



The Resultative Hypothesis – Myth or Reality? On Motivation and Success in the Foreign Language Classroom.

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This study examines the relationship between success and motivation in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Its purpose is to determine whether motivation is triggered by previous success in second language learning and, therefore, proves the Resultative Hypothesis (Hermann 1980) true. This piece of research was carried out with a group of ten undergraduate students learning English as a Second Language (ESL) at the University of Vigo, Spain. The students' motivation towards the subject and the learning process, the teacher's role and the influence of assessment have been analyzed. The results indicate that indeed all the students had been successful in learning English already before entering university and that this second language (L2) achievement triggered motivation in them to learn the foreign language further. Moreover, the findings show that the vast majority of the undergraduates were praised by their former English teachers for performing well, which made the learners' motivation boost. The results also demonstrate that the students will be more motivated to learn a foreign language if they have previously experienced success in the foreign language classroom and that ESL teachers had better be generous in praising the learners for performing well in class as it counts as achievement for the students – achievement that is invaluable for their motivation.

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