

Psycho-Pedagogy (Master01)

Lecture 06: Reward and Motivation

4. Reward and Motivation

The effect of ER on IM has been the subject of research for many decades. The results have exhibited many significant findings and activated a continuous controversy. Two research teams seem to tackle the questions concerning the relationship between reward and IM. On one hand, these are, Eisenberger and Cameron (1996) whose final conclusion displayed that, in certain cases, rewards do not undermine IM. On the other hand, Deci *et. al.*, (1999a) as cognitive researchers epitomize the undermining effect of rewards on IM.

Cameron (2001) found that rewards reliant upon solving problems, doing well, surpassing a score, finishing the activity, and meeting or exceeding the performance level of others revealed the positive effects of tangible rewards on IM when they are related to performance and success. Cameron's (2001) meta-analysis of 96 studies carried out in 1996 and another of 145 studies carried out in 1999 demonstrated that rewards have little or no negative effect IM. He (*ibid.*, 34) reports that "an implication of our findings is that rewards can be used to increase motivation and performance on low-interest academic activities." Good and Brophy (2000:39) state that "rewards and bribes should be minimized in classroom." They regard rewards as helpful to both teachers and learners if they are exploited in a proper way.

For Gagne and Deci (2005: 332), not all the rewards are detrimental to motivation. They displayed that "when rewards are given independent of specific task engagement ...or when the rewards were not anticipated ..., tangible extrinsic rewards did not undermine intrinsic motivation." Robbins (1998: 70) states that positive incentives or rewards will motivate

students to display the modeled behaviour. Positive reinforcement leads individuals to pay more attention to the reinforced behaviours, to learn them better, and to perform them in an improved way.

Verbal reward, or praise is regarded as an EM, and the students will take action to receive it. Boggino, Main, and Katz (1988) report that if verbal praise is not afforded in a controlling way, it can increase students' IM. Deci (1972) tests the impact of verbal reinforcements on males and females. The ultimate results evince that verbal reinforcement enhances males' IM, but it does not change females' motivation. These results suggest that reward is considered by males as being more informational than controlling.

Metsala (1996: 662) states that:

There are places for both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in every classroom. At times when skill building and behavior control are necessary, extrinsic incentives are useful. When higher order literacy and Self-directed learning are desired, the importance of students' intrinsic motivation should increase.

Metsala directs attention to the fact that some students will be extrinsically motivated, others, on the other hand, will rely completely on IM and do not show any need for ER. However, it is worth noting that students' dependence upon rewards can be a result of the inappropriate exploitation of these rewards.

In line with the previous investigations, reward can enhance learners' motivation to learn if it is seen as informational. Therefore, it remains teacher's duty to decide on rewards that will nurture their learners' motivation rather than devaluing all the types. On this basis, learners' perceptions of rewards have to be prioritized when determining what types, when, and how to use them to obtain effective results.

Conclusion

Higher academic achievement and motivation to learn are tightly connected as a result of both EM and IM. However, the desire to learn will be more vigorous when IM is the dominant one. The fact that motivation is modifiable affords teachers more hope to try to induce a change. Teachers can establish a positive and safe classroom climate to motivate learners by providing equal individual attention and encouragement.