

Teaching and Researching Motivation

Review by Neil McBeath

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TEACHING AND RESEARCHING MOTIVATION. Zoltan Dornyei. Harlow Pearson Education, 2000.

This is the first book from a new series—*Applied Linguistics in Action*—which appears under the general editorship of Christopher N. Candlin and David R. Hall. The blurb for this volume claims that it:

- provides a theoretical summary of the various facets of motivation
- examines how the theoretical insights can help classroom practitioners in their everyday teaching practice
- looks at how motivation can be researched and assessed
- offers practical recommendations and tips

It must be admitted that in this instance the blurb does not oversell the content.

The theoretical summary is sound, with Dornyei examining psychological theories of motivation, and only then turning his attention to the motivation, and only then turning his attention to the motivation to learn a second or foreign language. He is not explicitly concerned with the problems of motivating EFL learners, but much of the research cited comes from that field. He then offers his own process model of L2 motivation, showing how wishes, hopes, and desires can be transformed into goals, and then into intentions which lead to the achievement of the goals.

For classroom practitioners, there are no simple checklists that guarantee success, for Dornyei is acutely aware of the different variables that can affect each student's own motivation. He does however, offer some motivational techniques, strategies, and micro-strategies and tackles the problem of demotivation and the difficulties of peer pressure.

He also devotes an entire chapter to teacher motivation, exploring the sociocultural and contextual influences on teachers. He also offers a set of self-motivating strategies for teachers threatened with "burn-out".

The sections on motivational research and assessment are, perhaps, less accessible for the classroom practitioner, for not all teachers will intend to conduct even action

research. Even so, Dornyei outlines the advantages and disadvantages of qualitative, quantitative, cross-sectional and longitudinal research, and offers sound advice to those compiling either self-report tests or questionnaires.

In the same way, resources and further information presents a useful list of abstracting journals, databases, journals, magazines, measuring instruments and sample tests. These are offered within the framework of the place of motivational research in applied linguistics, and their relevance will vary from reader to reader, but no one who consults this book is likely to derive anything but benefit.

About the Reviewer

Neil McBeath is an English Education Officer working for the Royal Air Force of Oman. He is currently teaching ESP courses to aircraft engineering technicians. He holds two Masters degrees and has been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal of the Sultanate of Oman.