

**Motivational Factors Influencing the Preferences of Trainees
Learning English at the Intensive Language Teaching Centre at Djillali
Liabes University**

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Received: 15/05/2024

Accepted: 25/06/2024

Abstract:

English is the global lingua franca, and is gathering momentum in Algerian higher educational institutions, thus ensuring proficiency in the language has become a pivotal asset. Many constructs play critical roles in driving individuals to engage in language acquisition activities. Motivation is widely regarded as a cornerstone element in achieving proficiency in language learning. This paper focuses on investigating the type and level of motivation in English language learning. The instrument of the study was adopted from Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The purpose of this study was to reveal the reasons why students and teachers attending English courses at the Intensive Language Teaching centre of Djillali Liabes University (CEIL) have preferred that language and the explanatory relations between these reasons. To this end, 108 participants were included in the research. Instrumental, personal and cultural reasons that are effective with preferring the English language are the latent variables of the research. The model developed to verify between those attributes was tested. According to the findings, the instrumental and personal factors have a highly positive relationship. The problems that the students face during the learning process were also discussed. Some recommendations were proposed to improve the trainees' motivation in English learning.

Keywords: English Language Learning, ILTC, Motivation, Language skills.

1. Introduction:

In today's rapidly evolving global economy, the demand for English linguistic skills has become increasingly paramount. Annually, hundreds of Algerian learners undertake English language courses to showcase their language proficiency. However, the learners' progress in English skills is still disappointing. There are many pessimistic attitudes indicating that the teachers and students have low motivation to learn English as a foreign language. This is the reason why most of higher institutions in Algeria have to provide further English language support to encourage and to motivate the learners since motivation has been importantly considered as a major factor influencing their success and rate in learning a foreign language.

Research on trainees driving force at Intensive Language Teaching Centre at Djillali Liabes University in learning English, aims to offer valuable insights into the nature and level of their expectations to acquire the language. Deeper comprehension of these factors could facilitate collaboration between the University and English instructors to enhance the learning atmosphere and strengthen learners' enthusiasm. Ultimately, this could result in improved proficiency in English. The study aims to use one quantitative method to investigate the motivation of trainees to the study of English at ILTC at DLU. Furthermore, a better understanding of trainee's motivation may help English curriculum and instruction designers to build language learning and teaching programs which generate the motivation most conducive for more successful learners of English.

2. Background of the Study

One of the common services of the University is the Intensive Language Teaching Centre. Its primary mission is to meet the needs of the university community in terms of foreign language learning in general and English. The first ILTC was created in 1981 at the University of Algiers to guarantee the widespread adoption of the Arabic language as a component of the Arabization initiative. Following that, the integration of other foreign languages commenced, with French introduced in the late 1980s and English added towards the end of the 1990s¹. Algeria now boasts several ILT centres that have evolved alongside the shift in the university landscape. These centres offer foreign language education to teachers, staff, and students enrolled in graduate and post-graduate studies, particularly those whose research necessitates proficiency in a foreign language. At the turn of the 21st century, ILTC

¹ <http://www.univ-alger3.dz> December 2023

holds a pivotal position in the realm of language education, providing a uniform structure for teaching, evaluating and characterizing language that tries to provide students with more opportunities to improve their English skills including reading, writing, listening, and speaking and therefore permitting individuals to use the language with credentials to maneuver academic pursuits, career and personal growth.

In line with the initiative to advance scientific research and English language instruction, ILTC initiated specialized endeavors in 2007 to address the requirements of both teachers and students seeking to bolster their proficiency in English. These efforts aimed to assist individuals enrolled in various technical and scientific disciplines in comprehending their academic and scientific interests.

More recently, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research issued outstanding directives aimed at strengthening teaching in English during the 2023/2024 academic year. The directives have been sent to the rectors of universities, urging them to adopt concrete measures to promote the use of English in the academic environment.

On the one hand, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research was urging institutions to continue training research teachers, including new recruits, to achieve a level of proficiency equivalent to B2 or C1 levels. This training will be provided through intensive teaching language centres and undergraduate exam preparation programmes. In addition, specific training courses will be scheduled through online courses via dedicated digital platform. This platform was developed in conjunction with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). According to the Minister for Higher Education and Scientific Research, 30,000 university teachers are involved in this operation². The same Minister added that a national unit had been set up to support the progressive teaching of English to teachers, Doctoral students and trainee teachers, in accordance with a timetable to be drawn up for this purpose and supported by coordination units at university level. In addition to these aforementioned measures, the Ministry of HESR stated that no fewer than 30,000 teachers in all disciplines have already been trained in English and will be able to teach in the language from the start of the new academic year³. The following table proposes an overview about the actual number of teachers enrolled in English sections at the University of Sidi Bel Abbes.

² <https://english.aawsat.com> January 2024

³ <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com> January 2024

Number of Recruit Teachers	Number of TSeachers admitted to the first-year bachelor's degree in English	Number of Teachers enrolled in ILTC	Number of Teachers registered on the Ministerial Digital platform DUAL-Edx	Total
73	10	400	350	833

Table 1 Total Number of Teachers Enrolled in English Sessions during the Academic Year 2023-2024

On the other hand, the second part of these directives concerns the integration of English into academic programmes, adapted to the field of study. Along with this measure the Ministry of HESR has primarily set out to upgrade new Baccalaureate holders to help them cope with their required lectures in English from the first year of university, providing them with a minimum linguistic knowledge and enabling those taking online courses through the digital platform to reach B2 level.

The following diagram represents the number of students enrolled in English sections in ILTC at DLU along the four academic years. This presentation gives us a concrete view about the growing students' interest in learning English.

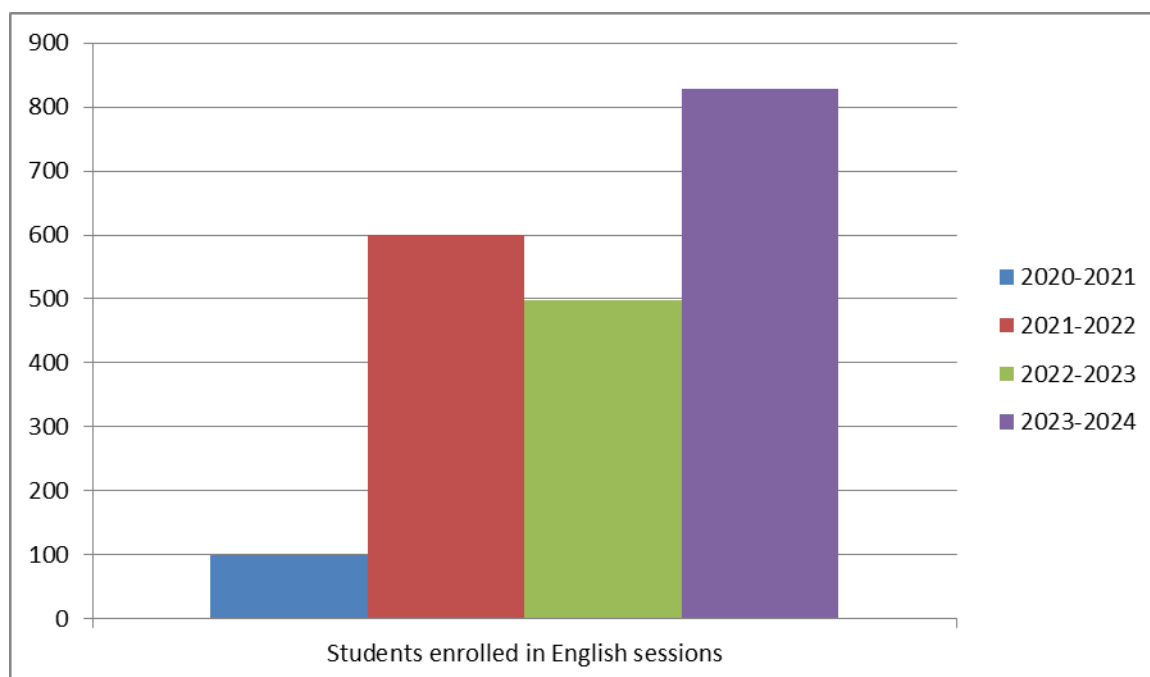


Figure 1 Number of Students Enrolled in ILTC English Sections at DLU

2.1 Objectives of the Study

The focus of this paper is two-fold; firstly to determine the motivational type of trainees learning English at ILTC at DLU. The second objective is to find out language difficulties do trainees encounter during English learning process and then to provide some recommendations for improving their motivation in learning English.

Research Questions

The following research questions addressed in this study are: (a) what drives trainees to learn English as a foreign language at ILTC at DLU? (b) what obstacles do students typically face while learning this language?

3. Review of Literature and Relevant Researches

Learning English as a second or foreign language underscores the necessity of mastering this language for navigating both professional and academic environments. The growing interest in acquiring proficiency in English is evident. Motivation, a multifaceted concept explored across diverse academic fields, emerges as a pivotal determinant influencing language acquisition and learning experiences. Mc Donough (2007: 371) confirms that “motivation of the students is one of the most important factors influencing their success or failure in learning the language”. The expression of motivation has been investigated differently by various perspectives. From a behavioral standpoint, motivation can be understood as simply the expectation of a reward. In contrast, the cognitive perspective sees motivation as tied closely to the decisions and choices students make in pursuit of their objectives or experiences, as well as the level of effort they are willing to put forth. Constructivists meanwhile, place additional emphasis on the social context and individual decisions when discussing motivation. (Brown, 2000)

In the same line, numerous definitions of motivation exist within the realm of language learning. Gardner and Lambert (1972), Cooper and Fishman (1974) categorize motivation into three distinct types: instrumental and integrative and personal. Instrumental motivation pertains to learning a language for practical purposes, whereas integrative motivation involves developing a genuine interest in the language and its culture. The third type revolves around achieving personal fulfillment.

In another linguistic aspect, motivation can also be classified into two other categories: extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation refers to the drive to obtain a reward or avoid punishment. It centers on external factors that stimulate students to participate in learning tasks, such as completing assignments, achieving grades, or seeking approval from teachers (Arnold, 2000). Intrinsic motivation, as delineated by Arnold (*ibid*), involves learning for its inherent gratification. This implies that students willingly participate in learning, motivated by their personal convictions about the significance or value of the subject matter. Individuals driven by intrinsic motivation exhibit an internal inclination to learn, independent of external rewards or consequences.

Within the same token, Lightbown and Spada (1999) noted that motivation and attitudes are closely intertwined in the process of learning a language. This can be explained in terms of two factors: students' communicative needs and their attitudes towards the language. Learners' attitudes represent another crucial element in language acquisition, as they are linked to psychological needs that directly influence motivation toward a language. In this regard, attitudes play a fundamental role in language learning, significantly shaping individual motivation toward acquiring that language. This assumption appears to underpin a significant portion of the discourse on language attitudes, which are significant because they are frequently associated with the viewpoints and inclinations that guide individuals within a community to learn or use a language.

As a result to above accounts, language attitude and motivation have all been recognised as to have a strong connection. Motivation refers to the driving force that initiates, directs, and sustains behavior towards learning a language, while attitudes represent the feelings, beliefs, and evaluations individuals hold towards a particular language or the speakers of that language.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Research Instrument

Regarding the technique, the researcher chose to utilize the questionnaire as the primary and most appropriate tool for conducting such an investigation, as the study's aim was to offer an accurate description on English language learning at the ILTC at DLU. The sample of the study was composed of 108 participants following English courses in ILTC and was diverse in terms of ages and gender. The design of this technique was quantitative, encompassing both descriptive and inferential aspects.

The study took place over a two-month period, from December 2023 to February 2024. An online survey was conducted via the official center website univ-sba.dz/ceil, where the questionnaire was made accessible to participants. The questionnaire comprised various items aimed at exploring participants' demographic backgrounds, gender, motivational factors, and opinions regarding the most challenging skills. The survey was conducted through a system created via email using Google Forms.

5. Findings

The questionnaire analysis intensely exposed the full range of results and the practical insights of the present research paper. It attempted to afford the outcomes obtained from the gathering data regarding the Motivational Factors affecting the Preferences of Students and Teachers learning English at the Intensive Language Centre. Once data collection was achieved from different main springs over and done with the intermediary of a research's tool including an online survey, the responses were analysed and debated.

5.1 General Information about the Participants

The target judgment sample in the current study covers both students and teachers. The questionnaire was administered to trainees who were enrolled in 2023 and 2024 at ILTC-UDL. The table below shows the distribution of respondents according to gender and number. Regarding the sample distribution of number, the students' targeted participants were first majoring with 91 participants representing 84.26%, followed by 17 teachers' participants' $\approx$ 15.74%. As far as the gender is concerned, the female participants are forerunners covering a total of 78 $\approx$ 72.22 participants in comparison with 30 $\approx$ 27.78 male participants.

	Frequency	Percent	Total
Students Trainees	91	84.26	108
Teachers Trainees	17	15.74	
Males	78	72.22	108
Females	30	27.78	

Table 2: Distribution of Participants by Gender and Number

5.2 Motivation

In this section, 17 main items were designed and put randomly to indicate the participants 'primary reasons driving their desire to improve their English language learning.

Data analysis regarding motivations was conducted based on their responses to these 17 statements, using a 4 point Likert scale: 1. Totally agree, 2. Agree, 3. Disagree, 4. Neutral and adapted from Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The results of this section are presented below, organized into subsidiary subsections, each focusing on the three motivational constructs: instrumental, integrative, and personal motivation. The level of motivation for learning English was categorized according to the following criteria: high, moderate and low: the higher their level of agreement, the higher their score.

5.2.1 Instrumental Motivation

As previously mentioned, instrumental motivation pertains to the practical value of learning a foreign language, particularly for enhancing business and career prospects. Table 3 illustrates the rung of instrumental motivation among the participants in the study.

Content of item	1	2	3	4
English is necessary for your studies	97	11	/	/
English is important for career advancement	74	19	10	5
English can enhance access to academic resources	54	31	15	8
English proficiency opens up a world of business opportunities	67	29	10	/
English is a requirement for admission to foreign universities	49	23	22	14
English Language skills are essential for professional development in many fields	71	25	2	10

Table3: Trainees Instrumental Motivations

According to the data obtained from table 3 the first sub section requires a specific consideration. This is probably the cornerstone of the questionnaire as it measures instrumental motivation reasons for learning English. As far as the first item is concerned, the overwhelming majority of trainees recognize the necessity of English for their studies. This indicates a strong awareness of the importance of English proficiency in academic pursuits.

The other remark feature is that a significant portion of participants acknowledge the importance of English for career advancement. This suggests that they are cognizant of the role English plays in accessing job opportunities and advancing in their chosen professions. While over half of them recognize that English can enhance access to academic resources, the

percentage is comparatively lower than other instrumental motivation reasons. This may indicate a need for greater emphasis on the benefits of English proficiency for accessing scholarly materials and research resources.

The findings of the fourth item demonstrate that a substantial percentage of participants believe that English proficiency can open up business opportunities. This underscores the perception of English as a valuable asset in the global business landscape. Less than half of the respondents view English proficiency as a requirement for admission to foreign universities. This suggests a potential gap in understanding the importance of English language skills for international academic mobility. The results of the last item have exposed a great deal of consistency as far as the respondents' instrumental motivations are concerned. The results totally affirmed that the majority of respondents recognize the essential role of English language skills in professional development across various fields. This highlights a strong awareness of the broad applicability of English proficiency in the job market.

5.2.2 Integrative Motivation

Once more, integrative motivation in foreign language learning is described as the aspiration to become a part of the community that speaks the language. Table 4 indicates the learners' integrative motivation.

Content of item	1	2	3	4
Better appreciation of English speaking cultures	23	10	50	25
Social interaction and integration	41	22	36	9
Personal enrichment and intellectual stimulation	77	26	/	5
Cross cultural communication	37	49	10	12
-Fostering a sense of interconnectedness	39	18	31	20

Table4: Trainees Integrative Motivations

This table shows the participants' integrative motives for learning English, the results obtained are as follow: item 1 scored the low approving rate, with a total of 23 respondents who show their strong disagreement that they use English to have a hand in learning English for a better appreciation of English-speaking cultures. This suggests that while some of them

may find cultural aspects motivating, it may not be as prominent a factor for the majority. Besides, for the sake of social accommodation, the results of this second item showed that a significant portion of participants enthusiastically supported the idea that learning English may facilitate social interaction and integration.

This indicates recognition of English as a tool for communication and connection within diverse social contexts. As far as item 3 is concerned, agreement remains very significant. The majority of participants cite personal enrichment and intellectual stimulation as motivating factors for learning English. This underscores a strong intrinsic motivation driven by a desire for self-improvement and intellectual growth. A considerable percentage of participants recognize the importance of English for cross-cultural communication. This highlights an awareness of English as a means to bridge cultural divides and foster intercultural understanding. Along the same line, a substantial portion of trainees give consent that motivation for learning English may foster a sense of interconnectedness. This suggests an appreciation for the role of English in connecting individuals across geographical and cultural boundaries.

5.2.3 Personal Motivation

As mentioned earlier, personal motivation in learning a foreign language centers on achieving personal fulfillment. Table 5 indicates the learners' personal motivation.

Content of item	1	2	3	4
Better engagement with English speaking cultural aspects	62	19	20	02
Strengthen family and friend relationships	42	29	3	24
Exploring destinations where English is spoken	77	27	/	/
Learning foreign languages provides self-expression and creativity	44	50	10	
Boosting self-confidence and esteem	61	34	/	8
Improving hobby opportunities	36	29	19	24

Table5: Trainees Personal Motivations

In reference to the above table, and after analyzing the personal motivation reasons provided by the surveyed participants' yields insightful observations: according to the first

issue, the results demonstrate that significant majority of them express motivation to better engage with English-speaking cultural aspects. This indicates a strong interest in immersing themselves in the language, literature, arts, and traditions of English-speaking communities. As far as the second item is concerned, an eligible percentage of participants cite strengthening family and friend relationships as a motivation for learning English. While this may not be as prevalent as other factors, it still reflects a desire for improved communication and connection with loved ones. Still, the results obtained can be considered rather positive.

A substantial majority of respondents express motivation to explore destinations where English is spoken. This suggests a desire for travel and cultural exploration, with English proficiency seen as a practical tool for navigating and interacting in English-speaking countries. Meanwhile, the results for items 4 and 5 reveal significant enthusiasm in respondents' personal motivation which remained largely positive towards learning English. Clearly, a significant portion of them view learning foreign languages, including English, as a means of self-expression and creativity.

This indicates an intrinsic motivation to develop linguistic skills as a form of personal growth and expression. Moreover, the task was also achieved in the item 5 with the worldwide position of English. A considerable majority of participants cite boosting self-confidence and esteem as a motivation for learning English. This suggests recognition of the value of language proficiency in building confidence and self-assurance in various personal and professional contexts. Certainly, in reference to the findings of the last item, a minority of participants express motivation to improve hobby opportunities through learning English. While not as prevalent as other factors, this still indicates an interest in pursuing hobbies and interests that may be enhanced through English language proficiency.

5.3 The Most Difficult Skill in English Learning

When learning English, trainees consistently aim to cultivate proficiency in all four essential language skills necessary for everyday communication: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. To identify common challenges students encounter in mastering these skills, the investigator surveyed them to determine which language skill they find most challenging during their English learning journey.

Language Skills	Frequency	Percent
Listening	12	11.11
Speaking	68	62.97
Reading	5	4.63

Writing	23	21.29
Total	108	100%

Table 6 **the most difficult language skill**

Table 6 shows the skills that the trainees find most challenging. The study revealed that speaking skill was perceived as the most challenging language skill by the majority of participants (62.97%). Many learners commonly struggle with mastering spoken English due to factors such as pronunciation, fluency, and confidence in oral communication. Following closely, writing skill was identified as the second most difficult language skill by 21.29% of the trainees who participated in the study.

6. Limitations

No doubt, a study cannot overcome inherent limitations, which can be defined as being outside the will of the researcher; yet, subjectivity and socio-educational background shape her analysis, to some extent, and control her final judgment. Nevertheless, on the basis of sound methodological tools, she could obtain results which are representative of the sample as in any action research and lead to a better understanding of the need analysis in the context of the research concerned with. Extended opinions could have been obtained with larger size samples of respondents and spontaneous answers and less time constraints. The researcher handed out a great number of questionnaires in order to collect more data, but a restricted one gave it back while others did not answer to all questions. Consequently, as any other study, this research cannot avoid potential weaknesses that have regulated the researcher's analyses results. As to the students, the degree of learners' interests and abilities must be noted as some felt bored and far from the point or discouraged in front of different scientific texts. Students' motivation is rather weak and it is necessary to promote good reading habits which are essential to any language learning and root causes to low- self- esteem, isolation and educational disadvantages.

The woman researcher is an English Foreign Language teacher interested in Linguistics and Didactics and which teaching experience at local university level amounts only to 12 years. With humility and sincerity, the researcher declares that some issues remain most unanswered. Because of successive governmental educational controversies on teaching English in all levels and particularly at the university one in the prevailing fields, much teacher training is required to cope with varying learners' interests and linguistic competence. These are among future research initiatives to be set forth.

7. Discussion and Recommendations:

In general, from the study, the trainees are highly motivated to learn English as a foreign language. This finding answered the research question about the level of the students' motivation. Based on the comparison and assessment, the researcher found that the trainees are highly more instrumentally and personally motivated to learn English than integrative motivation. From the one hand and based on the instrumental motivation reasons provided, it's evident that English proficiency is perceived as essential for academic and career success, accessing resources, and professional development. From the other hand, personal factors such as potential benefits, self-expression and confidence, interest, personal enrichment, and social interaction, often align with positive attitudes towards language learning. Learners who hold positive attitudes towards the language they are learning are more likely to feel motivated to engage in language learning activities willingly and enthusiastically.

Certainly, understanding these attitudes towards learning English is essential for educators and policymakers to design effective language learning programs and support mechanisms. By fostering a positive learning environment that promotes enthusiasm and motivation, educators can enhance learners' language proficiency and overall learning outcomes. Additionally, speaking and writing skills were the most troublesome to the trainees that participated in the study. Therefore, understanding the difficulties trainees encounter during the learning process is of paramount importance. This awareness aids curriculum developers, instructional designers, and teachers alike. It serves as a blueprint for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, with a particular focus on bolstering learners' motivation in the pursuit of English language proficiency. Here are some recommendations based on the analysis of these results which the teachers and the learners to face their academic and pedagogical hindrances:

- Recommend incorporating English language courses or modules into the academic curriculum across disciplines, emphasizing the relevance of English for studies and focusing on academic writing, reading comprehension, and oral presentation skills.
- Develop career development programs that emphasize the importance of English proficiency for Teachers career advancement.
- Furthermore, creating a positive and supportive learning environment through improving access to English-language academic resources, such as journals, articles,

and research papers, by subscribing to online databases and providing language support services for both teachers and students.

- Provide more guidance and support to teachers and students seeking assistance with English proficiency. As to establish language support services, such as language labs, tutoring sessions, and conversation clubs, to help the learners improve their English proficiency outside of formal classroom settings.
- Offer professional development workshops and seminars focused on enhancing English language skills for specific fields.
- Provide opportunities for learners to engage in real-world projects or internships that require English communication skills, allowing them to apply their language proficiency in professional settings.
- Promote motivation with ICTs as students seem today more techno literate and reading enhances word recognition while identification facilitates comprehension as asserted by Stricker et Al., (1998: 299): “As automaticity in word recognition develops, students read faster and have greater opportunity to gain meaning from the text. Difficulty in recognising individual words hampers the ability to gain meaning from the text... Thus, accuracy alone is not enough; accurate word recognition must be completed rapidly for fluency to occur.”(cited in Fasla 2024 :143)
- Lead to learner language’s autonomy which can be reached to some extent through certain activities which means promotion of language proficiency. Since the 1980s, a number of theoretical works have been produced on the nature of second language writing and learning (Brown, 2000), which provide different strategies which must be used to increase students language skills. Yet, writing remains the most used skill in evaluating students’ performance in almost all levels of education (Afrin, 2016:104).

8. Conclusion:

The findings show the complexity of defining and enhancing motivation in acquiring and using the fundamental EFL language knowledge within learners. Drawing on all the findings examined, it can be mentioned that the main results reveal that the teachers have a relevant lack of training regarding ESP teaching or teaching English appropriately within each specialty, depending greatly on the motivation of students, time allotted to EFL teaching, the teaching materials, to name just a few. With the advent of the amazing AL, and essentially ChatGPT to generate instant responses to academic inquiries and foster spontaneous

interactions on the one hand, and on the other hand students varied types and degrees of intelligences, the value of reading and writing as a process, the importance of seeing them as a vehicle for thinking are threatened, as the personal expression or understanding and the crafting of any written work are rather diminished. Motivation can become problematic as comprehension is not challenged but ready at hand as a formatted asset which contribute to lessen the abilities of any language learner.

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