



On the Rationale behind Language and Motivation

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In 2023, due to a serious health problem, I decided to step down as editor of *Computer Assisted Language Learning* (Taylor & Francis). When I had fully recovered, I deeply regretted this decision, but at the same time I realized that after 22 years as editor, and now being emeritus professor, it was time for a change. Now that I had the experience, the vision, the network and... the time, I was more than eager to start a new journal, but I have to say that it was the topic itself that made me most enthusiastic about the idea.

I started as a language teacher in 1980, and soon became interested in developing language courseware. Together with our contemporaries we developed what we now call drill-and-practice software. We were fascinated by the possibilities of the technology and added complex functionalities, some of which have not been surpassed today. Gradually, more and more colleagues began to situate or even justify their systems design within a pedagogical theory, sometimes going back decades as in the case of Vygotsky and the social constructivist approach. With the emergence of the Internet and mobile devices, it became more feasible and popular to really start from a pedagogical theory when designing, implementing and evaluating software systems, hence the motto “Not technology, but pedagogy first.”

We went a step further in that evolution by formulating the hypothesis that the realization of pedagogical goals depends less on technology than on a methodological design based on psychological-motivational factors. After years in language pedagogy, educational technology and instructional design, we concluded that the most important issues in research were related to subconscious volitions, which resulted in our own modest Personal Goal Theory (Colpaert, 2010).

After having given many talks on this topic worldwide, I was more than convinced that the most meaningful, relevant, and appealing title for a new journal had to be *Language and Motivation*. As explained in the ‘Aims and Scope’ section, motivation is one of the most relevant research topics for the 21st century. More and more attention goes to psychological well-being in general, work–life balance, emotional intelligence, and motivation itself in terms of mental acceptance, identification and self-regulation. Conferences and publications on the topic of motivation are mushrooming, to a great extent due to the pandemic and its psychological impact on working and learning. Some journals have motivation as main topic (e.g., *Motivation Science*; *Motivation and Emotion*; *Learning and Motivation*; *Journal of Motivation, Emotion, and Personality*) while other journals mention motivation explicitly as an important sub-topic.

Motivation theory has evolved from traditional intrinsic-extrinsic dichotomies, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-factor Theory to more complex and fine-tuned models such as the Self-Determination Continuum (Deci & Ryan). Theories and models such as ARCS (Keller), Expectancy-Value Theory (Wigfield & Eccles), Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura), Goal Setting Theory (Locke & Latham), Attribution Theory (Weiner), and Appreciative Inquiry Technique (Cooperrider) now offer researchers a wider array of approaches to motivation.

One of the most relevant, interesting, and applicable concepts in my view is the Self-Determination Continuum. It shows six types of motivation with their regulatory styles, loci of causality, and corresponding processes (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Designers can use this model for plotting their targeted population before trying to gauge any progress. The goal of educators can never be to make the entire group of learners intrinsically motivated. But moving the entire group one level up would already be a beautiful result.

The fields of language acquisition and language education have followed at a different pace the rapid evolution of motivational theories and models. The seminal works by Oxford (Oxford & Shearin, 1994), Gardner's socio-educational model (Gardner, 1988) and Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei 2005, 2009) are perhaps the most prominent studies. More and more research projects (Dewaele et al., 2022), books (Lamb et al., 2019) and conferences (Aerts et al., 2010), focused on the topic of language and motivation. Strangely enough, as far as we know, there were no journals yet on the topic of language and motivation.

The topic of language and motivation seems narrow and very specific, but at the same time it appeals to a broad audience of readers, authors, and reviewers. Researchers from different related disciplines such as linguistics, pedagogy, technology, communication, design, and psychology will always be confronted with a motivational issue on the level of (the lack of) acceptance, identification and self-regulation.

Language and Motivation has been launched as an intercontinental and transdisciplinary journal that publishes significant contributions to the study of psychological-motivational aspects in and approaches to language learning, teaching, and testing. It aims to integrate recent motivation theories into language pedagogy, to develop new findings on language motivation and to contribute to high-quality language education worldwide. It intends to respond to a growing demand for relevant findings on the subject and for publication possibilities by inviting established scholars worldwide to contribute as author or reviewer.

We welcome submissions on all aspects related to language learning, teaching and testing (as assessment in the broadest sense), primarily L2 acquisition (FLA or SLA) on primary, secondary or tertiary level, in commercial courses or in more incidental settings 'in the wild', but also mother tongue acquisition and literacy.

Submissions can be based on linguistics (e.g. sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, computational linguistics, pragmatics, LSP or Language for Specific Purposes, minority and endangered languages), pedagogy (e.g. teacher education and training, instructional design, CLIL or Content and Language Integrated Learning, TBLT or Task-based Language Teaching, bilingual education, critical education, learner agency), communication (e.g. immigration and integration, intercultural communication, translanguaging), technology (e.g. artificial intelligence, smart systems, ambient intelligence, Open Data, courseware design), or psychology (e.g. emotions, anxiety, technology acceptance, language disorders, verbal giftedness), but they should preferably be geared towards developing *transdisciplinary* concepts and methods.

Transdisciplinarity aims to develop boundary-transcending terminology (such as the term 'affordance'), models, concepts, objects, methods, metaphors and even frameworks on a higher level of abstraction than the discipline level, to foster communication between the disciplines involved (Hubbard & Colpaert, 2019).

Language and Motivation advocates an ecological and multimodal approach to language learning, teaching, and testing. An ecological approach means that we preferably look at the motivational effect of the learning environment and context as a whole, as an ecology. In a multimodal approach, the learning process is not unidimensional but multidimensional: it is mapped out around various axes such as remote/face-to-face, synchronous/asynchronous, individual/collaborative, the four skills, strategies and media.

This journal embraces quantitative, qualitative and mixed-method empirical and experimental research methods, but also systematic reviews of literature (desk research or meta-analyses), (auto-)ethnographic research, reports on design or engineering projects, replication studies, book reviews or evaluations of educational technology.

The members of our editorial board represent diverse regions and topics of expertise and have been invited based on their experience, vision, and passion. I wish to thank explicitly Ali Al-Hoorie, Antonie Alm, Stephen Bodnar, Anita Bowles, Heejin Chang, Jean-Marc Dewaele, Soraya García Sánchez, Katharina Glas, Martin Lamb, Jia Li, Wenchao Li, Jo Mynard, Kimberly Noels, Stephen Ryan, Pia Sundqvist, Liss Kerstin Sylvén, Ema Ushioda, and Wen-chi Vivian Wu for their willingness to invest their time and energy in the launch and success of this journal.

We will also continue to invite reviewers for this journal. Reviewers from the most diverse disciplines and backgrounds. Reviewers who know what it means to be an author. Reviewers, so feared and sometimes hated by the authors, but who play a crucial role in our research. I need to mention two aspects in that respect. First, authors do have the right to disagree with the reviewers and to respond. The editor's role is to moderate this discussion. Second, I consider the discussion between authors and reviewers to be the core of our scholarly work. It is not the research project in itself, but more importantly its acceptance and impact that count.

The success of a journal is nowadays measured in terms of several criteria such as Journal Impact Factor (JIF), Scopus CiteScore, H-index, Eigenfactor score, Article Influence Score, SCImago Journal Rank (SJR), number of downloads and even author satisfaction. Of course, I was very happy to see that *Computer Assisted Language Learning* had reached a very high ranking and impact factor (7.0). But all this took more than 20 years. Had I focused on these figures from the beginning, I would never have found the drive and the energy to continue. It was the daily pulse of the field I could feel, the contact with authors and reviewers that nurtured my motivation.

I look forward to reading submissions that reflect a 'genuine' passion for knowledge (Colpaert, 2020), from authors who identify themselves with the topic and who know the field. Experienced editors recognize immediately authors who only write under pressure to publish and who primarily look for highly ranked journals.

One of the reasons I chose Castledown as publisher is not only its Open Access policy, but also the fact that there was no pressure to publish a specific number of articles per year or per issue. This gives the editor the freedom to decide to not publish articles that reflect the pressure to publish rather than an eagerness to know.

Articles that do not meet the clearly stated submission guidelines will not be rejected outright. A more lenient 'reject and resubmit' decision will allow authors to rectify frequent flaws such as persuasive terminology, unnecessary first sentences, incomplete references, exaggerated statistics, and false reasonings.

Last but not least, I wish to thank my successor Glenn Stockwell and publishers Vicky Farish and Lauren Harcombe from Castledown for their continued help and encouragement in launching this journal.

Jozef Colpaert
Editor

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