

Motivational Theory and Thinking: A review

Theory	Theorists (s)	Focus Points	Connections and Implications
Reader Response	Rosenblatt (1938)	<p><u>Beliefs about reading</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading is an interaction between reader and text • Text cannot exist without the reader and the converse • Consider efferent versus aesthetic reading • What is important about a text is an individual matter, including whether or not the work is important at all 	<p>Reflect on the way you were taught reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the typical assignments used to assess elements of reading instruction? • Were you asked to respond to text from the appropriate standpoint (aesthetic or efferent?) • What choice did you have in selecting the texts you read?
Self-Efficacy	Bandura (1997)	<p><u>Beliefs about behaviors and self</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s beliefs about inherent abilities impact achievement behaviors • “The capacity to exercise control over the nature and quality of one’s life is the essence of humanness” (Bandura, 2001) • One must have a positive perception of one’s self in order to control one’s life. • Efficacy influences goal setting, choices, willingness to expend effort, perseverance, and dealing with failure 	<p>Consider process, product, content, environment, deadlines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What control did you/ do you have over your own learning? • Did you / do you have an opportunity to learn from failure? • Do you view failure as a positive experience?
Expectancy-Value	Eccles and Wigfield (1992)	<p><u>Beliefs about expectations for success</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How one feels about expectations for performance and competence in specific domains (skills needed to perform) • Domain one: how one feels they will perform on an upcoming task • Domain two: does one believe they have the ability to perform on an upcoming tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did / do your teachers ever assess how you feel about your learning? • What opportunities did you / do you have to reflect on your learning process? • How did you learn to identify areas of weakness? • Did you feel as if your weaknesses were honored and you were

			given an opportunity to improve?
Goal Theories	Shunk (1990)	<p><u>Beliefs about goal directed behaviors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A motivated state is where goal-directed behavior is instigated and sustained • A motivated student works toward defined goal, preferably one that he or she had a part in setting, while sustaining a level of engagement and commitment to task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How often were you / are you asked to set your own learning goals? implementation? • Where and when did you learn how to set, assess, and adjust goals?
Self-Determination	Deci and Ryan (2008)	<p><u>Beliefs about competence and individual control</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals seek optimal stimulation and challenging activities that they find intrinsically motivating because they have a basic need for competence. • Intrinsic motivation is maintained when individuals feel competent and self-determined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have you been empowered to demonstrate understanding in ways that you are confident and possess competence? • How do you respond when you don't find your academic work interesting or of value??
Flow / Optimal Experience	Csikszentmihalyi (1990)	<p><u>Beliefs about motivation, happiness and optimal experience</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happiness is a condition that must be prepared for, cultivated, and defined individually • When performing an activity, one is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus and enjoyment of the process • Completely focused motivation • In control, full of purpose, in the zone • Flow is optimal experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect upon your optimal experiences and consider the essential elements • Can you identify any learning experiences that would be related to optimal experience? • What are some ways you could make your learning an optimal experience?

Mindset	Dweck (2007)	<p><u>Beliefs about a fixed mindset versus a growth mindset</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed mindset sees every encounter as a test of one's worthiness • Growth mindset sees every encounter as an opportunity to improve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What about school cultivates a fixed growth mindset? • What about school cultivates a growth mindset? • Would you consider your mindset to be one that is fixed or one of growth?
Motivation 1.0 Motivation 2.0 Motivation 3.0	Pink (2011)	<p><u>Beliefs about the evolving nature of motivation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to update our thinking about motivation to include autonomy, mastery, and purpose • Consider: what we do on the job or learn in school • Algorithmic vs. heuristic tasks • Algorithmic tasks follow a set of established instructions to one conclusion • Heuristic tasks have no algorithms so one has to experiment with possibilities to devise a novel solution 	<p>Reflect on your instructional practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about the tasks in which you engage in on a daily basis. How many of those tasks are algorithmic and how many are heuristic?
Challenging Notions of Motivation	Kohn (1996,2003)	<p><u>Beliefs about challenging societal notations of motivation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rewards versus good values</i> • Children of parents who provide rewards tend to be less gracious to their peers • <i>Rewards versus achievement</i> • Rewards cause people to lose interest in whatever it is they were rewarded in doing • Rewards motivate people to get more rewards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has your education helped you to develop your values? • Growing up, did you experience rewards and punishment in your classroom and/or at home? Or, did you experience natural consequences?

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Reader Response Theory

In her seminal text, *Literature as Response*, Rosenblatt (1938) articulates the concept of reader response theory. In this theory, reading is described as a transaction between the reader and text in which each makes an equal contribution. Essentially, each reader brings his or her own background knowledge to each text with which he or she is engaged. It is this background knowledge that helps each reader respond to, and make sense of, the text. Further, what is important about a work of literature is an individual matter, including whether or not it is important at all. Rosenblatt puts forth two types of reading, efferent and aesthetic. In efferent reading, one is reading to take away information. In aesthetic reading, the focus is on what is being lived through in the reading and connects directly to what the reader is feeling and thinking. Oftentimes, when reading, there is a balance of both stances; however, in school settings, students are often asked to read from an efferent stance even if the material at hand would be better suited to an aesthetic stance. Further, Rosenblatt (1978) speaks of the invisible reader and argues that the reader should be sharing the limelight with the author and text rather than being cast into the shadows.

Theoretical Constructs of Motivation

The Latin root of the word “motivation” means “to move”; in this sense the study of motivation is the study of action (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). In a meta-analysis of recent research on motivation, Wigfield (1997) found that the study of motivation has increased dramatically in the 1980s and 1990s. Modern theories of motivation focus on the relation of beliefs, values, and goals with action (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). Throughout this research, many have discussed their work in the context of different theoretical perspectives on motivation. As this study focuses on the reading and discussion of poetry as a motivational force, it is necessary to examine the theoretical perspectives of motivation that relate most closely to this research: (a)

self-efficacy theory, (b) expectancy-value theory, (c) goal theories, and (d) self-determination theory. The Atwell protocol relates most closely to these theories as it seeks to engage students in the reading and discussion of authentically challenging poetry in a way that allows each student to feel positively about his or her contributions to the discussion thereby fostering intrinsic motivation within each student. Individual background is honored in order to bolster self-confidence, and a community of learners is fostered as the class works toward the common goal of deeper understanding.

Self-Efficacy Theory

Self-efficacy theorists such as Bandura (1997, 2001) and Schunk (1990) discussed how children's beliefs about their inherent abilities impact their achievement behaviors. Bandura postulates that human functioning is a series of reciprocal interactions between personal influences, environmental features, and behaviors. Bandura states that "the capacity to exercise control over the nature and quality of one's life is the essence of humanness" (2001). In order to exercise control over one's life, one must have a positive perception of one's self. Efficacy beliefs play a central role in the self-regulation of motivation through goal challenges and the expected outcomes. It is partly on the basis of efficacy beliefs that people choose what challenges to undertake, how much effort to expend in the endeavor, how long to persevere in the face of obstacles and failures, and whether failures are motivating or demoralizing (Bandura, 2001). Bandura distinguished between two types of expectancy beliefs: (a) outcome expectations—beliefs that certain behaviors will lead to certain outcomes and (b) efficacy expectations—beliefs about whether one can effectively perform the behaviors necessary to produce the outcome. These two ideas are, in fact, different, as it is possible for one to believe that a certain behavior will produce a certain outcome, but he or she may not believe that the behavior can be performed. The likelihood that people will act on the outcomes they expect specific performances to produce depends on their beliefs about whether or not they can actually produce those performances. Bandura proposed that individuals' efficacy expectations are the major determinant of goal setting, activity choice, willingness to expend effort, and

persistence.

Expectancy-Value Theory

Expectancy-value theorists such as Eccles and Wigfield (1983; 1992) define expectations for success as individuals' beliefs about how well they will do on upcoming tasks. Eccles et al. (1983), in the expectancy-value model, define beliefs about ability as the individual's evaluations of his or her competence in different domains. These beliefs relate to one's expectations about performance on an impending task (ie. how one feels they will perform on an upcoming task) while the other relates to one's beliefs about competence in the specific domain (ie. does one believe they have ability to perform on an upcoming tasks). Interestingly, while these two constructs are separated in theory, in practice, empirical works shows that children and adults do not distinguish between the two (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). Eccles et al. (1983) outlined four components of task-value: attainment value, intrinsic value, utility value, and cost. Attainment value is defined as the personal importance of doing well on the task. Intrinsic value is the enjoyment one gains from performing the activity or the subjective interest the individual has in the subject. Utility value is determined by how well a task relates to current and future goals. Essentially, how useful is this task as it relates to one's future progress? Even if one is not interested in the task, he or she may still find value in it as a means to progress. Cost is what one must risk or put forth in order to engage in the specific task. This, of all the components, is focused on the more challenging aspects of the task since it relates to the effort needed or the opportunities lost as a result of the choice to engage in the task.

Goal Theories

Motivation researchers have also developed different perspectives as to how one's goals relate to achievement behavior. Schunk (1990) defines a motivated state as one where goal-directed behavior is instigated and sustained. Essentially, a motivated student is part of a process whereby he or she works toward a goal or common objective, preferably one that he or she had a part in setting, while sustaining a level of

engagement and commitment to task. While both Bandura (1997) and Schunk (1990) have shown that specific and challenging goals promote improved performance and self-efficacy, other researchers have branched out to investigate broader definitions of goal orientations (Ames, 1992; Blumenfeld, 1992; Butler, 1993). Through this work, two types of goal orientations were defined: ego-involved goals and task-involved goals. Individuals with ego-involved goals seek to promote favorable evaluations of their competence related to goal attainment while individuals with task-involved goals focus on mastering tasks and increasing competence.

Self-Determination Theory

Deci and Ryan (2008) focused on the concept of self-determination and asserted that individuals seek out optimal stimulation and challenging activities and find these activities intrinsically motivating because they have a basic need for competence. Further, they argued that intrinsic motivation is maintained only when individuals feel competent and self-determined. Much of this work is focused around discussion of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and the relationship between each and self-determination. Deci and colleagues defined several levels in the process of going from external to internalized regulation: (a): external - regulation coming from outside the individual; (b): introjected - internal regulation based on feelings that one has to do the behavior; (c): identified - internal regulation based on the usefulness of the behavior; and (d): integrated - regulation based on what the individual thinks is valuable and important to the self.

Summary

Research on motivation has grown dramatically over the past two decades. Through this work, theorists have delineated several related yet distinct perspectives on motivation. The theories put forth relate to self-efficacy, expectancy-value, goal setting, and self-determination. While each approaches the concept of motivation from different perspectives, the one common area of agreement is that motivation frequently makes the difference between learning that is temporary and superficial and learning that is permanent and internalized (Oldfather, 1993).

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