornyei & Csizer affirm the well-known implication that “student anxiety created by a tense classroom climate is one of the most potent factors that undermine student motivation” (1998, p. 215). Therefore, a healthy student-teacher rapport is not only essential to ensure an anxiety-free environment, and foster a positive atmosphere, but also ensures that the teacher is part of the cohesive learner group, as a model for the motivational processes, and a participant in the promotion of group cohesiveness

(Ehrman & Dornyei, 1998, p. 142). Group cohesiveness is critical in Japanese EFL classrooms as Japan is a group-orientated culture (De Mente, 1992). For this reason having the students create the curriculum goals as a group would personalize the learning experience as well as promoting a cohesive learner group. In addition, this strategy would increase students' "goal orientedness" and their "expectancy of success" (Dornyei, 1994, p. 281). Both lessons and tasks would have an increased personal relevance for the learners and in turn they would be more motivated.

Japanese university students tend to have a very negative view of themselves as L2 learners (Kimura, Nakata, & Okumura, 2001). Again, this issue stems from past L2 learning experiences. For example, at false-beginner ability levels most have been expected to decipher advanced grammar constructs. Consequently most students see the "mastery" of English as impossible and it is not worth any effort. As a motivational strategy to deal with these attributes, the teacher could re-situate learner beliefs to be more realistic. One way would be exposing students to different authentic texts of varieties of World Englishes in tasks to emphasise that the communicative competence they see as impossible is actually within their reach. Tasks should also be designed to be challenging with achievable outcomes, "making sure that students regularly experience success and a sense of achievement" (Dornyei, 1994, p. 281). These methods overlap with the factors Dornyei (2005) presents in the following motivational L2 teaching dimension.

#### **Actional Stage: Maintaining and protecting motivation**

With recent technological advances and the availability of the Internet in CALL classrooms, creating meaningful tasks based on authentic materials specific to students' interests is feasible for most teachers in Japanese universities. Chen (2005) has suggested a variety of ways that teachers can utilize computer mediated communication and the Internet as a teaching text. Chen argues that besides more exposure to authentic texts, and a popular cultural incentive, learners also have a wider range of opportunities to "take part in the social and cultural context", as a part of the global community of English users (2005, p. 4). Yashima's concept of international posture also "tries to capture a tendency to relate oneself to the international community rather than any specific L2 group" (2009, p. 145). This is a construct that is especially pertinent in EFL contexts such as Japan. Yashima argues that international posture both affects and influences L2 motivation (Yashima, 2009). The influence of students' attitudes toward the L2 and its speakers is important to consider as the reality is that English is the global language of the world today (Kachru & Nelson, 1996). The pedagogical implications of international posture are of significant importance for the Japanese learner. For example, in a CALL classroom, the teacher has access to position the learner in an authentic experience of communication as a part of the global community, such as in chat-rooms, blogs and so on. Post-task, in motivational retrospection, the learner can receive the feedback and praise of the teacher and increase their self-worth and confidence, and to some extent learner autonomy, as they managed the task of real communication.

Teachers could also promote learner autonomy by incorporating learner awareness tasks into their lessons and encouraging their students to take a more active, autonomous role in their learning through the use of classroom language, co-operative homework tasks, and encouraging students to create personalized vocabulary and phrase notebooks. The promotion of learner autonomy, especially for Japanese learners, whose attributes are based on past learning experiences of primarily teacher-centred classes, is crucial (Kimura, Nakata, & Okumura, 2000). The teacher can concurrently encourage the motivational component of the cohesive learner group by promoting reliance on their peers as resources, not solely the teacher judging degrees of correctness, and by utilizing co-operative learning tasks (Dornyei, 1994, p. 282).

Dornyei asserts that "by applying self-motivating strategies, learners assume responsibility and regulatory control of their own motivational disposition" (2005, p. 112). For Japanese learners at university, positive reinforcement of their efforts throughout the learning process seems to benefit their "affiliative motive to please the teacher" (Dornyei & Csizer 1998, p. 216) as well as "protecting the learners' self esteem and increasing their self confidence" (Dornyei, 1994, p. 281). Japanese learners may gain and maintain self-confidence by being given assurances that they are on the right track, and encouragement that they are doing a good

job. In this case, adapting Good & Brophy's "horse to water metaphor" of L2 motivation (cited in Dornyei, 1998) would be leading the horses to water, guiding them 'to drink with their own hooves', and patting the horses for doing so during and after the drinking has been done.

There are five teaching actions that Dornyei suggests to practice in order to maintain and protect students' motivation. They are a valuable overview for teachers of Japanese university L2 learners to consider (2001b, p.130).

- 1) Teachers can foster the belief that competence is a changeable aspect of development.
- 2) Favourable self-conceptions of L2 competence can be promoted by providing regular experiences of success.
- 3) Everyone is more interested in a task if they feel that they made a contribution.
- 4) A small personal word of encouragement is sufficient.
- 5) Teachers can reduce classroom anxiety by making the learning context less stressful.

#### **Postactional Stage: Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation**

The third dimension of Dornyei's L2 motivational teaching practice framework is not the final one, but rather from the model's temporal perspective, the stage that is the antecedent to "creating the basic motivational conditions" on the continuum of the process-orientation model (Dornyei, 2005). The teacher needs to reiterate, or in layperson terms 'wrap up', what the students have achieved and how they have achieved it. The teacher's praise, the reward of grades, and positive feedback from both the teacher and their peers would both increase learner satisfaction and provide motivational feedback (Dornyei & Csizer, 1998). The teacher could additionally employ peer and self-evaluation tasks to encourage autonomous self-retrospection. In conclusion, it would be very beneficial for teachers of Japanese university students to implement the strategies that have been discussed above in their classrooms.

#### **Conclusion**

Re-conceptualising L2 motivation as a temporal process would improve teachers' good practice and situate the L2 learner group at the centre of the tasks. Arguably, if the Dornyei-Otto (1998, Dornyei, 2005) process model is applied within the framework for L2 motivational pedagogical practice (Dornyei, 2005), in the learning context of the Japanese university classroom, it certainly would be conducive to L2 motivation and the L2 acquisition aspects it presupposes (Dornyei, 2005). By promoting goals and attaching values to personalized student-centred tasks, co-operatively creating a curriculum that is relevant to the students' age group and interests, and providing opportunities for autonomous learning, students will be more in charge of their own learning and will be encouraged to utilise their self regulation processes. As a result of the application of the process-orientated model, both teaching and learner satisfaction can be amplified.

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