

Factors Affecting Young Learners' Motivation in Readers' Theatre Contest Training

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Abstract

Readers' theatre (RT) contests provide a platform for learners to demonstrate the results of their education and to promote language learning. At the elementary school level, young learners often receive intense training before attending a RT contest. However, the contest participants' motivation changes during the training and the affecting factors are often neglected. This study investigates the factors that influence young learners' motivations in RT contest training. Four contestants of an RT contest were selected based on their contest attending experience and ability to express themselves. Data were collected and analyzed through interviews, reflection journals, and observation. Results show that contest participants' motivation is affected by feedback from significant others (teachers and peers), the monitoring of one's personal performance, and the collectivist mindset of Chinese culture. Moreover, the pursuit of personal excellence and failure avoiding strategies enable the participants to achieve the shared goal of the team. The aforementioned factors intertwined with one another and became a great impact on their motivation. Pedagogical implications for educators wishing to train learners in future contests are provided.

Keywords: Young Learners, Motivation, English Contest Training, Readers' Theatre

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1 INTRODUCTION

Foreign language contests have been promoted in many foreign language instruction contexts as they are expected to increase the opportunities for practice and mastery of the target language (Dörnyei, 1994). Language contests and competitions may also be seen as means to demonstrate the results of learning and language proficiency (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). In the Asian EFL environment, academic-related contests and competitions have been particularly emphasized (Fenton & Terasawa, 2006). These competitions serve as a platform to promote English education and to demonstrate the results of English instruction (British Council, 2013). Students are expected to learn through the preparation process for the competition. Researchers (Chamot, 2005; Williams & Williams, 2011) have found that students' motivation differentiates between regular language course and contest preparation training. Also, the sustainability of contest participants' motivation was found to play an essential role in influencing the results of the language learning (Dörnyei et al., 2015), competition and contest training (Huang et al., 2017).

Many Asian countries have offered formal English lessons starting from elementary school in order to increase the competitiveness of their citizens (Chu, 2017). Learners of English are encouraged to participate in different activities, including the language contests. This is a crucial stage for young learners since their initial contact with English and English contests might begin at this developmental phase (Chu, 2017). It is important to incorporate multiple teaching techniques to increase and maintain their motivation to learn English. Past studies have explored the efficacy of English contests and the processes involved in contest training. However, there is a lack of research on the influencing factors of contestants' motivation, particularly at the elementary school level. Consequently, the present study aims to bridge this gap in the research and illuminate the factors that impact motivation in this context.

2 READERS' THEATRE CONTEST AND ENGLISH LEARNING

Readers' theatre (RT) is a form of theatre performance in which the participants adopt vocal expression to immerse the audience into the show and literature (Sloyer,

1982). Readers' theatre can be seen as a simplified play or a "radio drama" since limited costumes, kits, and movement are allowed (Bennett, 2010: ix). Actors need not memorize the lines for reading the script is acceptable during the performance.

In the field of language teaching, readers' theatre is a commonly used teaching technique that can be easily implemented in the language classroom for different purposes (Tsou, 2011; Tsou & Hsu, 2009). Many studies have shown that readers' theatre facilitates English learners especially in reading and speaking proficiency, particularly in fluency (Clark et al., 2009; Griffith & Rasinski, 2004), automaticity (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003), prosody (Miller & Schwanenflugel, 2008), accuracy (Young & Rasinski, 2009), comprehension (Rasinski, 2010; Young et al., 2017), and learning motivation (Worthy & Prater, 2002).

Given that effectiveness and convenience are the advantages of readers' theatre, this teaching implementation is highly promoted in EFL education (Liu, 2000; Martinez et al., 1999; Rasinski, 2010; Sloyer, 1982). Readers' theatre has been widely adopted in improving English at the elementary school level (Clark et al., 2009; Tsou, 2011; Young & Nageldinger, 2014). Scholars studying various contests in different languages have noticed that many English contests, such as readers' theatre, require substantial preparation due to their skill-based nature (Carrell & Menzel, 1997). In Asia, however, joining English contests, regardless of the type, provides opportunity for the learners to polish their language skills. Thus, English contests are popular in Asian countries, such as China, South Korea, Thailand, and Taiwan (Nunan, 2003). Participating in contests is encouraged by parents, teachers, and schools authorities. However, English readers' theatre contests and the training process are still under-researched.

Previous studies have paid tribute to contests because the contest training possesses many factors that could affect the trainees' motivation. According to Chilingaryan and Gorbatenko (2015), the experience of attending contests could influence learners' motivation and their persistence for further learning. Researchers also found that team cooperation and techniques could also have an impact on both the team's and the learners' development (Garmston & Wellman, 2016; Hume, 2010). Kugler (2012) suggested that the followings actions should be carefully considered during the contest training process: training planning, team supervision, and

participants' professional, emotional, and social development. The form of the contest design could also influence learners' attitudes. For example, Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) pointed out that when the competition itself is designed as a game-like scenario, the learners might maintain higher motivation. Therefore, before any instruction is applied, a thorough understanding of factors affecting participants' learning motivation is needed in order to facilitate efficiency in understanding the educational impact of the contest.

3 METHOD

3.1 The Study

The current study adopted a qualitative method to investigate the motivation sources of the RT contest trainees. Via the lens of grounded theory, the collected data were examined in order to deepen the inquiry regarding contest participants' motivation dynamic and the underlying factors. The findings reveal the factors influencing the participants' motivation.

3.2 Context

In the Taiwanese educational setting, English is a compulsory subject taught as a foreign language starting from elementary school. During the early stage of English learning, much emphasis is put on listening and speaking with the goal of building young learners' basic language proficiency. The public elementary schools offer one to two English classes per week. Apart from the regular English lessons in school, many parents in Taiwan send their elementary aged children to English cram schools in order to gain more learning opportunities. The opportunity to participate in extra curricular English activities is also welcomed by parents, schools, and cram schools. Largely due to government efforts to promote English learning, various English contests are held each year, including story-telling, reading, speech, singing, and readers' theatre contests. Participating in these contests is a good way for English learners to demonstrate their learning achievement and to gain more opportunities to practice their English. Thus, most parents would encourage their children to join the training sessions for these contests.

The current study is conducted in a municipal elementary school located in central Taiwan. This school places contestants in all the primary-school-level English contests held by the local government annually. The school authority highly values each contest and most English teachers have to shoulder the responsibility to train students for different contests. The contest participants are publicly recruited and then selected by audition. The selected learners usually gain support and encouragement from their parents to do their best in the activities.

3.3 Participants

3.3.1 Contest trainees

Four participants, three male and one female, were randomly selected from the eight RT trainees. They were fifth and sixth graders from a municipal elementary school located in central Taiwan. At the time of data collection, their ages ranged from 10 to 11. They had been receiving formal English lessons for more than five years. Their English performance was above average and they were more expressive in language compared to their peers. These contestants joined the RT team with the goal of obtaining additional training and enhancing their English proficiency. Their ultimate objective is to win the RT competition held by the city government.

Before joining this research, informed consents were acquired from the participants' guardians, with the research objectives clearly explained. Participants were assured that no harm or risk would be imposed upon them, and they have the right to withdraw from the research at any time if they found it inconvenient.

3.3.2 Teachers as trainers

Three English teachers served as contest trainers during the intensive training process. The three teachers had all majored in English and had previous experience in training for the Readers' Theatre contest. They flexibly used various techniques to enable the trainees to become familiar with their lines. Moreover, the teachers helped build the scenario of the story so that the trainees could be fully immersed in the context.

3.4 Data Collection

Data were collected from participant interviews, teacher reflection journals, and training observations made within the surrounding social context. Interviews were conducted after each RT training session, which were held once a week for eight

consecutive weeks. The teacher, being one of the researchers, kept a reflection journal and also observed the trainees' performance in the training sessions. According to previous research, the use of the interview technique in data collection would be helpful for acquiring in-depth information (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Along with the interviews, the teacher's reflection journal and training observations were used to validate the data through a methodological triangulation process.

3.4.1 Interview

Interviews, conducted right after each RT training session using a semi-structured guideline, serve as the main data source. The participants reflected upon the activities and training process, and then answered the interview questions. The interview questions (see Appendix A) targeted students' performance, emotion, and incidences that had happened during the training session and encouraged the trainees to reflect on what they would do during the next training session.

By conducting the interviews right after each RT training session while everything was still fresh in the participants' memories, the researchers collected better data as the trainees were able to express themselves more effectively. Moreover, due to the short attention and memory span of young contestants, the interviews only took about five to ten minutes. The data were recorded via a recording application on a smartphone. All recorded data were transcribed and sent to the participants for verification.

3.4.2 Teacher reflection journals and observation

The teacher who trained the RT contestants also paid attention to each trainee's performance. The trainer kept a journal to record and to reflect on the training process. The journal content included the strengths and weaknesses of each trainee, the trainees' performance for that day, the training methods used, and the training effectiveness and results.

3.5 Data Analysis

Through the use of the grounded theory approach, the researchers analyzed the collected data in three coding stages: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1988). At the open coding step, the data underwent comprehensive reading by the researchers in order to unveil the salient concepts. A few general concepts arose during this step. At the axial coding step, themes were found and

grouped based on similar characteristics among the concepts. Then, the overarching themes were connected from the axial themes at the axial coding step. Repeated comparisons were made until a core category emerged during the selective coding step.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results show that these young contestants' motivation was affected by their teachers, peers, and personal performance.

4.1 Teachers

It was found that the teachers had built a close yet distant relationship with the contest participants. Both the teachers and participants shared the goal of doing well and winning the RT contest. During the intense training, the teachers had provided a great amount of advice, instruction, and drills, through which an intimate relationship had been built with the participants. However, the criticism and discipline from the teachers negatively influenced the students' motivation states. The participants wished to avoid criticism and scolding from the teachers since it caused negative feelings. They did this by working harder to have better performance.

The participants were encouraged to practice and repeat the lines continuously. The teachers supported this repetition through the use of different training approaches. The techniques encompassed a range of methods, including but not limited to tone changing, intonation variation, backward reading, reading with beats, demonstration, echoing, and emotion and empathy training. The participants appreciated and highly valued the teachers' suggestions, encouragement, and critique of their performance and made adaptations accordingly to enhance their performance in RT. One participant, Joyce, affirmed that she had made progress during the training and that she was thankful for the teachers helping her improve her pronunciation and intonation. During the interview, Joyce said:

I think participating in the RT contest has greatly influenced my future English [learning], and I am also more willing to perform on stage. The teachers helped me become braver and I am more open-minded now. I won't be afraid. Also, the

teachers helped me improve my pronunciation and intonation, and I feel they [are both] getting better... the teachers complimented us on our performance, and this makes me want to do even better.

The participants were motivated by the encouragement from the teachers. The positive feedback became the impetus that pushed them to continue working hard. Another participant, Ken, who was also impressed with the encouragement from the teachers, said:

The teachers encouraged me and [this] made me feel more confident. When I heard the teachers' encouragement, I felt very happy. [The teachers] also said that I ought to keep working hard, and they would prepare more kits for me...I felt happy and motivated particularly when the teachers encouraged me by saying 'you did a good job on the expression of...'

The participants felt encouraged not only by the teachers' verbal expression, but also by their actions. The participants noticed that their teachers were working hard to prepare many things for them. One participant, Andy, mentioned that the teachers fully supported them and the prepared activities and materials were great motivational sources for him. He said, "The teachers did a lot of work. They would even buy soft drinks for us, and even [treat us] to food from McDonald's. The teachers worked so hard renting the costumes and making the kits for us." Similarly, Mark also responded that he enjoyed the soft drinks that the teachers had treated them to. He was grateful and was willing to work harder.

On the other hand, in order to increase training efficiency, the teachers had to discipline the participants and strictly organize the time allocated to each activity. The teachers would use eye contact, verbal expression, and even gestures (e.g. pointing, arms crossed over their chest, etc.) to maintain discipline and thus facilitate the training procedure. The participants tried to avoid getting into trouble. After one training session in which the teacher had looked mean and showed disapproval during the rehearsal, Ken mentioned that:

Although I was not the target person scolded by the teachers today, I tried very hard to avoid becoming one who got scolded. I pushed myself to work harder...I didn't want to be scolded, so I did my best to fulfill the teachers' requirements.

The participants built resilience during the training sessions by following the teachers' suggestions and improving their performance. The teachers critiqued the participants' performance, not their personal characteristics. Although the critiques were viewed as "scolding" at the beginning and participants felt upset when being critiqued, they did not retreat from the training. Instead, the critiques enabled the participants to work harder without demotivating them. During the interview, Joyce said that initially it made her nervous and she lost self-confidence after receiving teachers' harsh suggestions. She explained:

Although the critiques made me sad, and it was me that had not performed well, I lost confidence in myself.... This affected me a lot.... However, with the teachers' stimulation, my desire to join the contest grew. Maybe it is because I tend to be competitive.

The interview results also revealed that the teachers and participants had built a close relationship. The close bond was established throughout the interactions intertwined with discipline during the training sessions. The teachers gave positive reinforcement and suggestions to the participants. When the participants received feedback, they felt the teachers cared about them. This empowered the participants to produce a better performance. Previous research has also shown that both teachers' verbal and physical behaviors strengthen participants' self-beliefs (Cleary & Zimmerman, 2004). When participants know that feedback is constructive to their learning and could better their performance, they are triggered to work harder on self-improvement and pursue higher language achievement (Sheen, 2011).

When the participants felt the teachers were working hard, they would feel appreciative and thus work harder (Rao, 2006). This characteristic is more likely to be found in East Asian students. The participants noticed that the teachers put great effort into training and preparing them with the skills and the equipment they needed.

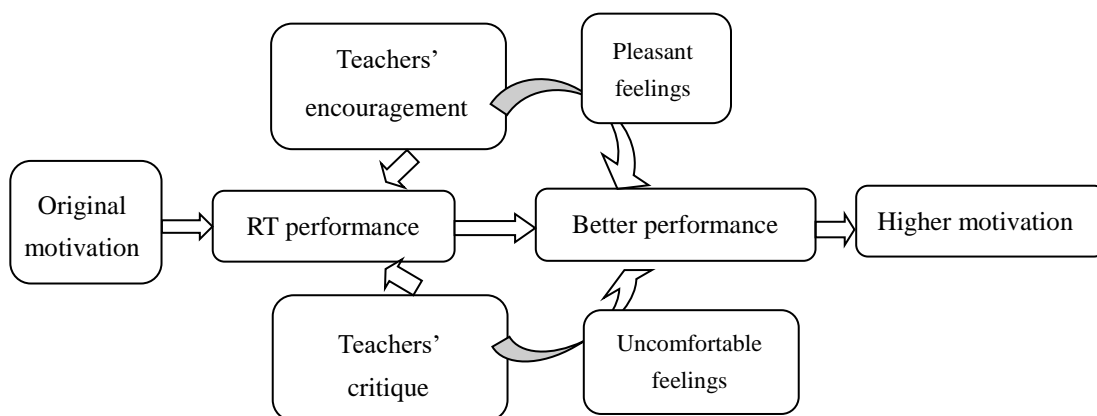
This mutual understanding of the same goal motivates the participants to work hard and reinforces their desire to win the competition.

Teachers have to take control of the training sessions in ways similar to classroom management (Torelli et al., 2017), and such actions of management can cause the participants to experience some unpleasant feelings. Although there is a scarcity of research on this aspect of language contest training, more relevant research was found in fields of other professions, such as law (Chilingaryan & Gorbatenko, 2015).

The teachers found that it was necessary to be strategic in disciplining their young participants. If the teachers became very strict and serious, the participants were frightened and would not maximize their ability and potential. On the other hand, when the trainer was not demanding, some participants acted up and caused the training to be inefficient or even chaotic. Hence, it is essential for teachers to be adaptable and responsive in accordance with the contestants' performance. By evaluating the contestants' real-time performance, teachers have the chance to offer encouragement or constructive critique, potentially influencing enhanced performance and evoking both positive and challenging emotions, respectively. Improved performance, in turn, contributes to heightened motivation among the contestants. Figure 1 shows how changes in the relationships influence the participants' motivation.

Figure 1

The influence of readers' theater training teachers' encouragement and critiques on participants' motivation



4.2 Peers

The results show that peers also appeared to affect the participants' motivation by their behaviors. It was found that three factors triggered the influence: the common learning goals shared by the participants and their peers, the Chinese characteristic of collectivism, and the participants' tendency toward failure avoidance.

The participants were triggered to work hard in order to achieve a common goal – winning the contest. Teammates encouraged each other to practice frequently. The participants and teachers would remind the team and themselves that their efforts were being made to win the glory. This atmosphere of uniting and working hard for the same purpose was conducive to their motivational development and team spirit. Peers seemed to be willing to support and encourage other members who had the same targets. For instance, Mike mentioned that he was pleased when the other participants complimented him on his performance. He said:

I had not done well on the lines previously....It was really hard....The teachers had corrected me many times and [I] practiced many times at home. When I finally said it right, the other participants said to me 'Woo-hoo! Not bad!'

The notion of attaining common goals also contributed to the stimulation of collectivism, which is believed to be innate in Chinese learners. It was noticed that the atmosphere of collectivism united the participants. When a member did well, other teammates would cheer for him. This action appeared to form a circle of virtue that strengthened the motivation for cooperation and aroused the unification of the participants. Mike, one of the contestants, further mentioned that: "If everyone works hard together, I am more willing to join the contest." It was observed from the data that under the pressure of collectivism, the participants pushed themselves and their teammates to work harder. By devoting serious effort, the participants gained recognition from their peers, such as compliments for their good performance. In addition, the participants were truly concerned about their peers' behavior, feelings, and feedback regarding their performance during the training. Joyce mentioned:

After the intense training began, ...I felt that I needed to do better....Everyone was working very hard, so I had to improve myself as well. When the other

teammates were making progress while I was not, I would affect their or the whole team's performance negatively.

Furthermore, the participant's tendency to avoid failure was observed during the training. None of the participants wished to fail themselves and the team; therefore, they would work hard. If a team member did not devote himself or herself to achieving the shared goal, possibly causing failure, other team members would become frustrated. Meanwhile, this frustration would generate unpleasant feelings among all the team members, which could impact the whole team negatively. Andy, one of the participants, stated the reasons he felt demotivated and disappointed:

Not everyone was working hard together. When there was a problem, we pointed our finger at each other. This made my motivation go down, and I did not want to join the [RT] contest. Particularly, when everyone was angry, we scolded each other.

He also mentioned:

If we had to rehearse certain sections again just because one person had not done his part well, those who had done well would get mad. None of us wanted to repeat the whole process. Thus, that person would be blamed.

From the results, it was shown that a Chinese cultural value enabled the participants to respect shared goal collectivism during the training. In their study, Chen, Warden, and Chang (2005) noted the Chinese collectivism cherishes the resources provided from the families and clans. Hence, all success should be used to glorify the families. In the current study, the collective orientation was extended beyond the families and the clans to teammates. It is the strong common value of attaining the collective goal, of winning the game, which unite the participants (Huang, 2015). In addition, this firmly-held value had influenced the members' behaviors, as was pointed out in Rao and Chan's study (2009). Thus, harmony among the group members was promoted and deemed essential in encouraging the team members to help each other. Just as the success that grows out of traditional Chinese

collectivism should go to the families of the victor, the honor the participants would gain from winning the contest would not just bolster the individual, but bring glory to the whole group. According to previous studies, fulfilling the responsibility and bringing honor to the group triggered the team members' motivation to be devoted in preparing for the competition (Rao, 2006; Tsui & Ng, 2010). It was also found that the participants cherished each other's efforts toward reaching the same goal. They gave comments on one another's performance in order to help their teammates improve and encouraged the group in their performance. It was observed that the participants were content and motivated when their peers were praised on their good performance. Conversely, when any individual obstructed the way to attaining the collective goal, either accidentally or on purpose, that person would be blamed. That participant's unsatisfactory performance would invite criticisms from his peers, since the group would fear that the collective goal might not be achieved. In addition, poor performance might indicate that the individual participant was not respecting the hard work of other group members (Rao, 2006). Blame and criticism would cause frustration and demotivation of the participants and further lower the team spirit.

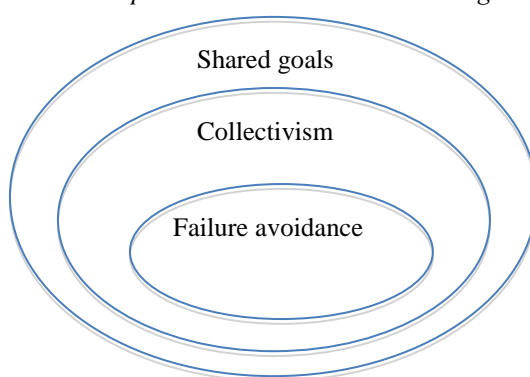
From what has been mentioned, peers appeared to be a strong mediator of the participants' motivation during the training process. This echoes previous studies in that the recognition of ones' peers is crucial in sustaining learners' motivation (Huang, 2015). From a sociocultural perspective, the interactions among peers scaffold learners' language development, both physically and mentally (Immordino-Yang et al., 2018; Nijs et al., 2016; Tsou, 2011; Vygotsky, 1978). The contest training group itself can be seen as a mini-community that sustains each member's motivation and willingness in accomplishing difficult tasks (Lantolf, 2006; Niu et al., 2018). This phenomenon appeared to apply to the young Chinese learners in the current study.

The shared goal of winning the contest seemed to unite all the participants and triggered them to work hard. Furthermore, the participants appeared to be confined by the ideology that they were working hard for the honor of the group. The aforementioned collectivistic concepts reinforced the team members to work hard. In addition, the peer interactions were confined by the notion of shared goals and group collectivism during the training. Therefore, the participants preferred to take failure

avoidance actions, such as performing their parts well. By doing so, they would not only gain recognition from their peers, but also realize the shared goals. Peer influence can be illustrated as is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Constraints of cultural influences and peers in Readers' theater training



4.3 Personal performance

The participants' personal performance also influenced their motivation during the training process. It is obvious that the participants valued and worked hard to achieve excellence in their performance. They set high expectations for themselves. When the improvement was recognized, either by themselves, their peers, or the teachers, the recognition brought them much joy. For instance, when his progress was noticed, Mike said:

It is great because I felt that I had improved....I found my speaking had become more fluent and the correcting frequency from the teachers had been reduced....When my teammates told me that my performance was good, I felt contented....Then I felt more confident about joining the contest.

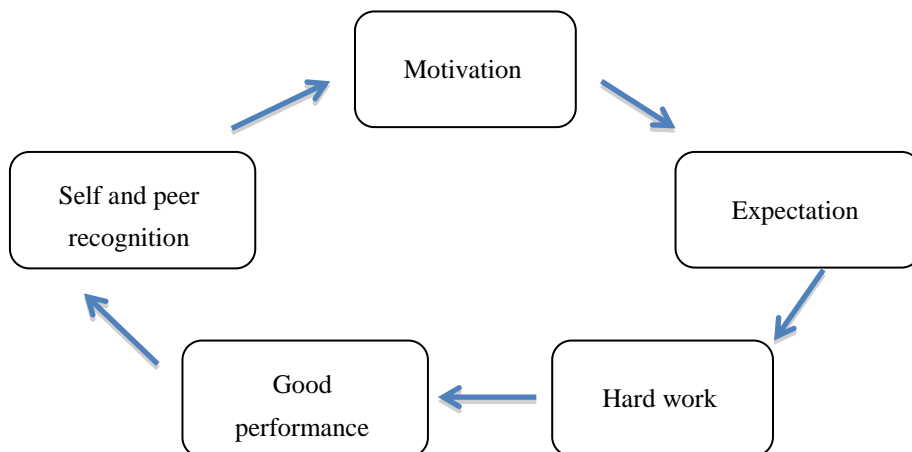
The positive personal experience motivated the participants to work harder. The results revealed that the participants seemed to be aware of the virtuous circle of learning being formed by their efforts and performance. For example, Joyce insightfully said, "The more effort I put into it, the better I could perform." She was pleased to see her improvement in English during the training process. The

participants also realized that their personal performance not only contributed to the group success, but to their success in both current and future English learning. One of the participants, Andy, said, “I noticed that when my performance became better, my pronunciation, intonation, and fluency also became better. This is good for me for future learning.”

On the other hand, when the individual performance was not desirable, the participants would blame themselves and be blamed by their peers. In order to avoid this, most participants would try their best to improve their personal performance in the RT training. Ken commented that he was afraid of being scolded. He said, “No one likes to be blamed, so I will work hard. When I perform well, I won’t be scolded, neither by the teacher, nor the classmates [peers].”

When excellent performance was demonstrated, the participants knew their hard work had paid off and they were proud of themselves. This finding is similar to those revealed from previous studies in that learners’ motivation would be reinforced and enhanced through positive learning results (Benson, 2011; Littlewood, 1999). Once the target achievement is accomplished, more positive experience is accumulated. Learners gain more power and confidence to face unknown challenges. The virtuous circle increases their motivation for future learning (Pulido & Hambrick, 2008).

The contest participants appeared to be self-demanding team members, who autonomously monitored and evaluated their own performance. This finding also echoes that of previous studies that noted that self-regulated learners tended to supervise and assess their learning process and outcomes (Benson, 2011; Chamot, 2005). Their self-perception would be strengthened from positive self-evaluation. Conversely, when unsatisfactory outcomes were shown, they would modify their strategies and make improvement (Broadbent & Poon, 2015). It was shown that ones’ own performance plays an important role in motivating the individual and the team during the training process.

Figure 3*Virtuous circle of motivation*

From the analysis of the qualitative data, it was found that teachers, peers, and self-performance are influential factors in the contest participants' motivation and training effectiveness during the preparation process. Although these factors seemed to be independently affecting the participants, they were entangled with deep-rooted Chinese cultural beliefs that promoted the quest for group advantages and self-perfection.

5 CONCLUSION

Based on the grounded theory approach, the researchers analyzed the interview and observation data collected during the English readers' theatre contest training of eight Taiwanese elementary school pupils to identify motivational development and the factors affecting it.

The findings of the current study show that contest participants' motivation is affected by three main factors: feedback from significant others (teachers and peers), the monitoring of one's personal performance, and the collectivist mindset of Chinese culture. The results are consistent with those of previous studies in that significant others play a crucial role in assisting language learning development and motivation (Huang, 2015). Furthermore, it has been pointed out that learners' motivation is enhanced when they notice their better performance and learning results (Dörnyei &

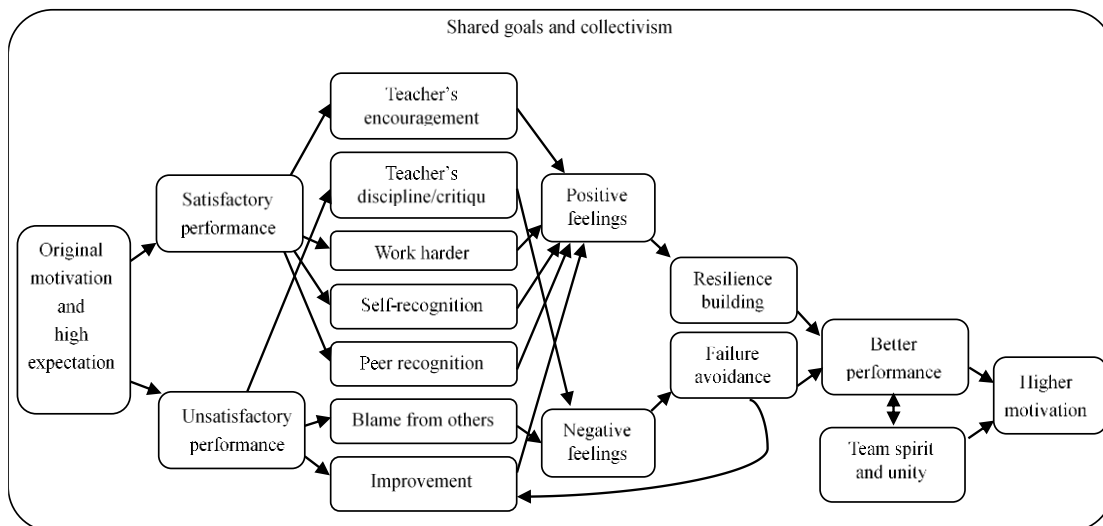
Csizér, 1998). Moreover, in Asian contexts, the pressure of collectivism creates an atmosphere in which all team members feel the obligation to devote themselves to the pursuit of the shared goals (Rao & Chan, 2009).

These contextual factors intertwined with one another and had an impact on the fluctuations in the participants' motivation, as depicted in Figure 4. These factors, derived from the specific context of this readers' theatre contest training process, tended to be driven by participants' inner beliefs about cultural collectivism and self-perfection. The collectivist mindset, which puts emphasis on respecting and appreciating teachers, can be transformed into an attitude of applying oneself to work hard to please the teachers with one's self-improvement which in turn serves to achieve the common goal. Improving one's own performance could thus be seen as obeying and respecting the Chinese expectations of collectivism. So it is that the participants' pursuit of personal excellence and their avoidance of failure appear to have complemented one another and served the shared goal of the team. With everyone buying into the shared goal, the trainees were given more power to enhance and supervise the performance of both themselves and their peers during the readers' theatre training process.

Although the participants demonstrated growth in their motivation toward the contest training and further English learning, the intertwining factors during the readers' theatre contest training process should not be neglected. Language instructors are encouraged to establish and maintain a secure and supportive environment during the practice period, as proposed by Bennett (2010). Additionally, it is advised to communicate the reasons for offering critiques to participants before the initiation of contest training. This proactive approach not only sustains contestants' motivation but also nurtures a positive mindset towards receiving constructive feedback (Wei, 2016). Furthermore, clarifying the purpose of critiques contributes to preserving a harmonious atmosphere and prevents any potential distancing among participants. Furthermore, the advantages of readers' theatre should be promoted among all the trainees and their parents to strengthen a willingness to join the contest.

Figure 4

Contextual factors influencing the motivation of trainees for a readers' theatre contest



The current study obtained several findings pertaining to language contest training. The researchers identified the motivation changes and its factors. However, there were a few limitations with regard to the data collection. Since the interviews were conducted right after each RT training session, the location was sometimes noisy and distracting to the participants. These young participants might also have had difficulties organizing their thoughts and reflections within a short amount of time. It is therefore suggested that the participants should be provided with an appropriate reflection period and a quieter place for the interviews.

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Appendix A

Semi-structured interview questions (Chinese Version)

受試者姓名：

謝謝你接受訪談，請你先回想一下剛才的訓練過程。(然後回答下面問題)

1. 你覺得自己在剛剛訓練的過程表現如何?
2. 訓練時，你有什麼感受或想法嗎?
3. 關於老師在訓練中對你說過的話，你有什麼感受?
4. 關於其他選手在訓練中對你說過的話，你有什麼感受?
5. 剛才訓練過程裡，發生了什麼事？你對那些事情有什麼感受或想法嗎?
6. 你覺得這一次訓練對你的英文學習有什麼影響?
7. 訓練完，你的心情如何?

影響學童在英語讀者劇場比賽訓練動機之因素

魏培真¹ 黃聖慧²

摘要

英語讀者劇場比賽是台灣各縣市政府很重視的英語比賽之一。此賽事提供學童展現學習成效與提升未來語言學習動機。國小學童在讀者劇場比賽前通常會接受密集訓練。然而，這些參賽者在培訓過程中的動機轉變及其影響因素卻未有深入探討。本研究調查影響學童比賽培訓過程中動機的因素。四位參賽者因其受訓參賽經驗參加本研究。藉由分析訪談、觀察記錄、省思心得等資料，研究結果發現影響學童動機的因素來自重要他人的回饋（老師及同儕）、個人表現監控機制、受中華文化影響之集體主義心態；此外，追求個人卓越表現及避免犯錯的策略使參賽者得以達成共同目標。上述所有因素交互影響參賽者的動機。本研究亦提供建議，以供教育學者於未來培訓比賽選手時運用。

關鍵詞：國小學童、動機、英語比賽訓練、讀者劇場

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