## Improving Students' English Proficiency by Enhancing the Motivation through Organization Development Intervention— An Action Research Study of a Local University in China

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## Abstract

The research aims to enhance students' English learning motivation so as to improve their English proficiency by applying the Socio-educational Model under OD interventions. The study focuses on three dimensions of motivation, namely, attitudes to learn the language (ALL), desire to learn the language (DLL), and motivational intensity (MI). The action research was conducted in the experiment group (N=53) through three stages: pre-ODI, ODI and post-ODI. The OD interventions in the study included team meetings, appreciative inquiry workshops, CLT class, and extra-class activity. By implementing the OD interventions, data were collected both from experiment group (N=53) and control group (N=53) based on Attitude /Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) questionnaires and English proficiency test to determine the significant relationship between OD interventions and students' language learning motivation, as well as the relationship between language learning motivation and English proficiency. The results show that OD intervention effectively enhances students' language learning motivation and language learning motivation has significant impacts on students' language proficiency.

Keywords: motivation, English proficiency, organization development intervention

## Introduction

Today, English is no longer only a language used by those people of the English-speaking countries, but also by the people who take it as a second language all over the world, as it is shared among non-native speakers for international tourism, business, scientific exchange, and media (Warschauer, 2000). Therefore, the awareness of the importance of the English language in life makes people, even in non-English-speaking countries, consciously bring English learning into consideration and learn it "as an

international language" (Jenkins, 2006). This explains why there are so many non-native speakers learning English today, and why it is currently taught not only in secondary schools, primary schools, and pre-school (Graddol, 2006). Because of the rapid pace of globalization, English learning has become more significant when connecting with the people all over the world (Garayeva, 2015).

**Organizational Context of the study**

The focal institution for this study is a cooperative institution between a local private university in eastern China and a university located in the middle part of the US with more than 100 years of history. The researcher names the cooperative institution as "International College"', with an abbreviation of "IC". The institution started in the year 2011, with 180 freshers in that year. Now there are more than 300 students in different grades from one to three, and from Practical English to Business Management. IC aims to cultivate the students with a global mind and competent professional skills, so the graduates of IC aim to be professionals in the local foreign-trade market or go abroad for continuing study.

**The Need for Action Research**

With the goal and aim of IC mentioned above, there are the necessities of some action research for organization's better development.

(1) Students' low motivation in language learning

In classes, Communicative Language Teaching is widely implemented in China, but low participation because of students' motivation hinders the effectiveness in delivering language classes; and thus, becoming a big obstacle to further development for the schools.

(2) Students' English proficiency is a critical need for improvement.

With the presence of low effectiveness of classes relatively caused by students' low interests and enjoyment in class participation, the students' English proficiency improvement trend is limited after three or four years of study at university. Such conditions lead to low employment in the future when they graduate. The low employability of the graduates would then deteriorate the university's attractiveness and brand perception and thus potentially derailing the ability to recruit new students in the future.

**Research Questions**

Based on the need for action research mentioned above, this study tries to answer the following questions:

(1)  What are the motivation status and English proficiency of students both in the experiment group and control group of cohort 2018 at IC before the OD interventions?

(2)  What can appropriate ODI be taken on the students of the experiment group to enhance their motivation and English proficiency?

(3)  What are the differences in the values of students' motivation and English

proficiency of the cohort 2018 at IC both in the experiment group and control group after ODI?

(4) What are the differences in the values of students' motivation and English proficiency of the cohort 2018 at IC both in experiment group and control group between those of Pre ODI and Post OD?

**Research Hypothesis**

The study concerning the hypothesis on the relationship between learner motivation and language proficiency and the effectiveness of ODI to those two variables will cover the issues such as change process, intervention methodologies together with assessment process including surveys, interviews, and data collection.

Ho1: There is no significant difference in students' (experiment group's) motivation of cohort 2018 at IC between Pre ODI and Post ODI.

Ha1: There is a significant difference in students' (experiment group's) motivation of cohort 2018 at IC between Pre ODI and Post ODI.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in students' (experiment group's) English proficiency of cohort 2018 at IC between Pre ODI and Post ODI.

Ha2: There is a significant difference in students' (experiment group's) English proficiency of cohort 2018 at IC between Pre ODI and Post ODI.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between motivation and English proficiency between Pre ODI and Post ODI.

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## Literature Review

The following part of the literature review concerns those theories and models related in the study.

**Organization Development (OD)**

At the beginning, the researchers were concerned about developing a better and more positive way of dynamics of change in organizations and people began the OD movement (Greiner & Cummings, 2004). However, till now, for OD, there has been no definition that can be agreed upon until now. Beckhard (1975) regards OD as an organizational change process. Burke defines OD as a planned process of change in culture (1994). At the same time, French and Bell posit that OD aims to improve organizations' capabilities in problem-solving (1998). Cummings and Worley (2014) articulated that organization development is a process of applying behavioral science knowledge and practices to help organizations to build the capacity to change and achieve effectiveness,

93

including enhancing the performance, satisfaction, and engagement of the members in the organization. According to Burke, there are seven areas worthy to notice, including process and content of OD, leadership, organization structure, reward system, training and development, team and teamwork, organization performance (1987). Overall, the themes hidden behind these definitions of OD include the management of change, improvement of organization culture, enhancing the organization's productivity and effectiveness to make better quality of work-life or organization members.

**Organization Development & Instructional Development Instructions**

The purpose of Organization Development Intervention, for short, ODI, is to help the organization to enhance the effectiveness (French & Bell, 1998). It is also described as a response, an attempt as well as an initiative to make changes within an organization (Carkhuff, 1983). It   means that the tasks are carried out to achieve change so as to obtain effectiveness, productivity and development. Intervention involves purposeful action to create and change in an organization on setting or system (Adelman & Taylor, 1994; Midgley, 2003). In this study, the ODIs are team meetings and AI workshops.

Instructional Development intervention, in short, IDI, is designing activities that are used to improve current situation and solve the problems of students, and in Harintornsutthi's research (2016), IDI is used to improve students' sense of responsibility. Warittanon (2011) asserts the effectiveness of IDIs on students' performance. On language learning, Tong, Irby, Beverly, Lara-Alecio, and Yoon (2010) have implemented instructional interventions on Hispanic English learners. In this study, the IDIs are CLT classes and extra-class activities.

**Language Learning Motivation**

The issue of language learning motivation (LLM) explains the phenomenon why some students are involved in the tasks and activities by meaningful interactions with teachers or their classmates, while some are not. Motivation is regarded as the most influential element in language learning, which makes it crucial during the whole language learning process. From Dörnyei (2001), the definition of motivation is the concept answering three questions: first, the reasons why people decide to do something; secondly, the length of time people are willing to sustain the activity; and thirdly, the effort or how hard people are going to pursue something.

There are extensive research concerning motivation in education (Linnenbrink-Garcia & Patall, 2016), among which, there are many research and studies on LLM (Gardner, 1968; Spolsky, 1969; Brown, 1980; Deci & Ryan, 1981; Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford & Shearin, 1996; Williams & Burden, 1997; Locke & Latham, 2002). There is research on the situations and conditions that emotions emerge within the classroom settings and the relationship between engagement and learning (Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2012).

There are also varied opinions on the components of motivation, from individual differences including age, gender, and personality to situational differences as in education, work, traveling, or from social and cultural differences to cognitive factors (Belmechri & Hummel, 1998). Eccles and Wigfield (2002) have listed the theories based on different focuses, with on reasons for engagement (self-determination theory, goals theory and intrinsic motivation theory), on integrating the expectancy and value (like expectancy-value and attribution theory), on motivation with cognition (including self-regulation theory as well as theories of motivation and volition). There are some well-known and widely accepted theories and models listed following: Self-determination theory, Goal theories, Attribution theory, L2MSS, and Socio-educational Model.

In Self-determination theory, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations were used to describe motivation status. According to Deci and Ryan (1981), to reach intrinsic motivation, such as autonomy, relatedness, and competence, these need to be provided. Self-Regulated Questionnaire Academy was developed to measure the four types of regulation: external, introjected, identified, and intrinsic. On the same token, it was found that it may lead to negative effects on self-regulation by offering individuals too many choices (Vohs et al. 2008), and it cannot be generalized for those adolescent learners (Vandergrift, 2005). For the same reason, it only allows measuring the status of motivation but gives less support for intervention.

The goal-setting theory was mainly developed by Locke and Latham (1990) with frequent references to workplace settings (Pagliaro, 2002), with three main characteristics of goals that make the differences: difficulty, specificity and commitment. The reason for the researcher to put this theory in LLM is that some LLM researchers such as Oxford & Shearin (1994) and Dörnyei (1994) have applied the theory in some of their works. But Lier (1996) warns against the exclusive focus on those future goals, such as the long-term goals for a language learner to master a language, since it might distract teachers' attention, as learners' intrinsic enjoyment during the learning process and their innate curiosity are also vital sources of motivation,

The attribution theory on learners' motivation with internal and external reasons as a locus of causality, and locus of control, was also largely influential during the 1980s (Dörnyei, 2003). But he pointed out the problem of the theory that it can not render itself to quantitative research.

To process-oriented LLM, L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) was developed by Dörnyei, with Ideal-L2-Self (IL2S) and Ought-to-L2-Self (OL2S). But till now, the authoritative measuring tool for L2MSS is not found.

In Socio-educational Model, two kinds of motivations were defined, the instrumental and the integrative. A measuring tool, AMTB (Attitude / Motivation Test Battery) was developed based on the Model, in which motivation is measured with three subscales:

95

motivational intensity, attitudes, and desire.

Socio-educational Model that believed motivation is the desire from the learner with effort and favorable attitudes to achieve the goal set during the learning process is applied by the study. There are three reasons: firstly, it explains the causal-effect relationship between motivation and language proficiency; secondly, it is the theory with applicable authoritative measurement tools, which can provide quantitative research data for analysis; and thirdly, the components in theory are applicable to OD interventions.

## Relationship between Motivation and Language Achievement

Much research have been done on the causal-effect relationship between motivation and educational outcome such as academic achievement (Grolnick, Ryan, & Deci, 1991), and even earlier in 1984, it has been overviewed in a lot of such researches (Benware & Deci, 1984). In the new century, many kinds of research have studied the relationship between motivation and TOEFL, a language proficiency assessment (Amiryousefi & Tavakoli, 2011; Baleghizadeh & Rahimi, 2011; Fotos, 2013; Haggerty & Fox, 2015), and there are studies on motivation and reflecting on IELTS scores (Samad, Etemadzadeh, & Far, 2012; Yang, 2012; Meniado, 2016). In China, there are studies on the relationship between CET (College English Test) scores and motivation (Cheng, 2008; Wang, 2008; Fang, 2010). Most of the research mentioned in this study are based on Gardner's SEM.

According to Socio-educational Model, motivation stays in one of the important variables of language learning achievement (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). The following figure explains the variables of language learning achievement.

**Figure 1**

*A simple representation of the socio-educational model*



Source: Gardner, 2001
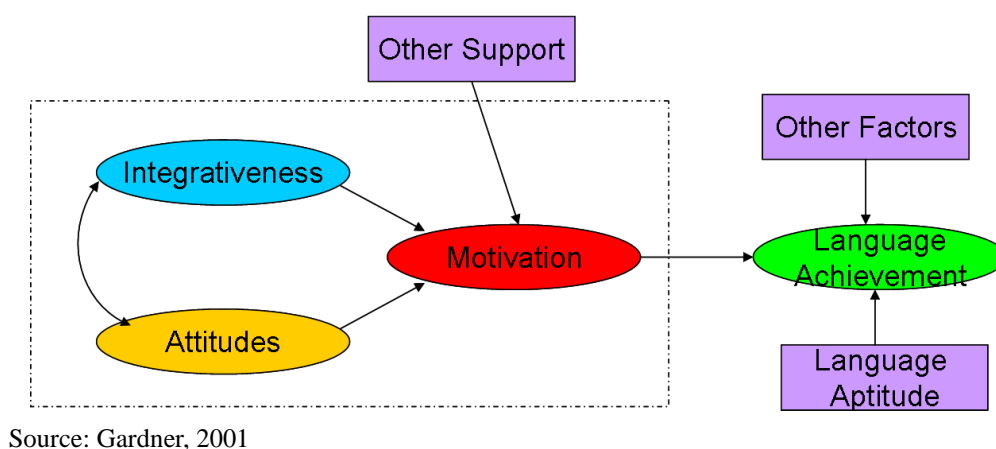
The research focuses on the part of learners' motivation and adopts the sub-variables

as attitudes towards learning the language, desire to learn the language, and the motivational intensity of learning the language. Thus, the Model is simplified as follows:

**Figure 2**

*Simplified Schematic Representation of Motivation of Socio-educational Model*



Source: Gardner, 2001
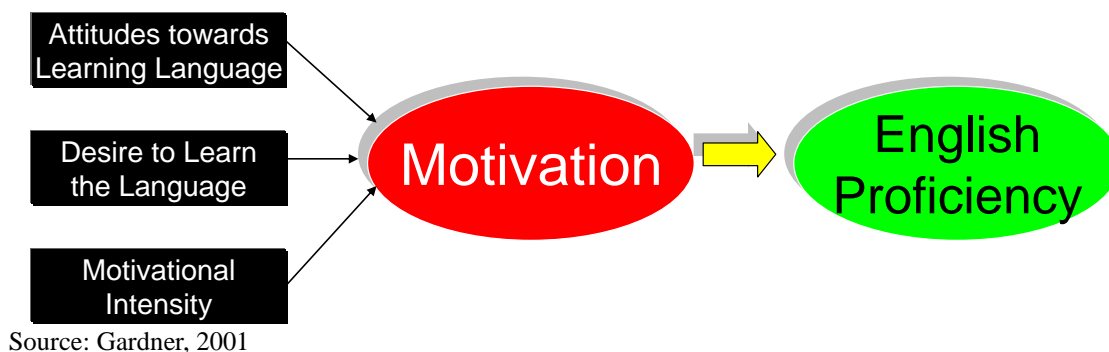
The figure above explains the sub-variables, according to the Socio-educational Model, which is also aligned to the part of the questionnaire on motivation in AMTB, namely: Attitudes towards Learning Language (ALL), Desire to Learn the Language (DLL), Motivational Intensity (MI).

**Conceptual Framework**

The basic idea of the study focuses on the Organization Development Interventions and Instructional Development Interventions on English learners' motivation to improve their English proficiency in listening, reading, writing, and speaking, while OD interventions and ID interventions are crucial in the process to enhance the motivation. The following figure explains the process and causal effect of the study.

**Figure 3**

*Conceptual Framework*
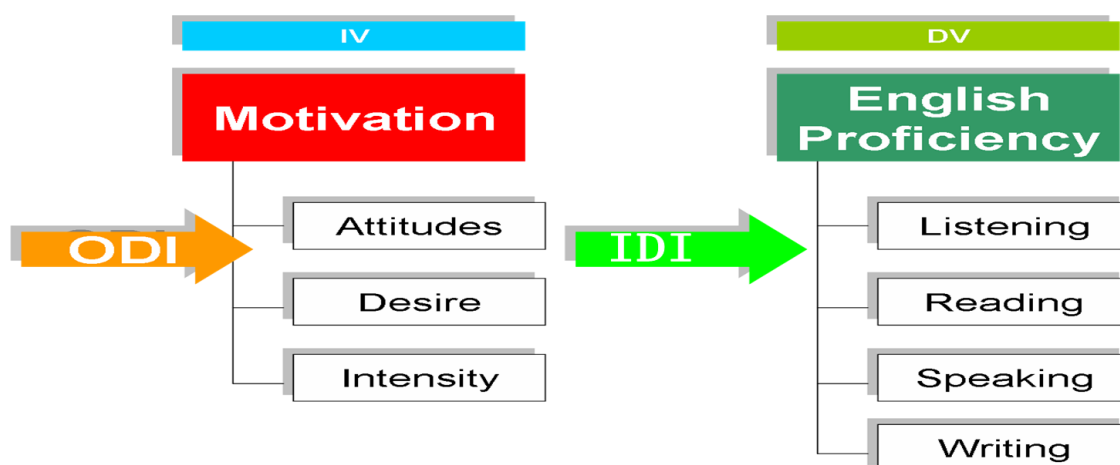


## Research Design and Methodology

The study is to enhance students' English proficiency by improving their motivation through ODI. Based on action research methodology, the whole study is divided into three stages: pre-ODI, ODI, and post-ODI to find out the problems of the focal system at each period of time and figure out the answers and solutions.

### Scope of Population and Sampling

The participants of this study are English major students at IC, and the total number of the subjects is 108. They were divided into the experiment group of 54 students and the control group of 54 students. The students were divided based on the English scores and AMTB survey results taken in pre-ODI stage. The total mean score of the experiment group on English proficiency test was 5.06 and that of the experiment group was 5.11. On motivation, the mean score of the experiment group was 3.61 and that of the control group was 3.65. The mean scores of both the English proficiency and motivation were very close between the experiment group and control group.

### Scope of Instrument

The survey instrument of the study is Attitude /Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), which has been developed to evaluate in language learning motivation aligned to the Socio-educational Model. An English version of AMTB was developed by Gardner (2004). There are 104 questions in the English version AMTB into 24 scales, among which, the Motivational Intensity, Attitudes toward Learning Language, and Desire to Learn Language are equally with 10 questions, 5 positively keyed and 5 negative keyed.

98

In order to test the reliability of AMTB, 10489 individuals were employed for meta-analysis (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003), and the result showed high reliability of AMTB questionnaires. On the component of motivation, its reliability was 0.92. The subscales of motivation included Motivation Intensity with reliability 0.80, Attitudes toward Language Learning, 0.91, and Desire to Learn the Language 0.84. In the pilot study of this research, the reliability of three variables including Motivation Intensity, Attitudes toward Language Learning, and Desire to Learn the Language were tested, and the scores were 0.78, 0.70, and 0.60 respectively.

To measure students' language proficiency, IELTS tests were adopted. There were four parts in the test: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. In the pilot study of the research, the reliability of four variables was respectively 0.85, 0.69, 0.75, and 0.69.

## Scope of Organization Development and Instructional Development Interventions

*Pre-ODI:*

At the beginning of the stage of pre-ODI, SWOT analysis was made among the administrative level, teaching staff level, and student level, to identify the problems on students' language learning motivation and English proficiency. During the stage of pre-ODI, the participants and their data were collected based on the questionnaires of AMTB and English proficiency tests. Based on the scores from the questionnaires and tests, students were divided into two groups: the experiment group and the control group. The average scores of students' language learning motivation and English proficiency were designed to be at the similar status.

*ODI:*

In this research, specific ODI and IDI activities were designed to achieve the research objectives. The ODI activities in this research include team meeting and appreciative inquiry workshop. The IDI activities are CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) classes and extra-class activities. Table 1 tells the detailed information.

**Table 1**

*ODI and IDI Activities of the Study*

| No. | Date | Activities | Topic | Time Length | Category |
|-----|------|-----------|-------|-------------|----------|
| 1 | 11th May, 2020 | CLT Class | Environment | 90 minutes | IDI |
| 2 | 25th May, 2020 | CLT Class | Cyberspace | 90 minutes | IDI |
| 3 | 27th May, 2020 | Team Meeting | English Corner Preparation | 120 minutes | ODI |
| 4 | 29th May, 2020 | Extra-class Activity | English Corner | 120 minutes | IDI |

| 5 | 3rd June, 2020 | AI Workshop | 4D-cycle | 120 minutes | ODI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 5th June, 2020 | Extra-class Activity | English Corner | 120 minutes | IDI |
| 7 | 8th June, 2020 | CLT Class | Reputations | 90 minutes | IDI |
| 8 | 12th June, 2020 | Extra-class Activity | English Corner | 120 minutes | IDI |
| 9 | 17th June, 2020 | Team Meeting | Debate Competition Preparation | 120 minutes | ODI |
| 10 | 19th June, 2020 | Extra-class Activity | Debate Competition | 120 minutes | IDI |
| 11 | 14th September, 2020 | CLT Class | Migration | 90 minutes | IDI |
| 12 | 16th September, 2020 | AI Workshop | 4D-cycle | 120 minutes | ODI |
| 13 | 18th September, 2020 | Extra-class Activity | Debate Competition | 120 minutes | IDI |
| 14 | 25th September, 2020 | Extra-class Activity | English Corner | 120 minutes | IDI |
| 15 | 28th September, 2020 | CLT Class | Study | 90 minutes | IDI |
| 16 | 30th September, 2020 | Team Meeting | Reading Reports Preparation | 120 minutes | ODI |
| 17 | 9th October, 2020 | Extra-class Activity | English Corner | 120 minutes | IDI |
| 18 | 14th October, 2020 | AI Workshop | 4D-cycle | 120 minutes | ODI |
| 19 | 16th October, 2020 | Extra-class Activity | Reading Reports | 120 minutes | IDI |
| 20 | 19th October, 2020 | CLT Class | Emerging Adulthood | 90 minutes | IDI |
| 21 | 23rd October, 2020 | Extra-class Activity | Reading Reports | 120 minutes | IDI |
| 22 | 28th October, 2020 | Team Meeting | Speech Contest Preparation | 120 minutes | ODI |
| 23 | 30th October, 2020 | Extra-class Activity | Reading Reports | 120 minutes | IDI |
| 24 | 2nd November, 2020 | CLT Class | Cultural Differences | 90 minutes | IDI |
| 25 | 4th November, 2020 | AI Workshop | 4D-cycle | 120 minutes | ODI |
| 26 | 6th November, 2020 | Extra-class Activity | Reading Reports | 120 minutes | IDI |
| 27 | 13th November, 2020 | Extra-class Activity | English Speech Contest | 120 minutes | IDI |
| 28 | 16th November, 2020 | CLT Class | Conspicuous Consumption | 90 minutes | IDI |

Team Meeting

The team meetings were designed to prepare for extra-class activities. Students were asked to decide the types of extra-class activities and how they would organize the activities. Based on their willingness on the types of extra-class activities they wanted to organize, the students were divided into groups with 13 or 14 students respectively responsible for the activities they decided to organize.

Appreciative Inquiry Workshop

The appreciative inquiry workshops were arranged to help students in the groups better know each other based on 4D-cycle model. Students were asked to find the potentials of their fellow group members, which made it possible to improve students' confidence on organizing the extra-class activities well and distributing the tasks to appropriate ones.

CLT Class

CLT classes focus on communications rather than language teaching and would be arranged once a week on variety topics: environment, cyberspace, reputation, migration, study, adulthood, cultural difference, and conspicuous consumption.

Extra-class Activity

Based on the activities of team meetings and appreciative inquiry workshops, students had decided the types of extra-class activities: English corner, book reports, debate competition and English speech contest. Students were divided into four groups taking responsible for one of the activities. The activities would be organized and carried out by students deciding the venue, participants, process and the regulations of the activities.

*Post-ODI:*

Data were collected again in terms of students' language learning motivation and English proficiency, respectively with AMTB questionnaires and IELTS test. Outcomes of each variable in this study on mean and standard deviation were compared with those collected in the pre-ODI stage, and paired sample t-tests were used to evaluate the significance.

**Scope of Population and Sampling**

In this study, the quantitative analysis was mainly used. The data including the variables of Motivation Intensity, Attitude toward Language Learning, and Desire to Learn Language from AMTB questionnaires together with Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking from IELTS tests, was collected in Microsoft 2010 Excel charts, and uploaded to SPSS Version 19.0. Both the variables of students' motivation and English proficiency were assessed by Likert Scale, with AMTB 6-point scale, and IELTS 9-point scale. The data in Excel charts then were uploaded to SPSS to acquire the mean and standard deviation. The results were compared between pre-ODI and post-ODI. Pearson correlation analysis were done to evaluate the relationship between the variables, and paired sample test or t-test were done to testify the significance of the variables.

**Results**

**Pre-ODI Stage**

*Research Question 1:*
*What are the motivation status and English proficiency of students both in the experiment group and control group of cohort 2018 at IC before the OD interventions?*

The data of motivation status quo of students of cohort 2018 at IC for quantitative analysis is collected from the AMTB questionnaire survey done on May 11th, 2020, containing the statistics on Attitude towards Learning Language (ALL), Desire to Learn the Language (DLL), and Motivational Intensity (MI).

**Table 2**

*Comparison of Motivation Values between Experiment Group and Control Group at Pre-ODI Stage*

| | Experiment group | | Control Group | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variable | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| ALL | 3.83 | 1.3859 | 3.83 | 1.3966 |
| DLL | 3.66 | 1.2357 | 3.79 | 1.2424 |
| MI | 3.31 | 1.2735 | 3.33 | 1.2945 |
| Motivation | 3.61 | 1.2984 | 3.65 | 1.3112 |
| Overall Mean Score on Motivation of 108 students: 3.63 | | | | |
| Overall SD on Motivation of 108 students: 1.3048 | | | | |

Table 2 above shows that the mean score on the motivation of the experiment group is 3.61, and that of the control group is 3.65. Variables of ALL, DLL, and MI respectively arrive at 3.83, 3.66, and 3.31 in the experiment group, while in the control group, the values are 3.83, 3.79, and 3.33.

On May 13th, 2020, all the 108 students took part in the English proficiency test on writing, reading, speaking, and listening. The following table tells the detailed information of the result in four parts: writing, listening, reading, and speaking. The highest mean score is on reading, which is 5.58, and the lowest speaking, at 4.74.

**Table 3**

*Comparison of English Proficiency between Experiment Group and Control Group at Pre-ODI Stage*

| | Experiment group | | Control Group | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variables | Mean (9-point) | SD | Mean (9-point) | SD |
| Writing | 5.21 | 1.742 | 4.98 | 1.765 |
| Listening | 4.89 | 1.197 | 5.05 | 1.126 |
| Reading | 5.58 | 1.592 | 5.24 | 1.559 |
| Speaking | 4.74 | 1.763 | 4.95 | 1.788 |
| English Proficiency | 5.11 | 1.574 | 5.06 | 1.560 |
| Overall Mean Score on English Proficiency of 108 students: 5.08 | | | | |
| Overall SD on English Proficiency of 108 students: 1.5665 | | | | |

As illustrated in Table 3 above that the mean score of the English proficiency test of the experiment group indicated M=5.11, SD=1.57 and the control group indicated M=5.06, SD=1.56. Overall Average Mean Score on English Proficiency of 108 students, cohort 2018 of IC indicated =5.08, SD=1.56.

**OD Intervention Stage**

*Research Question 2:*

***What can appropriate ODI be taken on the students of the experiment group to enhance their motivation and English proficiency?***

In order to answer Research Question 2, some specific ODI activities were taken from May 11, 2020, to November 20 ,2020 including four clusters of activities: team meetings, appreciative inquiry workshops, CLT classes, and Extra-class activities.

Team Meetings

According to ODI's design, there were four meetings in the whole process, respectively on May 27th, June 17th, September 30th and October 28th. The setting of these meetings was mainly for the prearrangement of extracurricular activities, so that students could prepare and actively participate in later to make sure the activities could be carried out smoothly. In the meetings, students discussed the possibilities of extracurricular activities as well as the topics and forms of the activities. They needed to decide with whom to organize the activities and how they would organize the activities. Students were given complete autonomy to decide anything of the activities under the guidance of the teacher. Finally, in the meetings, they decided to have four activities: English Corner, Book Reports, English Debate contest, and English Speech contest.

Appreciative Inquiry Workshop

Concerning the better actual effect that an appreciative inquiry workshop with a smaller group of students may cause, and the consideration of time length of each workshop, 54 students of the experiment group were divided into four groups with two groups of 13 students and two groups of 14 students.

In the workshop, the students were encouraged to talk about their most impressive and successful experiences in their life, after which, they were also inquired about what they would like to do after graduation; this opens the stage of discovery, the first one in the 4D-cycle intervention (discovery, dream, design, and destiny). After that, they were also asked about what kind of success they hoped to achieve in their work after graduation; this is the stage of the dream. Each student expressed his or her own opinions. Some wanted to get high income; some wanted to consider the balance of family and career, while others wanted to be well-known figures in their line of work. In the next step, students were invited to discuss whether their dreams could be realized and what strengths and potential they already had to support the success. This is the design phase. At the end of the first half of the workshop, the students were suggested to discuss with other students about the present limitations and shortcomings and how they could be promoted in university to realize the dreams.

At the end, when the students had brief ideas, they were asked in detail about what

103

they could do to enhance the possibility of their future success. Some students talked about passing CET-6 in one semester, and some students wanted to take the certificate of interpretation and translation. In addition, students were aiming to get some relevant professional qualifications, such as vouching for clerk certificate, and customs declaration certificate. Finally, students were told to make more detailed plans to achieve their goals with the help of SMART principles (to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound).

CLT Classes

CLT classes began from May 11, and end on November 10, 2020. Compared with traditional teaching, the CLT class emphasized authenticity, interaction, and autonomy. The topics covered issues like life, education, politics, and technology. The class activities were interactive, including the forms of debate, presentation, and role-play. The tasks were assigned under full consideration of students' autonomy and were designed to be as interesting as possible. On the other hand, the classes of the control group continued the usual traditional way, which were not implemented according to topics but language knowledge, such as the practice of clauses, word order, sentence patterns, and inversions.

Extra-class Activities

The activities were organized by students themselves, which provided them with autonomy. The purpose of these activities was to provide a platform for students to show themselves, cultivate students' practical ability and comprehensive application ability of English language, cultivate students' good cooperative innovation and good habits, and form healthy personality. In addition, the activities were also to improve students' comprehensive quality and lay a good foundation for their future English learning. In addition to those above, the activities also stimulated students' motivation and cultivated students' interest in English and English learning.

**Post -ODI Stage**

*Research Question 3:*
*What are the differences in the values of students' motivation and English proficiency of the cohort 2018 at IC both in the experiment group and control group after ODI?*

After six months of intervention, on November 18th, 2020, the students took the second test of AMTB and on November 20th, the second academic test on English proficiency.

**Table 4**

*Results Comparison of Motivation Variables between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI*

| | Experiment Group | | | | | Control Group | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variables | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Increase | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Increase |
| ALL | 3.83 | 1.386 | 4.69 | 1.389 | 22.5% | 3.83 | 1.397 | 3.81 | 1.378 | -0.6% |
| DLL | 3.66 | 1.236 | 4.48 | 1.363 | 22.4% | 3.79 | 1.242 | 4.07 | 1.123 | 7.2% |
| MI | 3.31 | 1.274 | 3.98 | 1.369 | 20.2% | 3.33 | 1.294 | 3.41 | 1.343 | 2.3% |
| Overall | 3.60 | 1.298 | 4.38 | 1.374 | 21.8% | 3.65 | 1.311 | 3.76 | 1.281 | 3.0% |

In the part of experiment group from Table 4, the mean score of all the three variables measuring motivation have an increase of more than 20%, in which ALL ranks the highest with an increase of 22.5%, and the MI the lowest with 20.2%. The overall motivation improvement is 21.8%.

In the control group, the mean score of ALL has decreased from 3.83 to 3.81. The other two have increased but at a low percentage with DLL 7.2% and MI 2.3%. The overall motivation improvement is 3.0%.

## Research Question 4:

***What are the differences in the values of students' motivation as well as English proficiency of the cohort 2018 at IC both in experiment group and control group between those of Pre ODI and of Post ODI?***

To answer Research Question 4, besides the results of motivation surveys demonstrated above, the statistics of the students' English proficiency of both the experiment and control group between pre-ODI and post-ODI are to be illustrated in this part.

**Table 5**

*Results Comparison of English Proficiency Tests between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI*

| | Experiment Group | | | | | Control Group | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variables | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Increase | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Increase |
| Writing | 5.21 | 1.742 | 5.71 | 1.202 | 9.6% | 4.98 | 1.765 | 5.01 | 1.635 | 0.6% |
| Listening | 4.89 | 1.197 | 5.74 | 1.689 | 17.4% | 5.05 | 1.126 | 5.19 | 1.953 | 2.8% |
| Reading | 5.58 | 1.592 | 5.87 | 2.068 | 5.2% | 5.24 | 1.559 | 5.67 | 2.319 | 8.2% |
| Speaking | 4.74 | 1.763 | 5.68 | 1.174 | 19.8% | 4.95 | 1.788 | 4.96 | 1.657 | 0.2% |
| Overall-EP | 5.11 | 1.574 | 5.75 | 1.533 | 12.5% | 5.06 | 1.560 | 5.21 | 1.891 | 3.0% |

According to Table 5, in the experiment group, the growth rate of students' speaking part is the highest, with a growth rate of 19.8%. The listening part has increased by 17.4%

from 4.89 of pre-ODI to 5.75 of post-ODI. The growth rate of students' writing is the smallest, with a growth rate of 5.2%. In the control group, the variable of reading increases most with an improvement of 8.2%, and the least is speaking with the percentage of only 0.2%. The overall English proficiency of the students in the experiment group has improved by 12.5%, from 5.11 to 5.75, and the results show that students' English proficiency of the control group increases only by 3.0%.

Thus, Table 4 and Table 5 together answer Research Question 4 by comparing the results of both the experiment and control groups between the results before and after ODI.

### Research Hypothesis 1:
**Ha1: There is a significant difference in students' (experiment group's) motivation of cohort 2018 at IC between Pre ODI and Post ODI.**

To verify the significance of ODI on students' (experiment group's) motivation of cohort 2018 at IC, the paired sample tests on three varieties of motivation between experiment group and control group are done.

**Table 6**

*Paired Sample Test Result of ALL*

| Groups | Mean ODI | Mean Post-ODI | Increase | t | df | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experiment | 3.83 | 4.69 | 22.5% | -3.842 | 53 | .000 |
| Control | 3.83 | 3.81 | -0.5% | 1.181 | 53 | .243 |

As show in Table 6, there is a significant improvement in the scores for the pre-ODI (M=3.83) and the post-ODI (M=4.69) for ALL in the experiment group with an improvement rate of 22.5%. With the paired sample test result: t(53) = -3.842, p < .05, it can be concluded that ODI contributes significantly to the improvement of ALL. As for the control group, instead of improvement, there is a decrease from pre-ODI (M=3.83) to post-ODI (M=3.81), and the result of paired sample test with t(53) = 1.181, p > .05 suggests that there is no significant relationship between the two mean scores without ODI.

**Table 7**

*Paired Sample Test Result of DLL*

| Groups | Mean ODI | Mean Post-ODI | Increase | t | df | Sig. |
|--------|----------|---------------|----------|------|----|------|
| Experiment | 3.66 | 4.48 | 22.4% | -4.082 | 53 | .000 |
| Control | 3.79 | 4.07 | 7.4% | -1.518 | 53 | .135 |

From the statistics in Table 7, it can be found that there is a significant improvement in the scores of the experiment group from the pre-ODI (M=3.66) to the post-ODI (M=4.48) on DLL. The improvement rate is 22.4%. The paired sample test result: t(53) = -4.082, p < .05, also suggests that ODI contributes significantly to the improvement of DLL. While in a control group, there is a 7.4% improvement from pre-ODI (M=3.79) to post-ODI (M=4.07), and from the result of paired sample test with t(53) = -1.518, p > .05, it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between the two mean scores in the control group.

**Table 8**

*Paired Sample Test Result of MI*

| Groups | Mean ODI | Mean Post-ODI | Increase | t | df | Sig. |
|--------|----------|---------------|----------|------|----|------|
| Experiment | 3.31 | 3.98 | 20.2% | -2.636 | 53 | .011 |
| Control | 3.33 | 3.41 | 2.4% | -1.237 | 53 | .222 |

From the statistics in Table 8 above, it can be concluded that there is a significant improvement with an improvement rate of 20.2% in the means scores on DLL in the experiment group from the pre-ODI (M=3.31) to the post-ODI (M=3.98). It also suggests that ODI contributes significantly to the mean score improvement of DLL according to the paired sample test result: t(53) = -2.636, p < .05. While in the control group, though there is also an improvement from 3.33 to 3.41, the result of t(53) = -1.237, p > .05 suggests that without ODI, the scores have no significant relationship.

### *Research Hypothesis 2:*
### *Ha2: There is a significant difference in students' (experiment group's) English proficiency of cohort 2018 at IC between Pre ODI and Post ODI.*

The data set was tested to determine the significance of the impact of ODI on students' English proficiency, and Paired sample tests are done between the statistics of pre-ODI and post-ODI.

**Table 9**

*Paired Sample Test Result of Writing*

| Groups | Mean ODI | Mean Post-ODI | Increase | t | df | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experiment | 5.21 | 5.71 | 9.6% | -2.236 | 53 | .013 |
| Control | 4.98 | 5.01 | 0.6% | -1.387 | 53 | .163 |

Table 9 shows a progress of 9.6% on writing on the experiment group students, but there is only 0.6% progress on writing on the control group students. Table 8 also suggests a significant difference in writing between pre-ODI and post-ODI according to the paired sample test result: t(53) = -2.236, p < .05. While in the control group, there is also an improvement from 4.98 to 5.01, but the result of t(53) = -1.387, p > .05 suggests that there is no significant impact on students' writing in control group.

**Table 10**

*Paired Sample Test Result of Listening*

| Groups | Mean ODI | Mean Post-ODI | Increase | t | Df | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experiment | 4.89 | 5.74 | 17.4% | -3.336 | 53 | .001 |
| Control | 5.05 | 5.19 | 2.8% | -1.817 | 53 | .079 |

According to Table 10, students in the experiment group have improved their proficiency in listening by 17.4%, while the students in the control group have improved less by 2.8%. The paired sample test result of experiment group: t(53) = -2.236, p < .05, tells a significant impact of OD. On the other hand, there is no significance in the control group since the result is t(53) = -1.817, p > .05.

**Table 11**

*Paired Sample Test Result of Reading*

| Groups | Mean ODI | Mean Post-ODI | Increase | t | Df | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experiment | 5.58 | 5.87 | 5.2% | -2.025 | 53 | .046 |
| Control | 5.24 | 5.67 | 8.2% | -1.953 | 53 | .057 |

On the part of reading, Table 11 shows that the paired sample test result of experiment group is t(53) = -2.025, p < .05, and that of the control group is t(53) = -1.953, p > .05. The results suggest a significant difference in students' English proficiency in the

part of reading in the experiment group, but of no significance in the control group.

**Table 12**

*Paired Sample Test Result of Speaking*

| Groups | Mean ODI | Mean Post-ODI | Increase | t | Df | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experiment | 4.74 | 5.68 | 19.8% | -4.832 | 53 | .000 |
| Control | 4.95 | 4.96 | 0.2% | -1.384 | 53 | .172 |

Based on the results of Table 12, it can be concluded that there is a significant impact of OD on students' speaking in the experiment group: $t(53) = -4832$, $p < .05$, and there is no significant impact in the control group with $t(53)=-1.384$, $p>.05$.

### Research Hypothesis 3:
**Ha3: There is a significant relationship between motivation and English proficiency between Pre ODI and Post ODI.**

To verify the significance of the relationship between students' language learning motivation and their English proficiency, Pearson Correlation through SPSS is done.

**Table 13**

*Pearson Correlation between English Proficiency and Motivation*

| Variables | | Motivation |
|---|---|---|
| Writing | Pearson Correlation | .568* |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .002 |
| | N | 54 |
| Listening | Pearson Correlation | .728* |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 54 |
| Reading | Pearson Correlation | .590* |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .002 |
| | N | 54 |
| Speaking | Pearson Correlation | .851* |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 54 |

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results of Table 13 show that there is a significant relationship between

109

students' language learning motivation and their English proficiency. Motivation has a significant correlation with writing (r=.568, p<0.05), listening (r=.728, p<0.05), reading (r=.590, p<0.05), and speaking (r=.851, p<0.05).

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Through the whole process, 54 students in the experiment group, after six months of action research and OD intervention, increased by 21.70% in motivation based on the statistics indicated by the AMTB test, from the mean score of 3.30 to that of 4.38. Among the three variables, the biggest improvement was students' attitude on learning with 22.5%, followed by desire, 22.4%, and relatively speaking, the motivation intensity was the third with 20.2%. In terms of improving students' attitude and desire, and motivation, the results showed that students' motivation had been greatly improved through OD intervention.

What is more important is that that there are obvious differences between the experiment group with OD intervention and the control group without OD intervention through the paired sample test. On attitude towards English learning, the result of experiment group is $t(53) = -3.842$, $p < .05$, while that of control group is $t(53) = 1.181$, $p > .05$. On the desire of language learning, the significance score of the experiment group is 0.000, much lower than 0.05, and on the other hand, the score of significance in the control group is 0.135, which was larger than 0.05. It is also the same on motivation intensity, with a significance score of experiment group on 0.011 versus control group's 0.222. Therefore, through AMTB statistics of both the mean scores and paired sample tests, it can be concluded that ODI had a significant impact on students' motivation.

In the English language proficiency test, it is found that the language proficiency of the students in the experiment group is much higher than that of the students in the control group after OD intervention.

According to the results of paired sample tests demonstrated respectively on writing, listening, reading and speaking between pre-ODI and post-ODI, it can be concluded that there is a great significant impact on students' English proficiency in this research.

Pearson correlation analysis is also conducted, and it was found that there is a positive correlation between motivation and English proficiency scores. The correlation coefficient of listening and speaking is 0.000 (p<0.05) and 0.000 (p<0.05), while the correlation coefficient of reading and writing is 0.002 (p<0.05) and 0.002 (p<0.05), respectively.

To sum up, from what was mentioned above, a conclusion can be drawn that motivation significantly impacts English proficiency in this research.

## Recommendations to Focal Organization

As in a Sino-foreign cooperative college, students of IC will have higher requirements for English when they go abroad in the future. Therefore, how to improve student's English proficiency is a vital challenge. In addition, with the globalization, the communication between China and foreign countries is more and more close, which requires the universities in China to cultivate a large number of foreign language talents, who should not only have high test scores in examinations but also can use English to serve the society in various fields.

From this point of view, the teachers should teach students English language knowledge, and cultivate students' ability on the perspective of the practical function of cooperation and communication so that they can really use English in an authentic environment. For the reasons above, it is necessary to well-select the teaching materials, remove the traditional teaching content of grammar and vocabulary, and to pay a lot attention on the teaching content of function and usage. Secondly, the ways and strategies of daily teaching practice need also be improved. English teaching cannot be limited to classroom teaching, but it should be extended outside the classroom. By arranging many tasks close to reality, teachers and students can cooperate more to make students experience the sense of achievement, the sense of belonging and the sense of relatedness. Fourth, classroom activities can be altered from traditional ones with the teacher dominating the class to those with students-centered activities to focus on learning instead of teaching. Task-based learning or project-based learning is strongly recommended. Finally, the evaluation system of students' English proficiency needs to be reformed, from the test of vocabulary, grammar, and knowledge to evaluating language proficiency.

On the other hand, from OD's point of view, the researcher strongly suggests to vigorously promote ODI application in this organization, not only in daily teaching but also in work. The activities like team building, appreciative inquiry workshop, and group meeting, enable the organization to find potential and diagnose and solve problems to keep sustainable development. Finally, the researcher hopes that the program can be sustained and rolled out to the whole organization. Students will graduate, and new students will come. The action research and OD intervention enable the students, new or old, to have good academic performance in English based on ensuring their language learning motivation.

**Recommendations to Future Research**

The researcher may need to explore whether OD intervention and action research can significantly impact other varieties besides the one of motivation in the Social Educational Model. Furthermore, it needs also to be explored and tested whether there are significant correlations between the other variables in SEM and English proficiency.

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114

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