

Bridging the gap: Motivation in year one EAP classrooms

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Abstract

Motivation has always been considered an important factor in language learning, and this is particularly crucial for first-year university undergraduates under the new four-year curriculum. With one year less English learning experience in secondary schools and one more year to study at universities, where English is usually used as a medium of instruction and a lingua franca for international knowledge exchange, this transition can be challenging. To bridge the gap, first year undergraduates are usually required to take courses of English for Academic Purposes (EAP). However, because of the compulsory nature of the courses, students are usually instrumentally motivated or not motivated at all. Therefore, course developers and teachers play vital roles in developing learners' L2 learning motivation, and preparing them for further study in their own discipline using English. This paper investigates research in L2 learning motivation and how it can be applied to EAP classrooms to enrich the English learning experience of first year undergraduates. Practical strategies to motivate students to participate in classroom activities and out-of-class learning, and methods to provide motivational feedback in formative assessment will be suggested.