Instructional Practices that Motivate Students to Learn English[*]

Pınar Yüncü Kurt[*][*]   **Hüseyin Kurt[**][*]**

Abstract

Motivation to learn English plays a curial role in students' performance, achievement and attendance. This indicates that instructors should be aware of the importance of motivation and strive to motivate their students. To be able to do that, instructors should have a novel knowledge of instructional practices that motivate students so that they can adjust their teaching methods and insert motivational tactics and strategies into their teaching procedures. Thus, the aim of this article is to find out the instructional practices that motivate students to learn English most. For that reason, ARCS motivational model (Keller, 2010) was applied throughout ten weeks in main course lessons of preparatory classes at Namık Kemal University during students' regular class hour. By means of this model several motivational tactics and strategies were inserted to the classroom instruction. Researchers prepared detailed lesson plans according to the weekly schedule and needs of the students and the students were asked to write weekly comments about them at the end of each week. Next week's lesson plan was prepared based on researchers' observation of the effectiveness of the lesson plan and students' comments collected previous week. Using a qualitative research design, comments from 30 students were collected in ten weeks and analyzed. As a result, we have reached the conclusion that students' comments can be evaluated under two headings. The first heading includes comments related to classroom instruction and the second one is related to instructor behavior and we tried to explain them in detail in this article.

Keywords: motivation, motivational model, arcs, weekly comments

Öğrencileri İngilizce Öğrenmeye Motive Eden Öğretici Etkinlikler

Öz

İngilizce öğrenme motivasyonunun öğrencinin sınıf içi performansı, genel ve yılsonu başarısı ve ders devamlılığı üzerinde yadsınamaz bir rolü bulunmaktadır. Bu durum, öğretmenlerin motivasyonun öneminin farkında olmaları ve öğrencilerini motive etmek için çaba göstermeleri gerektiğini göstermektedir. Bunu yapabilmek için öncelikle hangi sınıf içi etkinliklerin öğrencileri motive ettiği hakkında güncel bilgiye sahip olmaları ve bu bilgiyi kullanarak kendi öğretme etkinliklerini adapte edip, motive edici taktik ve stratejilerle zenginleştirmeleri gerekmektedir. Bu yüzden, bu çalışmanın amacı, öğrencileri İngilizce öğrenmeye en çok hangi öğretici etkinliklerin motive ettiğini bulmaktır. Bu sebeple, Namık Kemal Üniversitesi İsteğe Bağlı Hazırlık Sınıfı Temel İngilizce dersinde on hafta boyunca ARCS Motivasyon Modeli (Keller, 2010) uygulanmıştır. Bu modelden faydalanılarak çeşitli motive edici taktik ve stratejiler sınıf etkinliklerine eklenmiştir. Araştırmacılar haftalık programı ve öğrenci ihtiyaçlarını göz önünde bulundurarak detaylı ders planları hazırlamış ve her hafta sonunda öğrencilerden ders programına entegre ettikleri taktik ve stratejiler hakkında yorum yapmaları istenmiştir. Bir sonraki haftanın planı araştırmacıların gözlemleri ve öğrenci yorumları dikkate alınarak hazırlanmıştır. Nicel araştırma yöntemi kullanılarak, 30 öğrencinin on hafta boyunca yapılan sınıf içi etkinliklere ve öğretmen tutum ve davranışlarına yönelik yaptıkları yorumlar toplanmış ve değerlendirilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, öğrenci yorumlarının iki başlık altında toplanabileceği sonucuna varılmıştır. İlk başlık sınıf içi etkinliklere yönelik yorumları kapsarken, ikincisi öğretmen davranışı üzerinde odaklanmıştır ve bu makalede bu başlıklar detaylı şekilde açıklanmıştır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: motivasyon, motivasyon modeli, ARCS, haftalık yorumlar

Introduction

2016 reports of OECD highlight that students encounter demotivation problems and they experience poor performance and a high rate of dropping out as a result. Many instructors throughout the world also complain that their students lack motivation as supported by OECD. These complaints indicate that instructors are aware of the importance of motivation in achievement and attendance. However, the attempts to motivate students seem to have proven ineffective (Jang, Conradi, McKenna & Jones, 2015). Thus, we need to find out what actually motivates our students. That is the question that aroused our interest and urged us to seek answers. As a result of extensive study and experience Keller (1983) put forward the ARCS Motivational Model as a solution to the problem to find more effective ways of understanding the major influences on the motivation to learn, and to provide systematic ways of identifying and solving problems with learning motivation. Keller's ARCS Motivational Model consists of four categories, Attention, Relevance, Confidence and Satisfaction. It covers most of the areas of research on human motivation and is a motivational design process that is compatible with typical instructional design models. Therefore, this study makes use of the model in English language classes at the preparatory school of a university to find out what motivates students to learn English in a Turkish context and, on the basis of the results, to suggest some techniques to increase motivation.

ARCS Motivational Model

To have motivated students, first instructors should have a necessary understanding of motivation which means they need an overview of the important components of the motivation to learn and need to have an understanding of the strategies that will help fulfill these components (Jacobson & Xu, 2002). For these reasons, practical motivational strategies are necessary so that instructors can design effective and motivating instruction (Keller, 1987a, 1987b). To be able to know what types of strategies to use, how many to use, and how to integrate them into the course, a motivational design plays a crucial role. Therefore, Keller (1983) developed the ARCS Motivational Model to guide instructors to blend the important elements of motivation so that they could design motivational instruction. To be able to apply ARCS motivational strategies effectively, a systematic motivational design process should be undertaken. The motivational design process has 10 steps.

Table 1. *Motivational design activities and process questions (Keller, 2010, p.59)*

Activities		Questions
DEFINE	1. Obtain course information	What are the relevant characteristics of the current situation including course description, rationale, setting and instructors?
	2. Obtain audience information	What are the relevant characteristics of the audience, including entry-level skills and attitudes towards job and training?
	3. Analyze audience motivation	What are the audience's motivational attitudes toward the course to be offered?
	4. Analyze existing materials and conditions.	What kinds of motivational tactics are in the current materials or other source materials and are they appropriate?
	5. List objectives and assessments	What do I want to accomplish with respect to the motivational dynamics of the audience and how will I know if I do?
DESIGN	6. List potential tactics	How many possible tactics are there that might help accomplish the motivational objectives?
	7. Select and /or design tactics	Which tactics seem to be most acceptable for this audience, instructor, and setting?
	8. Integrate with instruction	How do I combine the instructional and motivational components into an integrated design?
DEVELOPE	9. Select and develop materials	How do I locate or create motivational materials to achieve the objectives?
PILOT	10. Evaluate and revise	How can I detect the expected and unexpected motivational effects of the course?

ARCS Categories

Attention

Attention category seeks to answer the question "How can I make this learning experience stimulating and interesting?" and suggests that the instruction should capture the interest of students and stimulate their curiosity to learn and consequently help students focus their attention to learn (Fitzpatrick, McConnell & Sasse, 2006). The instructor can design instruction in a way that captures and maintains students' attention by using attention strategies such as a sudden or unexpected change in the environment, a loud whistle, a change in voice level, humor, and using different types of materials.

Relevance

Capturing students' attention is not enough for them to keep their initial motivation throughout the process of accomplishing a task. The relevance subscale answers the question "In what ways will this learning experience be valuable for my students?" and is related to how important students consider the subject matter being learned. In terms of expectancy theory, if students value and perceive the instruction as relevant to their personal or educational needs, they will choose to pursue the desired outcome (McConnell, Hoover & Sasse, 2001; Yap, 2008). Relevance can be achieved by linking course content to the students' past experiences and knowledge, current and future objectives, and their personal interests (Keller, 2010). Accordingly, instructors' role is to "build bridges between the subject matter and the learner's needs, wants, and desires" as Keller (2010, p.48) states. Moreover, relevance can be enhanced if a match between instructors' teaching and students' learning styles, and cultural values can be provided so as to stimulate personal involvement in the class. The instructor should use students' names, simulations, analogies, case studies, and examples related to the students' immediate and current interests and experiences in addition to providing choices.

Confidence

Confidence category is related to the students' perception of their ability to successfully learn or perform the required concept or task (Carpenter, 2011) and the focus question of this category is "How can I help the students succeed and allow them to control their success via instruction?". The instructors' role is to help the students believe or feel that they will succeed and control their success by means of enough challenge that requires a degree of effort to succeed, but not so much since it creates serious anxieties or threatens their confidence (Keller, 2010). To sustain student motivation, providing opportunities for success is crucial since the success experience will be meaningful and give students the feeling of control over the events that influence their learning as well as improving their efficacy expectation, and will stimulate continued motivation (Margueratt, 2007; Keller, 2010). Let the students know what is expected of them and provide examples of successful students to build confidence. It is important that students actually succeed at challenging tasks that are meaningful. Thus, the pacing should be adjusted as the students' competency levels change. The content should be organized in a clear, easy to follow sequence. Both verbal and nonverbal reinforcements will have an impact on the learner's self-confidence. Giving learners choices in sequencing and their working environment, allowing them to go at their own pace help them to improve confidence (Keller, 2010).

Satisfaction

The last step to motivate students to learn is to generate satisfaction by answering the question "What can I do to help the students feel good about their experience and desire to continue learning?" (Keller, 2010, p. 159). Satisfaction subscale suggests that instruction should be designed in a way that students gain positive feelings about their learning experiences (Carpenter, 2011). If students expect certain and valued outcomes from their behaviors, they will perform better and put more effort. Students should be able to associate their effort to learning goals. At the end of the course, satisfaction can be enhanced when students see how they are now able to perform significant and comprehensive activities that they did not have the skills for at the beginning of the course. Motivational strategies to

increase feelings of positive challenge or accomplishment in this category include verbal reinforcement, rewards, fairness, personal attention, feedback, and deliberate avoidance of negative influences (Keller & Suzuki, 2004).

Method

The purpose of the study is to find out the instructional practices that motivate students to learn English most. The research question is as follows: What instructional practices are considered to be motivating for the students?

The participants of the study were university students who were learning English as a foreign language in the preparatory school at Namık Kemal University, Tekirdağ/Turkey. The participants were chosen using convenience sampling. One of the researchers was the class instructor herself. The participants were exposed to 28 hours of English instruction per week and the instructor taught 10 hours of English lesson with each class which provided the instructor sufficient time to implement the ARCS motivational lesson plans and to observe the effectiveness of the motivational practices. The lesson plans which were prepared based on ARCS model principles and strategies were implemented in the participants' classroom at their regular scheduled class time.

A qualitative research design was adopted for the present study. Besides the classroom materials that were used to implement ARCS strategies, a weekly comment sheet (see Appendix) was used to gather data. At the last lesson of each week which means at the end of 10 hours of instruction, the participants were asked to comment on the lesson and lesson materials. The data were obtained through weekly comments written by the students to examine the effectiveness of the model in depth and to learn about the instructional practices that appealed to the students. Student comments were analyzed to find out their perceptions related to the effective instructional practices and instructor behavior.

The students commented on the activities that aroused interest most, whether the activities were relevant to their personal goals, whether they were satisfied with the activities, their feelings about the activities, the instructor behavior, and so on. The participants were free to write their comments in English or in Turkish. Due to the fact that the participants wouldn't feel comfortable when they write their comments with their names on the paper, their names weren't required. Instead, the participants were asked to use a nickname so that the researchers can comment on the participants' comments. Nevertheless, some of the students chose to use their own names. At the end of each week, these comments were collected and evaluated by the researchers.

When the students mentioned their deficiencies or problems through weekly comments sheet, the researchers wrote back positive and encouraging comments. The most important reason to ask for weekly comment is that the researchers needed immediate feedback from the students so that they would be able to modify and apply the most suitable strategies. Keller (2010) suggests that a great number of different types of measurement can be used ranging from body language to comments or interviews to get feedback from the students. Another researcher that emphasized using student comments was Visser (1990). Visser (1990) collected weekly, anonymous self-reports in which he asked the students to describe the three greatest motivational challenges and three most positive motivational influences they experienced during the previous week.

Furthermore, the researchers made use of a token system to motivate learners. According to Keller (2010), "a token economy is a system that incorporates the systematic use of reinforcements to manage behavior, encourage learning performance, or increase learner motivation" (p. 172). In these systems, target behaviors are specified clearly and tokens are awarded for those behaviors. When enough tokens are collected by the students they had the opportunity to exchange their tokens for a tangible reward such as edible items, school supplies, or a special privilege such as choosing that week's game. In this study, symbolic rewards were prepared in the form of cards with motivating pictures such as star, happy or funny faces as tokens. The winners in class activities or the students who performed a satisfactory contribution in class were given one token. The students were informed that when they collect three tokens they can exchange them with chocolate, when

they have five tokens they can exchange them with a graded English book. The students were given at least two chances of getting a token each week. Another motivational strategy that was used in the present study was the use of motivational messages. This concept was designed by Jan Visser (Visser & Keller, 1990) and it means writing a motivating message and delivering the message to the students who needs extra encouragement based on instructor observation (Keller, 2010). In the present study, at the end of the first week, a motivational text message was sent to every subject. During critical periods such as the first week, before the midterm exam, after the midterm exam, and towards the end of the semester, the researchers sent other text messages to keep the students alert and motivated. Moreover, student behaviors were constantly observed in class and motivational messages were written for individual students and were delivered to the students in class.

Table 2. *Personal message to a student*

| You have got a message! |
| I understand that you get bored and distracted sometimes. It may be because you are in a new class. But I'm sure if you try a little bit harder, you will enjoy more and won't feel bored. I know that you can pass the exam and be successful. |
| Sincerely |
| Pınar ☺ |

Results and Discussion

What instructional practices are considered to be motivating for the students?

The research question regarding the instructional practices considered to be motivating for the students was formed to find out the instructional practices that motivate the students most. The students' comments that were collected at the end of every week by means of weekly comments were evaluated by the researchers in terms of frequency to identify the instructional practices that motivate the students most. These comments can be evaluated under two categories as classroom instruction and instructor behavior.

Classroom Instruction

It is clear from the students' comments that classroom instruction significantly influences their level of motivation. Among all the effort that had been put through in class, the students commented that they perceived extra instructional activities such as games, songs and photocopiable materials including info-gap, problem solving, matching, puzzle, card games, picture description activities as the most motivating instructional practices. These kinds of materials are motivating since students are active participants of the lesson and can use their energy and creativity (Chen, 2009; Paras, Bizzocchi, 2005). This result isn't surprising, since course books can be monotonous, and instructors may need extra materials to support the book (Selcuk, 2011; Tomlinson, 2012; Tze-Ming, Chou, 2010). Following a course book extensively can become uninteresting because after a period of time it starts to be monotonous and students lose their attention to the lesson. Fredericks (2005) states that course books shouldn't be considered as the only teaching tool. New and interesting materials and visuals are needed to maintain students' attention as Acat and Demiral (2002) also suggested.

Many students commented that extra activities done through the use of photocopiable materials were useful and enjoyable since these activities helped them understand and remember important points easily especially when they were conducted in a competitive way. For instance, the pair competition activity in which the students matched cut-up sentences with their halves to practice conditionals in pairs was stated to be fun and useful, since this activity helped them to remember the grammar point better. Providing additional activities makes them more enthusiastic and energetic and brings variety to the instruction. Student 6 report his/her opinion on this issue as follows:

"We should make use of more auditory and visual materials in class since when we follow the book all the time I get bored (St.6)" (An example of students' comments)

Some students commented that they had difficulty in improving their listening skills, so they demanded extra listening activities in class. Thus, they were provided extra listening texts, short video activities, and song activities which were perceived as motivating class activities. Among all listening exercises, songs were the most motivating ones. All the students were in favor of listening to songs in class. In addition, besides being motivating, songs also increase students' listening skills which is another motivating factor (Chen, 2009). Students prefer listening activities since they weren't given much opportunity to listen something in English in their earlier English education (Olgun, 2004). Therefore, in this study being given such a chance is considered to be important and motivating for the students as Student 15 states:

"We should do more listening activities especially song activities" (St.5 at the beginning of the study)
"I have a good time completing song activities (St.15)"

Playing games in class was perceived as highly motivating. When students play games, they enjoy themselves and "take on the responsibility of reaching specific goals without ever reflecting on the strategies used to reach these goals" (Paras &Bizzocchi, 2005, p.6). During games, students experience flow and they are completely involved in the activity (Paras &Bizzocchi, 2005). Flow is an important term since it (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975) refers to being completely absorbed in an activity to the point that you are not distracted by external stimulus, you are in a high level of intrinsic motivation which suggests that your attention is totally focused on your task, and you progress unconsciously from one thought or activity to the next. Among all kind of games, vocabulary games were mentioned by the students most. Based on the students' comments, it has been understood that students find vocabulary games both entertaining and beneficial since they have the chance to revise newly learned vocabulary. This is because some units cover a lot of new vocabulary for the students to learn. Students had difficulty in studying these words. Vocabulary games helped them overcome this obstacle while having fun. Student 10 and 11 mention their ideas on this matter as follows:

"I like vocabulary games best since I easily remember the words we use to play the game (St.10)"
"The vocabulary drawing game we played on board was really useful (St.11)"

Board activities and competitions are considered to be attention gatherers and adding fun and excitement to the lesson. Changing activities especially boring and mechanic ones with competitions was commented as useful. Student 28 states his/her opinion on the matter as follows:

"Creating words with the letters on board was the activity that I liked most this week (St.28)"

The winner student, pair or the group was praised and provided with tokens for their hard work and participation. Another thing that affected their motivation was this token system. Some of the students were very eager to participate in activities to get a token and were pleased when they exchanged their tokens with a bar of chocolate or a graded book. Offering them a graded English book was very encouraging. Eight of the students were able to collect 5 tokens and managed to get a book; and ten students received chocolate as an exchange for their tokens. The students were contented because they received an award for their efforts. Recognizing success when it occurs and rewarding in class performance help students stay focused on task (Truchlicha, McLaughlin & Swain, 1998). Students report their views on this issue as follows:

"Getting tokens makes me happy because I love chocolate (St.14)"
"When there is competing in an activity, we learn well (St.7)"
"I enjoy competitions a lot and they are really fun (St.23)"

The students reported that they were fond of group or pair work activities especially when they were asked to perform a creative task because they benefited from student to student conversation (Johnson, 2012). Pair and group activities were considered as highly motivating. Lin (2008) also found out that students perceive working with a partner as

exciting. By sharing their ideas, these activities helped them to use their creativity and maintain their motivation (Carpenter, 2012). In addition, pair or group work activities are less threatening for students and foster risk taking; students prefer taking risks when they work with a partner (Wajnryb, 1992; Zuniga, 2010). Students report their ideas on this subject as follows:

"I like group works. These kinds of activities increase my motivation (St.22)"
"I never get bored during the activities that I work with my partner, I like these kinds of activities (St.30)"
"Creating an invention with my group was the activity I liked best this week (St.22)"

In addition, some of the students suggested that vocabulary practices or any other practice that were supported with visuals were more meaningful and helpful for them. Using power point presentations for vocabulary teaching and grammar revision, hanging pictures and creating example dialogues on board were effective motivators. Visual and verbal components of instruction complement each other and promote better learning since in this way complicated things are made easy to understand (Wall, Higgins & Smith, 2005). Student 4 and 28 report their opinions on the matter as follows:

"The 'used to' activity that we talked about pictures of famous people was beneficial (St.4)"
"Using pictures to ask questions to each other was good (St.28)"

Furthermore, students find speaking exercises highly beneficial and motivating. Many students commented that more speaking activities should be integrated into the lesson. This may result from the fact that students are aware of the importance of communicating in English for their personal development and for better job opportunities (Dincer, 2011; Sun, 2008). In addition, instructor's encouragement to speak English may affect students' willingness to communicate in English (Sun, 2008). Some of the students make comments on the issue as follows:

"We can do more speaking activities (St.1)"
"I like speaking activities because I feel that I can speak English and I feel happy (St.24)"
"I absolutely loved speaking activities; we talked English a lot this week (St.9)"

Therefore, students were asked to make short presentations about a topic they like to improve their speaking skills. Even though this activity wasn't included in the syllabus and was optional, all students participated, and they commented that it was motivating because they had the chance to talk about something of their choice. In addition, making a short presentation was regarded as motivating because students were allowed to choose their topic to present in class. In Carpenter's study (2011), students stated that making the assignments on their own and putting their own voice in them were motivating. Students 10 and 14 make comments over the issue as follows:

"My friends made a presentation about Sıla, this was my favorite this week. I think we had a good time (St.10)"

"The idea of making presentations is really good, the presentation about Carlos Martin was good (St.14)"

Instructor Behavior

Second category that emerged as a result of the students' comments was the instructor behavior. Instructor behavior in different aspects was commented as highly motivating. The strongest motivating instructor behavior was that the instructor managed to get students' attention to the lesson and involve them to the lesson very successfully and could emphasize important points. Thus, effective teaching skills were perceived as motivating. According to Arnold and Brown (1999) and Malmström and Öquist (2016) instructors are highly motivating models for learners. Instructor's classroom management style and professional skills were proposed to be motivating by Dörnyei (2001) and Wlodkowski (1993). To apply ARCS Motivational Model, the instructor always made detailed preparation for the lesson and the students recognized it. Presenting materials clearly and focusing on major points

held students' attention in class and made the course materials relevant to students and build confidence in students. Students state their opinions on this matter as follows:

"The instructor emphasizes the important points and revises them (St.3)"
"Your teaching style and methods are successful; your lessons are beneficial learn a lot (St.9)"
"Our instructor's teaching style is perfect, she never bores us, and we really understand and learn (St.25)"

Another thing that motivated students was the instructor's personal characteristics. Instructor's personality has been considered to be a very effective motivator for the students in literature too (Arnold, Brown, 1999; Carpenter, 2011; Dörnyei, 2001b; Wlodkowski, 1993). It was stated that commitment, warmth, empathy and trustworthiness determine the relationship between the students and the instructor (Dörnyei; 2001b). Moreover, according to Wlodkowski, (1993) instructor characteristics that motivate students most are expertise in the subject area, supporting learner autonomy, showing empathy, demonstrating enthusiasm, and providing instructional clarity. The results of this study support the above claims since the instructor was perceived to be enthusiastic and expert in the subject area. Besides, many students evaluated the instructor as kind, caring, creative, cheerful, polite, fun, energetic, concerned, and eager to help. Furthermore, instructors should avoid stimulating negative emotions in students and try to promote positive feelings (Keller, 1987, 2010) since negative instructor behavior is one of the demotivators in class. Strict and dominant instructor behavior can cause especially students who aren't motivated enough to feel worse (Selcuk, 2011). Consequently, the fact that the instructor had positive and close relationships with the students was perceived as highly motivating. Positive behaviors of the instructor made the students willing to participate and the instructor was commented to have a close and trustworthy relationship with the students. Many of the students made statements such as:

"We have a kind and creative instructor; she supports us even when we make mistakes (St.3)"
"I benefited from your lessons; you give us energy (Sts.6 & 8)"
"We have an interested instructor; she is more eager than us (St.25)"

What's more, they said that the instructor paid attention to individual students and their comments and prepared instruction accordingly. As Malmström and Öquist (2016)'s study suggests, supportive and participating teacher behavior is motivating. To illustrate, when students demanded extra speaking activities the instructor added extra activities to that week's instruction. This was appreciated by the students, since they felt that they were important to their instructor. In addition, the students wrote their comments every week and the instructor acted upon their comments and the students were aware of the fact that they were active participants of the process. These comments enabled them to participate in the decision-making process which according to Arnold and Brown (1999) opens up greater possibilities for students and help them develop their whole potential because students want to feel included and be a part of decision-making process (Arnold & Brown, 1999; Dörnyei, 2001b). Providing opportunities that promote student reflection also motivates students (Means, Toyama, Murphy, Bakia, & Jones, 2009). Some of the students state their ideas on this issue as follows:

"It is very important for us that you can take a close interest in every student (St.3)"
"This week we got feedback about what we wrote and once more we understood that we are important to you (Sts.10 & 11)"

Additionally, providing positive and corrective feedback, and giving praise when students accomplish a difficult task were perceived as motivating in this study because feedback creates energy that students make use of beneficially in class when given appropriately (Carpenter, 2011, Johnson, 2012). In this study, the students reported that they were encouraged and praised in terms of their in-class performance and received positive and constructive feedback. This shows the effectiveness of feedback and reward system on classroom motivation (Dörnyei 2001). Student 14 reports his/her ideas on the subject as follows:

"What made me happy most this week was your comment on my written assignment (St. 14)"

Sending text messages had also motivating effect on students. The message that was sent after first week made them feel positive about their new class and the instructor. The messages that were sent before the midterms were encouraging. Frequent student-instructor communication is another factor that motivates students (Carpenter, 2011).

Teacher's verbal and non-verbal immediacy behaviors that reduce the distance between students and instructor may impact levels of learning by modifying classroom motivation (Dörnyei, 2001b, p.36). In this study, the students were able to contact their instructor via e-mail and text messages when they asked for guidance and help. The instructor also sent some motivational materials to motivate them at certain times such as first week, before the exam, etc. These motivational messages increased motivation since the students perceived their instructor as a caring instructor who is willing to communicate with the students as Robb also indicated in his study (2011). Messages and e-mails motivated the students since they indicate that instructor cared about them and their success and this gives the students a feeling of importance (Robb, 2010; Visser, Keller, 1990). The researchers sent messages as follows:

First message: "Congratulations! You have passed your exam and started a new level. Welcome to your new class. Thank you for your participation this week. I'm sure we will have a wonderful time and you will pass your exam again at the end of the term. If you ever need my help, please contact me."

Moreover, when the instructor realized that there were some distracted students in class, she wrote comments during class time and gave those little notes to those students without making them uncomfortable and without getting attention of the other students. This helped them to get involved in the lesson, after reading the note students tried to participate in the lesson more actively since they were acknowledged as individuals by the instructor. Also, being able to reach the instructor via mobile phone or e-mail helped them feel cared and secured. Dealing with individual students, paying attention to every individual in class (Huett, Kalinowski, Moller & Huett, 2008) and being at equal distance from each student is very important so that students perceive their instructor to be fair and trust him/her and being fair is an important instructor characteristic (Dörnyei, 2001, Keller, 2010). The students in this study emphasized that instructor could provide guidance to every student without being bored or angry. Some of the students emphasized this issue as follows:

"Thank you for your message instructor (St.12)"
"Your message made me happy (St.17)"
"Your messages and e-mails were really effective (St.25)"

Conclusion

The aim of this article was to determine the instructional practices that motivated students most. Students' comments support that applying ARCS strategies in instruction can motivate students in several aspects. Weekly comments of the students provided a rich amount of details regarding student perspectives. These show that techniques and strategies used to motivate the students had a great deal of impact on them. Vocabulary teaching activities supported with games, listening practices such as songs and videos, group activities and competitions, visual materials, speaking activities and instructor behavior were considered as highly motivating classroom events. The results of this study and the students' comments claim that instructor's personal characteristics and professional skills, student-instructor interaction and frequent communication, enthusiasm and clarity, feedback and praise, and fairness are crucial to motivate students.

The present study has contribution to the field in the sense that it provides feedback both for the teacher and the students. By getting feedback in short time intervals, instructors can make need assessment and respond the need of the students immediately not at the end of the term but during the education process. However, the number of the participants can be increased so that more data can be obtained to have a better insight regarding the

motivational instructional practices. In addition, some of the students can be interviewed to validate the data. The ARCS Motivational Model can be applied to students with different levels of proficiency to see if the model is effective in every level and to see if the perception of students from different levels change regarding the motivational value of instructional practices. Also, the area might benefit from further research focusing on different age groups. Future studies may also investigate the instructors' attitudes towards the effectiveness of the model, and instructors can reflect upon instructional practices they use in class in terms of their motivating effect.

The results show that students' motivation is affected by classroom instruction and teacher behavior. The students' comments shed light on their ideas related to the course instruction and class materials in this sense the research makes practical contribution to the field. It reminds the instructors of the role of the classroom instruction and teacher behavior in motivating their students and provides them with practical strategies to implement in their classes.

Effective instructors plan their lessons ahead based on the course objectives and students' needs, adjust their teaching methods and materials when necessary and treat students as individuals. Consequently, rather than blaming students for their unwillingness and demotivated behaviours, this process makes instructors aware of the real problems in their class with most suitable solutions. We think that applying ARCS model would help instructors overcome these problems.

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