

Original Research Article

Motivation and Influencing Factors of the Second Language Acquisition Based on the Grounded Theory

ABSTRACT

This study explored students' learning ways, motivations and influencing factors of second language acquisition (SLA) based on the grounded theory. A qualitative research method was used, and semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted to collect data. The findings showed that students currently adopt a combination of teacher-guided learning way and self-directed learning way in the process of SLA. Moreover, SLA motivations can be categorized into intrinsic motivation (knowledge, achievement, stimulation) and extrinsic motivation (external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation). In addition, the factors of environment, motivation, competence, subjective norm, attitude, outcome expectation, language aptitude and learning habit can exert significant influence on SLA.

Comment [WU1]: Just mention with whom the interviews were done

Keywords: motivation; influencing factors; learning ways; second language acquisition; the grounded theory

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1. INTRODUCTION

Motivation is one of the most significant determinants of successful second language learning and students' task completion in the field of second language acquisition [1]. One of the main reasons why students perform poorly in SLA is a lack of motivation [2], and students need to be motivated from a variety of sources in SLA [3]. Thus, many scholars have made research on different types of motivation [4,5] and the important role of motivation in SLA [6-8]. In addition to motivation, some other factors have an impact on SLA, which has been studied by prior literature [9-11], although each one contributes differently to the success or failure of SLA.

Comment [WU3]: Before going to Motivation the authors can mention the importance of SLA in general and then move to the factors affecting SLA

Although there is a lot of research on students' learning ways, motivations and influencing factors in SLA, very limited studies actually give students a voice, Chinese university students in particular. Therefore, based on the grounded theory, we interviewed voluntary Chinese students including English majors and non-English majors in Zhaoqing University to find out what they perceived as the main factors influencing SLA, what drives them for SLA, and what are the learning ways they choose in the process of SLA.

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2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Motivation for Second Language Acquisition

Scholars have elaborated on motivation for SLA in different ways. Gardner is known as the founder of the field of motivational research in SLA, defining motivation for SLA as "the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language" [12], which was supported by many scholars [13-15]. The definition mainly emphasized the learners' internal factors: effort, desire and attitude. One limitation of it is that it ignored the influence of the external environment on learners' learning of a foreign language. William and Burden considered motivation to learn a second language as "a state of cognitive and emotional arousal; which leads to a conscious decision to act, and; which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort in order to attain a previously set goal/goals" [16]. This definition emphasized affective and cognitive factors and argued that motivation varies with awareness. At the same time, they argued that motivation for SLA is influenced by both internal and external factors.

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Ngo [17] argued that motivation for language learning refers to the extent to which individuals make choices about what they want to pursue and put effort into it, and that the learning environment can either strengthen or weaken motivation for language learning. The definition incorporates cognitive and affective factors and considers motivation to be under conscious control, taking into account the influence of the learning environment on motivation. Dörnyei et al. [1] illustrated that motivation is an indispensable part of challenging second language learning, and even if the learner has the most outstanding abilities, a lack of motivation will lead to failure, while strong motivation will compensate for important deficits. Seven [18] pointed out when it comes to learning a second language, motivation is concerned with the efforts made by the students as well as their positive attitudes toward learning the target language and a number of other elements that contribute to learning the second language.

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2.2 Development of Motivation Theories for SLA

Research on motivation for SLA has evolved over time and has been conducted from a social psychological perspective, a cognitive-situated perspective, and a socio-dynamic perspective [19]. Studying from a social psychological perspective, Gardner and Lambert [20] proposed that individuals' motivation to learn is determined by either integrative or instrumental orientation. The former refers to the willingness to learn a second language in order to identify with the target language community, while the latter refers to the motivation to learn a second language in order to gain utilitarian value, such as getting a good job. Later, Gardner proposed another socio-educational model of second language acquisition in 2006. This theory considers motivation as consisting of effort (motivational intensity), desire to learn a second language, and attitudes toward the second language. Motivation is mainly supported by "integrativeness" and "attitude toward the second language learning situation". Overall, the socio-educational model helped to conceptualize integrative motivation, understand the integrative-instrumental motivation dichotomy, and create a test battery for assessing motivational issues [19].

Later, many scholars [21,22] suggested that motivation for SLA is a multifaceted concept that should be viewed from different perspectives. As a result, scholars have begun to study motivation for SLA from a cognitive contextual perspective. In the 1990s, researchers in second language motivation [23,24] began to utilize some influential cognitive theories from mainstream motivational psychology, such as goal theory, expectancy and value theory, attribution theory, and self-determination theory for the study of motivation. These studies have considered both the influence of cognitive factors and the influence of the classroom

environment on motivation to learn. Self-determination theory is one of the theories that has been widely used in the study of motivated behavior. Self-determination theory was first proposed by Deci and Ryan[25] and further elaborated by later scholars[4,26,27]and is primarily concerned with the relationship between social environment (contextual support), psychological needs, motivation, outcomes, and well-being. Ryan & Deci [4]proposed that motivation is divided into three categories: internal, external and no motivation.

Later, scholars[28-30]study motivation from the perspective of social dynamics[31]. This perspective is characterized by a focus on the complexity of the second language motivational process and its organic development in dynamic interaction with internal, social, and environmental factors [31]. In fact, according to Dörnyei and Ryan[32], they want to explain how motivation develops as a result of interactions between people and their environments. In this regard, second language (L2) motivational self-system[28,33] is one of the well-researched theories, which is an international construct centered on people's future image and vision inside their self-concept system. This theory is composed of three dimensions: the ought-to L2 self, the ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience.

2.3 Studies on Influencing Factors of SLA

The process of learning a second language is complex and involves many different influencing factors. Accordingly, many scholars did research on the factors which have an impact on SLA. Al Rifai[6]examined the relationship between students' attitudes, motivation, and English language learning outcomes and showed that teachers and English courses influence students' motivation and that attitudes and motivation affect English language learning outcomes. Mosha [34]illustrated that teachers, teaching resources, environment (classroom environment, home environment), students' attitudes and frequency of language use affect students' language learning. Mahmoudi and Mahmoudi [7]argued that internal factors including cognitive and affective factors such as motivation, intelligence, anxiety, and risk taking ability and external factors such as environment and curriculum affect English learning. Likewise, Sun[8] agreed that internal and external factors can affect SLA, the former referring to individual factors of learners' age, attitudes, personality, motivation, and first language ability, the latter described as social factors of political, economic, cultural, and technological environment. Syaprizal's research [10]indicates that a number of factors affect language development. Children's language development is greatly influenced by biological and cognitive elements, including age, mother tongue, and environmental factors, including family, friends, and community. Md Yunus et al. [35]studied the factors influencing postgraduate students' behavioral intention to learn English online and showed that performance expectations, effort expectations, social influence and facilitating conditions influence learners' behavioral intention to use online learning English. Wang et al.[11] demonstrated positive psychology variables, namely academic engagement, emotion regulation, enjoyment, grit, loving pedagogy, resilience, and well-being can contribute to SLA. The study by Devaki [9]examined societal and individual factors which can impact SLA and found that age, gender, social economic context, ethnicity and language attitudes play an important role in SLA. Although scholars had different ideas on the influencing factors of SLA, most of them agreed that some factors such as motivation, attitude, and environment are crucial. This study also attempted to figure out the influencing factors of SLA on the part of Chinese students.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this study, a qualitative research method based on the grounded theory was used, and semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted to collect data. To qualify for the

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interviews, the participants were all college students from Zhaoqing University. To achieve diverse samples, the interviewees were both male and female of different ages, and he/she came from different majors and grades. Based on these criteria, the authors selected 25 interviewees for in-depth interviews. Table1 shows the basic information about the interviewed students. 16 of the 25 students were female and 9 were male. Their age ranged from 17 to 22 years old, including 1 at the age of 17, 6 at the age of 18, 7 at the age of 19, 8 at the age of 20, 2 at the age of 21, and 1 at the age of 22. 11 were freshmen, 8 were sophomores, 3 were juniors, and 3 were seniors. They came from the different majors of English, Arts, Environmental Design, Calligraphy, Chinese, Animation, Landscape Architecture, Electronic Information, and Biological Science. Since Zhaoqing University only offers English classes for non-English majors in their freshman and sophomore years, the only non-English majors interviewed were freshmen and sophomores, while the English majors interviewed were from four grades.

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Each interview lasted between 15 and 30 minutes, and the interview format was semi-structured and developed by the interviewer within agreed guidelines and a general framework to obtain as much information as possible from each interviewee. Interviewers encouraged participants to share their personal views on motivation, influencing factors, and ways of English acquisition. The interview questions used to encourage students to share their perceptions of learning English were as follows: 1. Do you think it is necessary to learn English and why? 2. What factors do you think influence your English learning? 3. What are the benefits of learning English? 4. What are your motivations for learning English? 5. In what ways do you learn English? Which way do you think is better? 6. Whose opinions do you value in the process of learning English? 7. Do you think you can learn English well? Why?

At the end of all the interviews, the entire interview transcripts were copied into a word document. The authors read all the interview transcripts carefully, identified key words and phrases, performed open coding, and finally categorized them to identify themes. Then, the authors further compared and combined these themes to generate higher-level themes. Finally, a framework was created.

Table1. The demographic information of the interviewees

Interviewees	Gender	Age	Grade	Major
Chen 1	female	22	The fourth grade	English
Zou 2	female	21	The fourth grade	English
Xie 3	male	20	The first grade	Arts
Guo 4	female	18	The first grade	Arts
Gao 5	male	18	The first grade	Environmental Design
Zheng 6	male	18	The first grade	Environmental Design
Liang 7	male	19	The first grade	Environmental Design
Chen 8	female	20	The first grade	Calligraphy
Wu 9	male	18	The first grade	Animation
Guo 10	male	19	The first grade	Animation
Zou 11	female	18	The first grade	Arts
Zhuang 12	female	21	The fourth grade	English

Huang 13	female	20	The third grade	English
Li 14	female	20	The third grade	English
Ke 15	female	20	The third grade	English
Lin 16	male	17	The first grade	English
Chen 17	female	19	The second grade	English
Huang 18	female	20	The second grade	English
Guan 19	female	20	The second grade	English
Jin 20	female	19	The second grade	Chinese
Qiu 21	female	19	The second grade	Landscape Architecture
Chen 22	male	20	The second grade	Electronic Information
Zhang 23	female	19	The second grade	Animation
Ma 24	female	18	The first grade	Biological Science
Wang 25	male	19	The second grade	Biological Science

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 English Learning Ways

By analyzing the interview content of 25 students, the authors categorized their ways of learning English into two groups: teacher-guided learning and self-directed learning (Fig.1). From the content of the interviews, it can be seen that 44% of the students attached more importance to the teacher's classroom teaching and guidance, and they thought that learning English with the teacher in the classroom was an important way to learn English (Xie3; Guo4; Zheng6; Liang7; Guo10; Zou11; Zhuang12; Li14; Ke15; Chen22; Ma24), because teachers can summarize the knowledge points, important and difficult points (Zhuang12), make English learning more systematic and in-depth (Zheng6; Chen22), and solve students' problems and make learning more efficient (Xie3; Zou11).

Self-directed learning is a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, to diagnose their own learning needs, set learning goals, determine the human and material resources needed for learning, select and implement appropriate learning strategies, and assess learning outcomes[36]. Self-directed learning as a learning model promotes self-control in the learning process and provides learners with the space and opportunity to interact with people outside the classroom to achieve learning goals[37]. Self-directed learning has attracted widespread attention in various disciplines of adult education, including the fields of language learning and teaching [38]. In some countries, students' in-class exposure to a language does not ensure their language learning success, and learning a foreign language is often a difficult and time-consuming process[39]. Therefore, in order to increase exposure to a foreign language, it is also important for students to devote time to learning the language outside of class and on their own[40].

Based on the content of the interviews, all the interviewed students adopted a self-directed learning way in English acquisition outside of class, they were able to determine the learning content according to their needs, find learning materials through various methods, and choose a learning method that suits them, such as memorizing English words, reading English originals and magazines, watching English speeches and debates, doing exercises,

conversing with friends or foreigners, watching English movies and TV shows. They can also listen to English songs, do English dubbing, take online classes, etc. This shows that the self-directed learning has become a common way for Chinese college students to learn English. From the analysis of the interviews, it can be seen that college students currently adopt a combination of teacher-guided learning way and self-directed learning way in their English learning process.

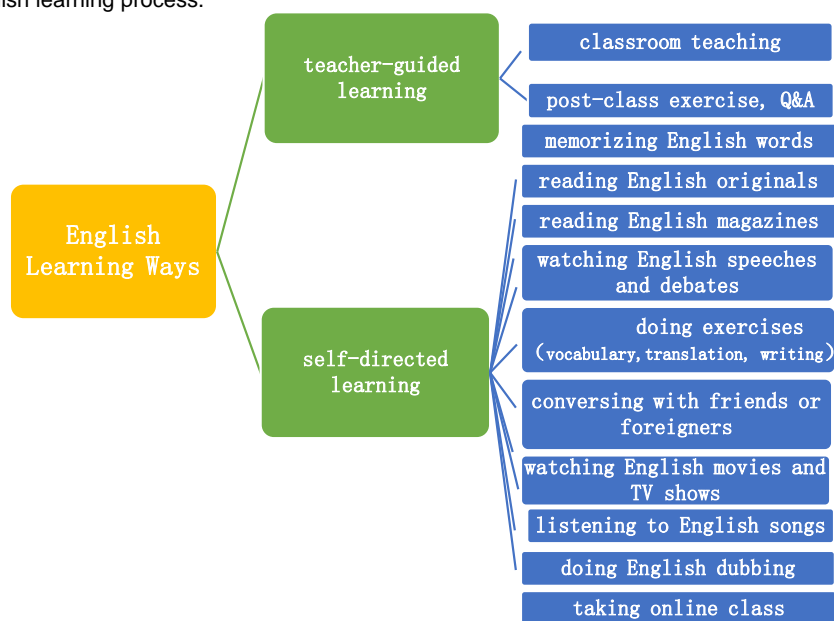


Fig. 1. English learning ways

4.2 Motivation Types for SLA

According to the interview content, students' motivations for SLA are various. Intrinsic motivation was described as "one of the most important psychological concepts in education" [41]. Some students learn English because they have interest in it or like or love it (Chen1; Zheng6; Wu9; Zou11; Zhuang12; Huang13; Li14; Lin16; Huang18; Qiu21), which can be described as the intrinsic motivation of stimulation. Some students learn English for improving professional competence (Gao5; Guan19), enhancing language proficiency (Chen1), communicating with English-speaking people (Chen8; Lin16), or realizing one's dream (Chen8), which can be depicted as intrinsic motivation of achievement. Some learn English in that they want to learn about the history, culture and customs of different countries (Zhuang12), read English books and literature (Xie3; Chen8; Chen22) or grasping more knowledge (Wu9), which can be regarded as intrinsic motivation of knowledge. Stimulation is the strongest intrinsic motivation in the current study. Likewise, intrinsic motivation was divided into three subscales including intrinsic motivation to know, intrinsic motivation to accomplish and intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation [41].

In addition to intrinsic motivation, some students learn English for praise (Guo10) or approval (Guo10). Some learn English for jobs (Chen1; Zou2; Liang7; Chen8; Chen17; Ma24), exams

(Zou2; Guo4; Liang7; Lin16; Jin20; Zhang23; Wang 25), contest (Ma24) or studying abroad (Gao5; Huang13). The motivation for exams is the strongest. The abovementioned motivations can be described as extrinsic motivation.

Accordingly, Chinese students' motivation for SLA can be categorized into intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation (Table 2). Intrinsic motivation can be classified into intrinsic motivation for knowledge, achievement and stimulation, supported by Vallerand et al. [41], and extrinsic motivation can be classified into external regulation, introjected regulation and identified regulation, which aligns with the findings of Ryan and Deci [4].

Table 2. Motivation Types for SLA

Motivation Types	Themes	Sub-themes
Intrinsic Motivation	knowledge	learning about the history, culture and customs of different countries; reading English books and literature; gaining knowledge
	achievement	improving professional competence; enhancing language proficiency; communicating with English-speaking people; realizing one's dream
	stimulation	interest; liking; love
Extrinsic Motivation	external regulation	external rewards (praise)
	introjected regulation	approval
	identified regulation	job; exams; contest; studying abroad

4.3 Influencing Factors of SLA

4.3.1 Environment

Although people can be aroused on an inherent level, they nevertheless require a nurturing environment to sustain and enhance their innate desire[4]. According to the participants in this study, environment exerts a great effect on English acquisition and is categorized into language environment (Liang7; Chen8; Wu9; Li14; Ke15; Chen17; Huang18), learning environment (Zou2; Liang7; Wu9; Guo10; Zou11; Guan19; Zhang23), teaching environment (Chen1; Xie3; Zheng 6; Wu9; Guo10; Li14; Lin16; Guan19), family environment (Chen1; Zou11; Huang18) and social environment (Gao5; Zou11; Huang18). Based on the data, teaching environment is perceived as the most influential environment on part of Chinese undergraduates.

4.3.2 Motivation

Motivation is crucial for improving students' English learning performance[42]. The importance of motivation, which is seen as a prerequisite for learning a second language and one of the important elements influencing language learners' performance, was highlighted by many scholars[43,44]. In SLA context, motivation is what drives the individuals to learn the second language.

According to the interviewees' ideas, motivation plays a critical role in English acquisition. Some students (Chen1; Zou11; Zhuang12; Huang13; Lin16; Guan19; Jin20; Qiu21) believe that interest and liking have a great influence on English acquisition. In addition, extrinsic motivation also has an impact on SLA. For example, Zhuang12 and Jin20 believe that passing exams is one of the reasons for them to learn English.

4.3.3 Competence

Competence relates to students' perceptions that they have mastered materials or are capable of performing well academically[45], akin to Bandura's concept of self-efficacy[46]. In this study, many students illustrate that competence can influence their English acquisition. Some students (Guo4; Zheng6; Ma24) agree that time management ability is very important during the process of English learning. Many students (Guo4; Guo10; Lin16; Guan19; Chen22; Zhang23; Wang25) believe that self-control ability affects English acquisition greatly. Moreover, Huang13 argues that perseverance is one of the secrets to learn English well. In line with the interviewees' opinions, competence consists of self-control, perseverance and time management ability.

4.3.4 Subjective Norm

Subjective norm relates to the perceived social influences or pressures to carry out some behaviors or not[47,48], which exerts a relatively strong impact on behavioral intention and influence people' behavior in a cultural of collectivism, such as China. In this study, subjective norms refer to the perceived social influences or pressures to learn English or not. All the students who participate in the interview agree that some important people have great influence on their English acquisition, namely, teachers (Chen1; Zou2; Xie3; Guo4; Liang7; Chen8; Wu9; Guo10; Zou11; Zhuang12; Huang13; Li14; Ke15; Lin16; Chen17; Huang18; Guan19; Jin20; Qiu21; Chen22; Ma24; Wang25), parents (Ma24), peers (Chen1; Zheng6; Chen8; Guo10; Zhuang12; Li14; Ke15; Guan19; Qiu21; Zhang 23; Ma24; Wang25), and other influential people (Chen1; Zou2; Xie3; Gao5; Liang7; Wu9; Huang13; Lin16; Huang18; Chen22; Zhang23). Among all the important others, 92% students state teachers have a significant influence on their English acquisition.

4.3.5 Attitude

Attitudes are general evaluations of objects, people or topics, characterized by a clear tendency toward one direction[49], and depend on expectations of and beliefs in the personal impacts on the outcomes resulting from the behavior[50]. Attitudes toward learning English is defined as "one's degree of satisfaction with the language-learning experience" [51]. Students with positive attitude can learn English better than those with negative attitude[51,52]. Learners' attitude is acknowledged as one of the most important factors affecting language learning[53,54]. In line with this, Zou11 in the study believes that attitude towards English learning has a great influence on SLA.

4.3.6 Outcome Expectation

According to Bandura [46], outcome expectations are opinions about the probable effects of a certain action, and are correlated to academic performance[55,56]. The likelihood that an individual will participate in the behavior that leads to the goal will be influenced by the expectation that a result will follow a particular conduct [57]. Based on the interviews, students' outcome expectations for SLA are various. They believe English acquisition is beneficial for daily use (Xie3; Liang7; Chen8; Zou11; Huang13; Li14; Lin16; Chen22), exams (Chen1; Guo4; Liang7; Chen8; Ma24), professional development (Gao5; Zhuang12; Li14;

Guan19; Jin20; Zhang23; Wang25), job (Chen1; Zou2; Chen8; Guo10), self-improvement (Zou2; Xie3; Guo4; Zheng6; Liang7; Chen8; Wu9; Guo10; Zou11; Zhuang12; Ke15; Lin16; Chen17; Huang18; Guan19; Jin20; Qiu21; Chen22),travelling (Gao5; Chen8; Zhang23),studying abroad (Chen8),enhancing self-confidence (Chen1; Zou2; Jin20),and making more friends (Chen8; Qiu21). The majority of the interviewees believe English acquisition is beneficial for their self-improvement.

4.3.7 LanguageAptitude

Foreign language aptitude generally refers to the specific talent for learning a foreign or second language[58], and the best predictor of language acquisition success[59]. Skehan [58] created the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) and offered four elements as the basis for the aptitude construct: a capacity for phonetic coding, for grammar sensitivity, for learning foreign language content by rote, and for inductive learning. It is acknowledged that a person with a high aptitude for languages can learn more rapidly and easily than someone with a poor aptitude for languages. Likewise, in the current study, Chen 8 states that memory and comprehension ability are important factors which can influence SLA. Besides, Qiu21 argues that talent for English learning is very important for SLA by telling her own experience in learning English and math. In addition, Zou2 illustrates that thinking mode affects SLA.

4.3.8 Learning Habit

Habits are routines of regularly repeated, mostly subconscious behaviors[60]. According to Wood and Runger [61], habits are behavioral patterns that are connected to particular situations, such as the time of day, a particular place, the presence of specific people, previous behaviors, or even one's mood. Learning habits are techniques and ways of acquiring knowledge[62], which facilitate students to plan their efforts to solve problems, cultivate abilities, gain knowledge, and finish school-related tasks [63]. Ke15, Guan19 and Wang25 demonstrate that learning habit is one of the factors influencing their English acquisition, which proves the importance of learning habits [62].

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Table 3. Influencing factors of SLA

Influencing factors	Themes	Sub-themes
environment	language environment	classroom language environment; after-school language environment
	learning environment	classroom learning environment; school learning environment
	teaching environment	teachers; resources; curriculum
	family environment	education concepts
	social environment	international situation; domestic situation
motivation	intrinsic motivation	knowledge; achievement; stimulation
	extrinsic motivation	external regulation; introjected regulation; identified regulation
competence	self-control; perseverance; time management skills	
subjective norm	parents	
	teachers	

	peers	friends; classmates; senior schoolmates
	other influencing people	accomplished people; people learning English well; native English speakers; some bloggers
attitude		
outcome expectation	daily use	reading books; watching films and videos; listening to songs; communicating with people
	passing exams	college entrance exams; graduate entrance exams; CET-4; CET-6; TEM4; TEM 8
	professional development	
	job	competitiveness; opportunity
	self-improvement	learning about culture, customs and history of different countries to broaden the horizons and improve the cultural literacy; developing a mindset; improving language skills; enriching knowledge
	travelling	
	studying abroad	
	enhancing self-confidence	
language aptitude	making more friends	
	thinking pattern; comprehension ability; memory; talent	
learning habit		

Comment [WU12]: Why is it without any main theme and sub theme?

5. CONCLUSION

This study explored students' learning ways, motivations and influencing factors of SLA based on the grounded theory. The findings showed that students currently adopt a combination of teacher-guided learning way and self-directed learning way in the process of SLA. Moreover, SLA motivations can be categorized into intrinsic motivation of knowledge, intrinsic motivation of achievement, intrinsic motivation of stimulation and extrinsic motivation including external regulation, introjected regulation, and identified regulation. In addition, eight factors of environment, motivation, competence, subjective norm, attitude, outcome expectation, language aptitude and learning habit exert a significant influence on SLA.

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Future research can use quantitative method to examine the relationships among environment, motivation, competence, subjective norm, attitude, outcome expectation, language aptitude, learning habit and SLA to build a theoretical model which can be used in the context of SLA. In addition, some other factors (e.g. experience, autonomy) can be taken into account when SLA is studied in the future.

Comment [WU15]: From where these two factors come from?

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APPENDIX

Chen 1

1. I think it is necessary to learn English. As one of the most important information carriers, English has become one of the most widely used languages in all areas of our lives.

Mastering English can improve competitiveness, contribute to diversified learning and the realization of self-worth, and bring benefits to our daily life and work.

2. I believe that the concept of family education, teaching resources, personal interest in learning and level of effort will affect my English learning.
3. Learning English is conducive to college entrance examination and can also improve the competitiveness of future job hunting. Moreover, compared with Chinese, English has different pronunciation, vocabulary and structure, which can affect our way of thinking to some extent. By learning English, I can know the cultural differences and I have more confidence. I think people who speak English well are usually more confident.
4. My mother is an English teacher. I grew up watching English cartoons. I became more and more interested in English, especially in spoken English. So I always want to engage in work related to English when I grew up, and I have always been trying to improve my English level.
5. In addition to the study of professional courses, I will use spare time to remember words, listen to Ted speeches and read magazines every day, for example, *The Economist*, *China Daily*. I will also read English original works and dub on software when I am free. I think it is better to read magazines, because you cannot only master new words, but also learn more authentic expression and cultivate logical thinking.
6. In the process of learning English, I will pay more attention to the opinions of professional teachers, excellent schoolmates and people who have made achievements in their own fields.
7. I think I can learn English well because I have a solid foundation in English, and I will also use a variety of methods to learn English effectively. More importantly, I love English and have excellent learning ability.

Zou 2

1. I think it is necessary to learn English. First of all, English is an international language, which is conducive to communication, especially in economic exchanges with foreign countries. Secondly, when you hunt for a job, the certificate of CET4 or CET6 is required. If we are good at English, we will have more choices. There are many things in life that are marked in English. We can understand them only when we know English.
2. Both Chinese thinking mode and learning environment will affect English learning.
3. I think learning English is to gain a skill, and also to enhance my self-confidence. It also provides more chances in future job hunting. Learning English can also expand my horizons.
4. At present, my motivation for learning English is to pass TEM4/TEM 8, and also to be able to teach better when I become a teacher in the future.
5. I usually learn English by reciting a lot of words and reading English novels. Sometimes, I also watch American TV dramas like *Friends* to learn English. Personally, I think memorizing words and reading English original novels will be more useful to me. Although memorizing words is boring, vocabulary is the basic requirement for learning English. I can learn a lot of authentic expressions by reading English novels.
6. In the process of learning English, I will pay more attention to the opinions of professional teachers, because teachers are professional and more experienced after all. I will also go online to see if other people have a better way to learn English. If it suits me, then I will use it.
7. No. Because I think English grammar is very difficult, just memorizing it by rote is certainly not enough, and there is no good language learning environment. Without a real context for English learning, I would find it difficult to learn English well.

Xie 3

1. I think it is still necessary for us to learn English, because we are exposed to English in

our daily life, such as some books or literature.

2. The teacher's English level and the quality of teaching materials and books that can be used to learn English can affect English acquisition.

3. I think the advantage of learning English is to facilitate daily use, for example, reading English books, watching English movies, listening to English songs, and communicating with foreigners. Learning English can also improve my language level.

4. I think my motivation for learning English is to use English in daily life, for example, watching English movies, listening to English songs. In addition, I want to read English literature.

5. I mainly learn English in English classes. After class, I learn English by listening to music,

reading books and watching movies. I still think it is better to learn English in class, because the teacher can help us solve the problems we don't understand, which can make us more efficient in English learning.

6. I pay more attention to the opinions of teachers and people who are good at English learning.

7. I can learn English well. My goal of learning English is to meet my needs in life in the future. I think that I can achieve this goal as long as I study English hard.

Guo 4

1. I think it is necessary to learn English. English is now the most important international language in the world, and English is also a skill.

2. Self-control and time management ability.

3. In addition to passing exams, I can also learn about the history and culture of English speaking countries through English learning.

4. My motivation for learning English is to pass various relevant exams.

5. I learn English by learning in class, listening to English songs, watching American TV shows or playing some games with words and phrases. I think it is better to learn English by playing games, because games can increase interest.

6. I pay attention to my teachers' opinions.

7. I think it should be OK, because there is nothing difficult in the world.

Gao 5

1. Yes. Both participating in competitions and learning software require the use of English.

2. The domestic economic environment and international situation will affect my English learning.

3. The benefits of learning English include: traveling around the world, more options for future development abroad, understanding the direction of professional development in foreign countries, and learning advanced foreign expertise.

4. My motivation for studying English is my professional needs and desire to study abroad.

5. I mainly learn English by translating articles from foreign websites, communicating with foreign netizens, using dictionary software to memorize words, and watching European and American dramas. I think translating articles and watching dramas are better ways to learn English.

6. I would value the opinions of people who have learned English very well.

7. Yes, because I'm interested in it.

Zheng 6

1. I think it is necessary to learn English because English is an international language.

Learning English well is equivalent to having an extra skill, an extra way out and an extra guarantee in my future job choice.

2. I think the diversity of the curriculum and my major will affect my English learning. Because

I major in art, the only course to learn English is College English, and I have to learn English in my free time.

3. I believe that learning English can improve my ability and cultural literacy and enable me to have more options in job hunting.
4. My motivation for learning English is partly because of my love for English, and partly because in today's international environment, countries are communicating more and more closely with each other, and learning one more language is becoming more and more important. I have been learning English for a long time, which is the best choice for me.
5. There are many ways to learn English, for example, listening to English songs, watching English movies and videos, and most commonly, taking English classes. I think taking English classes is the best because there are professional teachers to guide me and solve the problems. I can enrich vocabulary by listening to English songs and watching English movies and videos on my own, but if I have classes with a teacher guiding me, I can gain in-depth knowledge of grammar and morphology.
6. I will pay more attention to the opinions of senior schoolmates in the process of studying English.
7. I think I can learn English well because of my love and persistence.

Liang 7

1. Yes, I think so. English is an international language. Learning English can broaden my horizons. If there are foreign customers in the future career, and I do not know English, then I will miss the opportunity. And learning an additional language can improve myself.
2. Positive factors include teachers and classmates communicating and studying together, English Corner and library etc. These factors will promote my English from a positive perspective. Negative factor is that we are surrounded by Mandarin speakers, so there is no good language environment.
3. I feel that learning English and being good at English lead to a kind of "elegance". It can be beneficial for me to take the postgraduate entrance examination, communicate with foreigners and gain an additional skill.
4. I want to take the postgraduate entrance examination and I think it is necessary for future work.
5. I study English textbooks in class with my teacher, read English books or materials in paper format after class, and find some English materials online to study. I think reading paper books is a better way to learn English because online learning is easily disturbed and unfocused.
6. I value the opinions of teachers and people who have been successful in this field.
7. Yes, confidence and interest are the most crucial things to learn something well, and it just so happens that I have them!

Chen 8

1. It is very necessary. Firstly, to facilitate communication and exchange. Many companies and institutions have requirements for English communication skills, and if I do not know English, I cannot communicate with interviewers, clients, etc. Secondly, if a person can read English materials and books, he/she can gain more knowledge.
2. First, memory. Unlike pictograms, English words consist of 26 letters, which is difficult to remember. Second, comprehension. Because of various differences in language order, it is difficult to understand the meaning of some sentences. The third is the lack of language environment, because we don't usually communicate with each other in English.
3. The first benefit is to be able to have more opportunities to study abroad and hunt

for a job. The second is to improve my ability and outlook. Third, when travelling abroad, I am able to communicate better and make more friends.

4. The motivation for studying English is to be able to communicate in English and read English literature to avoid missing out on opportunities at work because of a lack of English skills. The exhibition industry that I want to learn about is very much in need of English communication skills, and I also want to realize my dream.

5. I mainly learn English by following methods: doing English exercises, watching American dramas, reading English articles or books, memorizing words and phrases, reading out loud, and writing English essays. The best way is to do English exercises, which can test one's learning level and also learn new or forgotten knowledge. The second is to memorize words and phrases, because only in this way can we understand the meaning of the article.

6. First, teachers are more knowledgeable and experienced than students, The methods and skills provided by teachers can help students make more progress by avoiding detours, and teachers are usually able to solve the problems that students could not. The second is the opinions of classmates. The third is my own opinions. I am the person who is the most aware of my level of learning and ability. As the saying goes, "One day without studying, I know the difference". I am the person who is the most aware of my true attitude and process of learning. If I know that I haven't put in enough effort in reality, I should work harder.

7. I can learn English well and it only requires further hard work and persistence, because there is nothing that cannot be achieved through hard work. Anyone can learn English well, but people with poor memory should put in more effort.

Wu 9

1. I believe that it is necessary to learn English. As an international official language, English is still commonly spoken in most countries. This makes it easy for us to communicate when we go abroad, travel and so on. English as a language is a skill. Learning English can help us read original books, get more information, expand our knowledge, and further advance in our related majors.

2. English learning cannot be separated from listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Learning English requires various resources related to it. In terms of listening, it is necessary to have audio and video teaching materials or some original film and television resources to provide a good language environment for me to learn English. Teaching is not possible without a teacher. The teacher's teaching experience and teaching methods can also affect our understanding of English. After class review is also important, but in non-teaching areas, due to changes in the environment, my focus has also changed.

3. Learning English allows us to master another language and to understand foreign customs and cultures, thus broadening our horizons.

4. I can learn an additional language. I personally prefer language classes. Language has a great attraction for me. In the process of learning a language, I never get tired of it, but rather expect more knowledge and things.

5. At the beginning, I familiarized myself with English by learning the International Phonetic Alphabet, and memorizing vocabulary was a daily routine. Nowadays I learn English by watching British and American movies and TV dramas combined with textbooks. In this way, I can not only learn English expressions, but also understand the local customs of Britain and America, and I can learn more authentic language in movies and TV shows which create a good language environment for me. I personally enjoy learning English by watching movies, TV shows, and plays. Sometimes, I use dubbing to imitate pronunciation and intonation, enhancing my language sense.

6. I usually consult my teachers or someone who learn English better than me, asking anything I want to know, including discussing some videos, movies, etc. in

order to find out how they learn English on a regular basis.

7. I can learn English well. It is said that interest is the best teacher, and I have had a great interest in English since I was a child. Whenever I learn English, I do not feel difficult because it is a foreign language. On the contrary, I enjoy learning English. Whenever I have new knowledge to learn, I am very eager to learn it.

Guo 10

1. I think it is necessary to learn English because nowadays English is an important part of the Internet language and one of the common languages used in the world. Learning English can also help us to better understand foreign cultures.

2. I think the following factors will affect my English learning: self-discipline, learning materials and collective learning atmosphere.

3. I think the benefits of learning English include improving the language skill, laying the foundation for future employment, and getting a scholarship with good test scores.

4. To get praise from teachers and recognition from classmates.

5. I learn English through my teacher's lectures in class, watching online classes, watching English videos, and reading some relative materials. I think it is a better way to learn English that occasionally teachers and students together comment on wrong English usage within major video apps in China, such as Tiktok and Kwai.

6. I would value the opinions of teachers and those who are good learners in my class.

7. I'm not sure whether I can learn English well because I don't have enough self-discipline and I don't have much initiative in learning English.

Zou 11

1. I think it is necessary to learn English. Learning English can enhance the ability to communicate with others and develop the ability of language expression, and learning English is also a skill that will be beneficial for future work.

2. The family environment, the learning atmosphere, the attitude, the widespread use of English, and personal interest can all influence the learning of English.

3. I can communicate with foreigners without any barriers, and I can develop language skills.

4. Interest and love for English.

5. I learn English through classroom learning, listening to English songs, watching English movies and television, communicating with foreigners and reading English books. I think classroom learning is better because the teacher can explain the difficult points.

6. I would give more weight to the teacher's opinions.

7. I think I was able to learn English well because of my own interest in English and the guidance of my teachers.

Zhuang 12

1. I think it is necessary to learn English because most Chinese students will go through the middle school and college entrance exams, and English is a compulsory subject, which is very important. In addition, after graduating from university and entering the society, if you are good at English, you will have an advantage in integrating into the society and professional development.

2. I think it changes over time. Before high school, it's probably more about test-taking. In college, the influencing factors are our own interest and preference.

3. I think the benefits of learning English are divided into two categories. One is for enriching myself, such as understanding the history or literature of other countries. On the other hand, in a practical sense, if I am good at English, it will be good for my future career development.

4. Regarding the motivation for learning English, I think that on the one hand,

my foundation before high school is quite solid, so I have always kept my passion and motivation for learning English. On the other hand, my curiosity for the Western cultures may motivate me to master the language and learn more about the culture different from my own.

5. The two main ways for me to study English are through school teaching and independent study. I think school teaching is better. Compared with independent study, the teacher has already summarized some knowledge points in the process of teaching, while the knowledge points may be more fragmented in independent study. My independent study is through reading books and the use of the Internet, such as the use of some software to practice my intonation and memorization of vocabulary, or to read some of the news of other countries on the Internet.

6. In the process of learning English, I will pay more attention to the opinions of teachers or experienced senior schoolmates.

7. I think I can learn English well, because English is a language, just like Chinese, and it's just a process of practice making perfect.

Huang 13

1. I think it is very necessary to learn English because globalization is a trend in the development of the world, so China needs to communicate with foreign countries in all aspects.

2. I think that the first factor affecting the learning of English is interest. If there is no interest, it will be very painful to learn English. The second factor is long-term perseverance. If I can stick to it, I can learn English well.

3. Learning English can help us to understand some English and American dramas without subtitles, and it can also allow us to read some foreign literary masterpieces in their original form.

4. My motivation for learning English is mainly because of my interest, and I like English quite a lot. The second motive is because I want to study abroad, so I have to learn English well.

5. I generally learn English on my own. For example, I listen to English radio every day, and I listen to original English recordings once a week, and I write them down word by word and then revise them. I think the best way to learn English is to have access to the most original and authentic texts of native speakers.

6. In the process of learning English, I pay more attention to the opinions of teachers, and sometimes take the advice of bloggers on the Internet who are good at learning English.

7. I feel that whether you can learn English well also depends on whether you have persistence and perseverance. If you can't be a self-disciplined person, I don't think you can learn English well. But if you have a plan and perseverance, I believe you can still learn English well.

Li 14

1. It is necessary. English is the common language of the world, so it is a big trend to learn English. Learning English can make us better communicate with people in other countries.

2. I think the teaching and language environment affect English acquisition. Currently, there are not many opportunities for us to actively speak English.

3. People who can speak English well can get a better job in the future. In addition, speaking English allows you to communicate with foreigners without any barriers.

4. In nine-year compulsory education, English is the best subject I learned, so I like learning English.

5. There are many ways to learn English, such as listening to teachers' lectures, watching

videos, taking online classes, watching British and American dramas and so on. I think watching dramas is the best way to learn English.

6. I will value the opinions of my teachers as well as my peers.
7. If I study hard, I believe I'm capable of learning English well.

Ke 15

1. It is necessary. If you learn English well, you will have one more skill; if you learn English well, you will have more chances to find a job and further study in the future.
2. Language environment and learning habit.
3. In the process of learning English, we can learn about the lifestyles and customs of the residents of other countries, so that we can broaden our horizons and lay a good foundation for us to go abroad in the future.
4. I have been influenced by my middle school teachers. Besides, learning English is also for exams and travelling abroad in the future.
5. Studying textbooks in class; listening to English songs; watching English movies. It is better to watch English movies because there is more authentic English in the movies, and it does good for forming a sense of language.
6. I will pay attention to the opinions of my teachers, classmates and some bloggers.
7. I am capable of learning English well. With enough motivation and the right way of learning, I believe I can learn English well.

Lin 16

1. It is necessary because English is one of the international languages. In addition, English is needed owing to the development of the profession.
2. I believe that the teacher's teaching, English education resources, self-discipline and interest in English are all factors that affect the acquisition of English.
3. Through English, I can learn about different cultures of many western countries and broaden my horizons. Besides, it allows me to communicate freely with native English speakers. In addition, reading English literature allows me to gain more knowledge, and I can also listen to English songs and watch English movies.
4. My motivations for learning English include the following: I am very interested in English; I want to listen to English songs and watch English movies; I need to take professional exams; and I want to be able to communicate with foreigners.
5. I learn English in the following ways: listening to English songs, Ted speeches, celebrities' speeches, and debates; practicing oral English by communicating with my friends or myself; reading some beautiful articles to improve my intonation; doing translation exercises every day. I think listening to famous people's speeches is a better way to learn English.
6. I would accept the advice of my English teachers and people around me who are good at English.
7. I think I can learn English well because I believe that language learning is a process in which quantitative change leads to qualitative change, and with a lot of practice as well as good training methods, it will definitely lead to a qualitative leap in language ability.

Chen 17

1. It is necessary. First of all, English is one of the communication tools we use to connect with the international community. Secondly, my major is English. Finally, a certain level of English is needed to go abroad or go to graduate school or look for a job.
2. The influencing factor is mainly the lack of English communication environment. Except for English classes during which we communicate with each other in English, we seldom speak English in daily life.

3. Learning English allows us to think differently and to be more inclusive.
4. At present, the motivation for learning English is for future work, not interest.
5. I learn English by reading texts, memorizing words in context and doing exercises. I think the method of building vocabulary in the context of the text is very useful because we not only memorize the meaning of the words but also understand how to use them and improve our sense of language.
6. I would give more weight to the opinions of my English teachers.
7. I can learn English well as long as I study hard.

Huang 18

1. It is necessary because English is the official language of the world, and it is the media that bridges China with the rest of the world.
2. Family environment, the closeness of communication between China and foreign countries, and the language environment all affect the acquisition of English.
3. Learning English allows you to read a lot of English literature, get first-hand information, and learn a lot about foreign cultures.
4. My motivation is my interest in English learning.
5. I learn English by memorizing words, watching dramas, listening to songs and so on. I think the most effective way is to communicate with native speakers, because the most authentic pronunciation and vocabulary usage can be learned from native speakers.
6. I tend to accept the advice of teachers as well as native speakers.
7. I don't think I can learn English well because there isn't good language environment for me.

Guan 19

1. It is necessary to learn English because it is the most widely used language in the world and is very helpful for one's development and future employment.
2. The learning environment, the level of teachers, self-discipline, interest and habits can all affect the learning of English.
3. Learning English can help us to understand other cultures and become more open and tolerant; secondly, it can help us to improve ourselves and professional development. It is very important for us to learn English well if we want to go abroad.
4. I want to improve my professional skills and become better.
5. I will use various methods to learn English, such as watching movies, listening to songs, memorizing English words, watching TED Talk and communicating in English. I think the most effective way is to combine my interests with English learning. For example, I prefer speeches, so I learn English by watching TED Talk.
6. I value the opinions of my teachers and friends.
7. Because where there's a will, there's a way, and if we work hard enough, we can learn English well.

Jin 20

1. I think it is necessary to learn English, because English is an international language. First of all, it is also a compulsory subject in the learning process of primary and secondary schools. Second, because of personal preference, learning English well will help individuals enjoy English films or get first-hand English materials.
2. I think my interest and motivation will affect my English learning. My motivation for learning English is to pass CET4 /CET6 and postgraduate entrance exam.
3. The benefits of learning English, I think, are that I can broaden my horizons, speak English fluently, and be more confident. Besides, learning English is beneficial for my

future career development.

4. At present, the motivation for learning English is passing various examinations in the university, including postgraduate entrance examination, CET4 and CET6.
5. I learned English through online classes and reading English journals. I think it is better to read English journals, because there is lots of information in different fields in journals.
6. In the process of learning English, I will pay more attention to teachers' opinions.
7. I think I can learn English well as long as I am interested in it and set goals.

Qiu 21

1. I think it is necessary to learn English, because English is still the most common language in the world, and because the Internet is becoming more and more developed, and transportation is becoming more and more convenient, and various transnational behaviors are increasingly common. Thus, there is an urgent need for grasping English to achieve globalization. So I think it is necessary to learn English as a college student.
2. I think learning attitude, interest and talent are all factors that can affect my English learning. I am very interested in English, so I always learn English very well. No matter how hard I work on math, I can't learn it well. However, it is easy for me to learn English well. So I believe I have a little talent in English. In addition, I found that my attitude toward learning English and learning mathematics was also very different, so I thought attitude could also affect my English learning.
3. I think that learning English can make more friends and get to know customs and cultures of other countries. If we learn English well, we can read English documents and get more knowledge.
4. My motivation for learning English is simply because I like it very much. I think it is quite interesting to be able to understand the language which is different from our own.
5. I usually combine online learning with offline learning to learn English. As to online learning, I will download some APPs to practice my listening, speaking and writing skills and increase vocabulary, such as Baici Chop, Duolingo, Daily English Listening, and English Interesting Dubbing. In terms of offline learning, I will buy some English books, such as Bookworms and novels.
6. In the process of learning, I will pay more attention to the opinions of teachers and classmates, because teachers always know more than I do. As for classmates, although I and my classmates may have similar levels, there are some differences between us. So I can certainly learn more from my classmates and teachers.
7. It is hard to say. I don't think I have developed a good self-study ability now, so I dare not to say I can learn English well. However, I believe that I can learn English well after I cultivate my self-study ability in the future.

Chen 22

1. It is necessary to learn English. After all, English is an international language. In addition, there is some professional software in English, so you need to know English to use these software.
2. I think both the environment and the ability to discipline oneself affect English learning.
3. To learn English is to master one more language, to improve yourself and to communicate with foreigners.
4. In order to read English masterpieces and search for study materials.
5. I learn English with my teacher in the English class and watch movies and listen to music after class. I think it's better to learn English with a teacher because learning a language

still requires systematic learning.

6. I will value the opinions of my teacher and my fellow students who are good learners.

7. I think it is possible to learn English well because of the availability of excellent teaching resources and fast development of the internet these days. More time for independent study in university is also a factor.

Zhang 23

1. I think it is necessary. On the one hand, I usually watch American dramas and listen to English songs, which is good for enhancing my listening skills and broadening my horizons. On the other hand, many academic papers are written in English, so learning English is very necessary. In addition, some websites for design majors to find materials, as well as websites for modeling are also in English. Although it is now possible to do translation by using translating software, I don't think it is convenient. I think it will be more efficient if I can read and understand English by myself.

2. One factor is the environment. As art students, especially those studying design, everyone feels as if learning English is not necessary. It is said that the environment has a great influence on people, and in such an environment where the atmosphere for learning English is not so good, you will always feel that there is no way to learn English well. Secondly, it is the problem of self-discipline. People have the nature of laziness. Enriching vocabulary is very important for English learning, but I myself dislike memorizing words. I didn't try my best to memorize English words for CET4 in last term, so I didn't recognize the keywords of the topic of the writing causing a poor grade.

3. First of all, I think acquiring one more language means one more possibility in the future. The second one is that I want to go outside and see the world, and when traveling abroad, English can help us communicate with people better.

4. At first I wanted to pass CET4 and CET6, but later I realized that learning English could help me develop a good study habit. I was always busy during the first semester of my freshman year, but I felt that I didn't get anything out of it. So in the second semester of my freshman year I signed up for CET4. At that time, while I was busy with the affairs of the college institutions and classes, I prepared for the CET4 a few weeks before the exam, and I could feel that my concentration was improved, and I also developed a good habit of reading books.

5. I'm trying to develop a sense of language by watching American dramas and listening to songs. Recently, when I watched short videos, I came across an English debate which was very attractive. I like listening to such debate, because it is good for improving listening skills and cultivating the ability to think and express ourselves.

6. I will take advice of my friends who are better learners and language bloggers on the internet.

7. I think I am able to learn English well, because I am a relatively persistent person.

Ma24

1. It is necessary to learn English, which is a common language of the world. In addition, learning English itself is a very interesting process. Besides, learning English is beneficial for future work and life.

2. The time spent in learning English is rather sporadic.

3. Language learning is good for improving memory and helpful in other subjects. Furthermore, learning English is a must for students who will go to graduate school.

4. You can acquire a skill that will benefit you in your future studies and work, and you can participate in English competitions if you have the opportunity.

5. I can learn English from the teacher and by using some APPs. Personally, I think APPs are more convenient, because I can learn anytime and anywhere through my smartphone.

6. I would value opinions of teachers, experienced family members and senior schoolmates.

7. I think I can learn English well. First of all, I am interested in English, and interest is the best teacher. Secondly, I think girls are better at language learning.

Wang25

1. It is necessary because English is a unique skill. Whether it is for future work or graduate school, learning English is necessary. Because I want to go to graduate school, it is necessary for me to learn English.

2. Some bad habits and my own lack of self-discipline affect my English learning.

3. Learning English can enrich knowledge, cultivate skills, and make it easier to watch English movies and magazines.

4. For future graduate school.

5. I learn English by memorizing words and reading English articles and magazines. No matter which way you use to learn English, I think interest is the most important.

6. I will pay more attention to the opinions of teachers and students who are good at English.

7. I dare not say I can learn English well, but I will try my best because I want to go to graduate school.

Comment [WU17]: The interview transcript must be removed from the paper

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