

## **Directed Motivational Currents: A Case Study of EFL Students in a Costa Rican Language Centre**

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### **Abstract**

Motivation has been a vastly researched topic; nonetheless, Directed Motivational Currents (DMCs) have been scarcely researched. A DMC is an intense motivation held through a long period of time. The present study aims to analyse if the participants have or not a DMC through a multiple case study. Zoltán Dörnyei, an expert on motivation in second language acquisition, introduced the term DMC. The article further analyses the necessary components an L2 learner needs to have and if each participant meets them. An interview was conducted to learn if the students match the components of a DMC. In addition, the participants self-assess their motivational journey through their time of study at a Language Centre in San Pedro, Costa Rica. The results indicated that the three participants had a DMC; nonetheless, all of them possess different characteristics that make them meet each component. Further research in specific areas of DMCs is discussed in this paper.

### **Key Words:**

DMC, motivation, English teaching, EFL, TESOL, goals

### **1. Introduction**

Second language motivation is a topic that has been vastly researched; nonetheless, due to the difficulty of even defining it, there is still a lot of room for improvement. One of the most recent researched topic in motivation has been DMC's ((Muir and Dörnyei, 2013; Henry, Dörnyei & Davydenko, 2015; Dörnyei, Ibrahim and Muir, 2015; Muir, 2016). A strong intense motivation is definitely relevant for second language learning and as a teacher it has many implications. I started wondering how much my teaching could improve knowing a student's DMC, if any? The aims of this study are: i) to identify if the participants have a DMC, ii) analyse individually the components of a DMC in each participant, and iii) show how their motivational journey has been. During this paper a review of literature -DMC concept, components of a DMC, L2 Vision, some theoretical concepts-, methods for research, the results and analysis, implications, recommendations and conclusions will be detailed.

## 2. A Literature Review and Theoretical Framework of DMCs

In the literature review, the definition of a DMC, the components of a DMC, L2 Vision, and theoretical links that were foundations for the creation of DMCs will be developed. This section will help further understand the theoretical background of a DMC and research developed on the topic of DMCs.

### 2.1. DMC Concept

A DMC is a Directed Motivational Current, -that is a motivational creation of energy towards a specific goal which becomes self-propelling by fueling motivation (Muir and Dörnyei, 2013; Henry, Dörnyei & Davydenko, 2015; Dörnyei, Ibrahim and Muir, 2015; Muir, 2016). Muir (2016) states that the periods of motivation aforementioned can be found in different scenarios towards different aims but still recognisable due to the person's intense motivation.

“DMCs are capable of capturing the power of a final vision and transferring it through a unique structure into sustained momentum in one so doing prolonging the initial vision led surge and enabling individuals to function at levels over and above what they might normally be capable of” (Muir, 2016, p. 27)

As stated by Muir (2016) DMCs are not just a strong motivation a person acquires but a vision to the future of what they can accomplish by committing and maintaining towards a goal. In terms of the longevity of a DMC, it happens only in long timeframes. The motivational momentum can last days, weeks, months and when the current is not derailed -years-.

Muir and Dörnyei (2013) talk about the definition of a DMC being accompanied by a clear future vision of the goal. And as discussed further in another section, that characteristic -future vision- leads to identify scientifically several common characteristics in every DMC.

Dörnyei et al. (2015) define a DMC as follows

“A DMC is a unique phenomenon; individuals experiencing a DMC are often aware that they are functioning at a heightened state of productivity and are able to perform with increased intensity, over and above what they may have believed possible... Once a motivational current is initiated, it can transport an individual forward towards a goal at a startling velocity” (p. 97).

That means that a person can identify if they are producing more than they expected for a particular reason like a DMC.

As part of the concept of a DMC, it must be noted that an individual goes through an extensive process of tasks which turn out to be satisfactory merely just because they make the person visualize the high valued goal -DMC- (Dörnyei et al., 2015). As an example, a DMC may be a student's desire to participate and win a spelling bee competition. Therefore, preventing from doing other activities (e.g. video games, movies, etc.) and spending time preparing for the event instead. Another example in a non-educational field is of a person who wants to be fit and decides to exchange socialising at pubs for exercising and getting proper rest.

### 2.2. DMC Components

Motivational Currents are different than other intense motivational experiences like Csikszentmihalyi's theory of flow and Deci and Ryan's intrinsic motivation. They are different since DMCs are part of a motivational superstructure which includes two particular features towards a goal or a vision: directedness and enduringness (Henry et al., 2015, p.330). Therefore, three relevant characteristics can be identified in the essentials of DMCs: goal/vision orientedness, a salient facilitative structure, and positive emotionality. (Henry et al., 2015, p.330).

### 2.2.1. *Goal/Vision Orientedness*

The most relevant feature of a DMC is its directedness which cannot occur without a clear goal, objective or target. It means that its motivational energy is directed into one direction. (Muir and Dörnyei, 2013; Henry et. al., 2015; Dörnyei et. al., 2015; Muir, 2016). As an example, a vision can be becoming a dentist whether the strong goal is graduating from university to become a dentist. In the case of learning a foreign language, a vision can be lecturing at a conference in the person's specialty and the goal to become a proficient speaker in foreign language. In addition, vision includes an additional imaginable variable to a goal. Therefore, L2 vision will be discussed further in another section.

### 2.2.2. *Salient, Facilitative Structure*

In order for a DMC to be successful, it must not only be a vision or goal but a well-directed road to achieve. In addition, it needs to have a clear starting point which has to be thought and envisioned. A DMC just does not simply start being out of nowhere. Furthermore, subgoals and progress play an important role in fueling vision. Reaching the aforementioned achieves maintaining motivation. The existence of behavioural routines aids the current by creating a sort of 'motivational autopilot'. This 'motivational autopilot' makes individuals change their daily routines to new goal-oriented daily routines. (Muir and Dörnyei, 2013; Henry et. al., 2015; Dörnyei et. al., 2015; Muir, 2016)

"...the salient structure of a DMC is more than merely a framework for progress; it is tailored for a specific individual in pursuit of a specific vision and, if successful, it becomes instrumental in generating and maintaining a great deal of the energy involved in fuelling action" (Dörnyei et. al., 2014, p. 100).

-That is, a DMC's subgoals, progress and routines counterpart a vision in order to be successful. A DMC is not an isolated construct that would ignite itself by just being created out of thin air.

### 2.2.3. *Positive Emotionality*

Positive emotionality refers to the enjoyment of the activities being developed towards achieving our vision. Those activities are not necessarily restricted to activities individuals have always found enjoyable. Some activities might have been considered unpleasant in the past, but due to the motivational current they might be enjoyable now (Henry et. al., 2015). As when a runner prepares for a marathon, running exhausting long distances is boring and painful but since the runner's vision of finishing the marathon makes those idiosyncrasies pleasurable.

## 2.3. L2 Vision

L2 vision has risen many motivational theories. The topic of L2 vision comes relevant to this paper since vision is an important element of the components of a DMC. Dörnyei and Chan (2013) mention the motivation construct of three elements:

1. Ideal L2 Self, it is a very powerful motivational element. The ideal L2 Self is the one the person wants to become and why they want to become – traveling or business-.
2. Ought-to L2 Self, the characteristics the learner feels ought to have to develop their goal. Wishes and desires are not noticeable in this self.
3. L2 Learning Experience, it deals with the success and/or how satisfactory the learning process is.

According to Dörnyei and Chan (2013) "the role images and senses play in shaping the motivation to learn an L2 through promoting a more vivid mental representation of one's self in

future states” (p. 440) -that is, images and self L2 vision of the L2 is a high motivational source that can clearly create and feed a DMC. It is also relevant to mention that a vision is “a vivid mental image, especially a fanciful one of the future” (You, Dörnyei, and Csizér, 2016, p.99).

## **2.4. Theoretical Links**

Two theoretical underpinnings are concisely presented next because of their links to some DMC features.

### **2.4.1. Goal-Setting Theory**

Seijts, Latham, Tasa and Latham (2004) indicate that one inspiring goal channels towards a better performance than a plain goal. Thus, a DMC must be one where the student feels fond of the final vision result to be obtained. Latham and Locke (1999) indicate that human behaviour is conditioned by a conscious goal. That is, a learner’s goals modify its values towards achieving that goal. As an example, a highly motivated individual with an inspiring goal will probably reject social activities and procrastinating in order to achieve the goal. “(A) goal-directed action is defined by three attributes: (1) self-generation ... (2) value-significance... (3) goal-causation” (Latham and Locke, 1999, p. 212). That means that a goal has to meet those three characteristics to be directed. In addition, those three features help understand better the DMC features of goal orientedness, salient facilitative nature and positive emotionality.

### **2.4.2. Flow Theory**

According to Csikszentmihalyi’s (1998, cited in Dörnyei et al., 2014) flow must include directed focus, complete involvement, high interest, well-defined feedback and orientation of the goal. Those characteristics sound similar to what a DMC is; however, flow deals with short-term absorption and individual activities while DMCs deal with longer periods of time and compound goals. Egbert (2003) describes a flow experience as someone who is in a hot streak. As an example, a basketball player who makes several shots in a row as to be in the zone. Flow theory is relevant since it shares characteristics with a DMC -taking into account the difference of length-.

## **3. Method**

### **3.1. Case Study**

According to Zainal (2007) a case study allows a closer examination of information in a very specific context; therefore, a limited number of participants can be selected for the study. Researchers can choose a single-case or multiple-case design. For this study a multiple-case design was used so that a difference can be shown in terms of DMC variety or lack of as well. As indicated by Zainal (2007) qualitative and quantitative data can be used as a part of the case study. Yin (cited in Zainal, 2007) explains the existence of three classifications of case studies: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. The type of case study selected for this research was exploratory.

### **3.2. Participants**

Not every L2 learner with a high motivated goal will have experienced a DMC (Henry et al., 2015). Therefore, as done previously by Henry et al. (2015) in their study; to increase the possibilities of identifying students with a DMC, the three chosen participants were students of the researcher in the past. They were chosen since they have a common goal or subgoal: non-native speakers of English looking to acquire a foreign language. The participants were six students of a public university’s Language Centre in Costa Rica. All the participants were studying English at an intermediate level and had a B1+ Level in the CEFR. The participants were part of a hybrid course

which used an online platform for students to use four hours per week at home and four hours of oral production in a face-to-face class. All the participants are native speakers of Spanish and are learning English as a Foreign Language. In Costa Rica, learning a foreign language is a synonym of work and life opportunities. English is interpreted as a tool for social mobility; as a consequence, it is highly profitable learning a foreign language.

#### **4. Instrument**

The two instruments were an interview schedule and a questionnaire focusing on the topic of students' motivation and whether or not those motivations could be considered a DMC. Both instruments were based on Christine Muir's DMC Disposition Questionnaire (Muir, 2016). The likert-scale used five points from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). In addition, according to students' answers in the interview, another likert-scale was created for students to identify their motivational journey at the language centre from not very intense to very intense to show how motivated they felt at a specific moment of their learning process. The instruments were applied in English and a paraphrase of the instructions were given if required but no comprehension issues happened. For the interview schedule, participants were first told phrases which could be identified as what people say when they experience intense motivation. This helped understand if participants comprehended the type of intense motivation a DMC has. Then, they were asked if they had experienced that type of strong motivation. If the answer was yes, participants were asked to recall that experience and the length. In addition, participants answered if they remembered how the experience began and if they would like to experience it again. Moreover, participants had to share if they noticed that type of intense motivation in others. In the second part of the interview schedule, participants were asked strictly about intense motivation while learning English as a Foreign Language. Participants were asked if they had experienced it, the location and time of the experience, their subgoals, their self L2 vision, gratifying moments, plans for the future usage of the language and their enjoyment.

##### **4.1. Data Collection and Analysis**

The interview was conducted with six participants by the researcher during the last week of the month of May 2018. The participants were previously informed of the study and given the participant information sheet and the participant consent form. The participants were given four days to analyse and read carefully both documents aforementioned before deciding upon participating or not. The interview took around six to seven minutes per participant and another ten minutes to fill in the questionnaire. The interviews were listened to for three times before completing the motivational journey likert-scale for students to self-plot their motivational highs and lows; and then the interviews were re-listened for three more times after the data was at hand. In addition, the interviews were listened while being paused around four more times in order to analyse, take notes, and compare the information. Trying to understand the participant and convey meaning forced a change in the formulation of some questions to some participants so that they would understand when they had small difficulties with meaning or a specific situation.

#### **5. Results and Discussion**

The participants -identified by a pseudonym- are contextualized first. In addition, their ability to recognize intense periods of motivation in themselves and others is included. Furthermore, the acquired information is divided according to the necessary components needed for a DMC to be considered one: goal/vision orientedness, salient facilitative structure and positive emotionality. The

participants self-assessed motivational journey is incorporated in this section as well as synthesized analysis of the presence or not of a DMC in the participants.

### 5.1. The Participants

**Holmes (age 43).** Holmes is a male intermediate student who is able to recognize intense periods of motivation in himself. Holmes indicated that in his case -intense periods of motivation tend to last about two months-. Heartened by his job as a researcher, he indicates that from time to time a project makes him intensely motivated for a period of eight weeks. The participant indicated an example of his intense motivation was his thirst for knowledge on Buddhism and shares that he would like to feel this type of intense motivation again. Holmes specified to have noticed this type of intense motivation in others. For instance, a friend who was intensely motivated on studying about agriculture.

**Hudson (age 33).** Hudson is a female intermediate student who is a researcher in a Costa Rican public university. The participant stated she has identified intense strong periods of motivation not only in herself but in others. Hudson affirmed that she has felt intense motivation towards research since she started her Masters' dissertation and then her research PhD. In this case, Hudson noted that she has perceived this intense motivation towards research since the year 2006. Furthermore, her drive is being a researcher. She acknowledged she could identify the same motivation in her co-workers since being a researcher is difficult as a career.

**Watson (22).** Watson -a female intermediate student- shared her intense motivation was studying abroad and that she makes a lot of efforts towards reaching that goal. Her intense motivation started two years ago when a French teacher lectured in her university about studying in another country. She communicated that she had not identified terms of intense motivation in others. She works as a statistician in a private company in Costa Rica.

### 5.2. Goal/Vision Orientedness

**Holmes.** As mentioned during the theoretical framework, having a clear goal is the most relevant feature of a DMC. Holmes acknowledged that a goal he has is to study abroad by taking a postgraduate in Europe which language is English. Therefore, the participant has a clear goal towards the future which he can achieve through learning English as a Foreign Language. Moreover, Holmes indicated he agreed with the statement "I remember thinking about my goal all the time" and that he strongly agreed with often imagining himself achieving his final goal. During the interview, Holmes also indicated that when he visualized himself using English as a Foreign Language he pictured himself communicating via e-mail or Skype, and talking to co-workers and colleagues from other countries.

**Hudson.** In this participant's case, her clear goals are to write scientific articles, participate in congresses, talk to other international researchers and an internship she will attend to in six months. Therefore, I would summarize her clear goal as being a bilingual researcher. Hudson expressed that at home she visualizes herself using the English language. Moreover, she answered she strongly agreed with the statements that she thinks about her goal all the time and that she often imagines herself achieving her final goal.

**Watson.** Watson's clear goal is to study abroad since most classes are in English despite of the country. The participant indicated that she disagreed with the affirmation that she thinks about her goal all the time but that she agreed with often imagining herself achieving her final goal. Watson stated that when she visualized herself using English as a Foreign Language she would be studying, giving conferences, writing papers, interacting with others especially in a work-related field.



### 5.3. Salient, Facilitative Structure

**Holmes.** The participant witnessed his progress during that intense motivation period. The participant strongly agreed that this experience was helping him achieve what he wanted, and he felt that something special was happening during that intense period. During the motivational period, Holmes agreed that he was able to work more productively than usually and that he was surprised with how much he had been able to do. Therefore, the participant felt progress during that period and felt gratifying the situation since was able to understand scientific articles and novels. In addition, the participant indicated he indeed had subgoals as increasing vocabulary, collocations and fluency; all of them Holmes -at the moment of the interview- felt had not completely achieved yet and were still in progress. In terms of routines, the participant attended to class two days per week and at home was responsible for working around four hours in an English software.

**Hudson.** The participant strongly agreed to the following during her intense period of motivation: work more productively than usually, this experience helping achieve what she wanted. Additionally, she agreed to be surprised of how much she has been able to do. -That is, a progress that was felt during the intense motivational period which she stated has lasted since she started English at the language centre. Hudson indicated that during the intense period of motivation she achieved milestones that made her happy: meeting new people using the English language, and not feeling shy anymore while speaking English. In addition, she felt gratifying that she improved her speaking skills and she felt that she was learning and improving in every area of the language. As Holmes, Hudson participated of four hours of classes and around four hours of independent work at home using an English software.

**Watson.** In Watson's case, as mentioned before her main goal is studying abroad. Therefore, she mentions learning English as one of her subgoals. Moreover, she stated that she agreed that she was able to work more productively than usually, she was surprised of how much she was able to do, and that the experience and motivation was helping her achieve what she wanted. As part of the progress, she detailed: "I like it when I watch movies and I can understand without the subtitles... if I meet a foreign person and I can talk fluently and they understand me and I understand them" (personal interview, 2018). As far of routines, Watson attends to two-hour classes two days a week and around four hours of independent study at home via an English software.

### 5.4. Positive Emotionality

**Holmes.** Through hard work, reward is often found. The participant agreed to have very good memories of this intense motivation period. In addition, he disagreed that many times it felt difficult to keep going -which reinforces the relevance of this type of intense motivation-. Adversity is faced through positive emotionality where in Holmes case it is not difficult to keep on with the task at hand while building good memories. Nevertheless, that positive emotionality does not mean the task itself is easy. Holmes stated: "I find the experience gratifying but many times it's hard and tiring".

**Hudson.** Hudson's case is remarkable in terms of her analysis of how difficult the process is but how good it makes her feel. She strongly agreed to have very good memories of this intense period of motivation despite feeling difficulty to keep going many times. Moreover, she mentioned that it did not feel like boring at the time. In addition, she expressed the following: "to have a long-term motivation you need a life goal that really makes you feel passionate about. That's the only way to maintain motivation". That means that Hudson comprehends what a DMC is without using the terminology.

**Watson.** Watson agreed to have very good memories of this intense period of motivation; nevertheless, she disagreed that it did not feel like hard work at a time. -That is, Watson had good experiences while the intense motivation lasted and was able to survive through what she felt like

hard work. Watson answered that she neither agreed nor disagreed with feeling that the work was boring at the time, but she agreed that it was an enjoyable experience. Watson indicated that she felt gratified when she spoke fluently and understood without help.

### 5.5. Motivational Journey at the Language Centre

Participants results to a likert-scale of motivational intensity at the language centre they were learning are further explained next.

As it can be seen in Figure 1, Holmes' self-assessed emotional journey shows that he has experienced very intense motivation. Holmes' motivation has been increasing since the moment he started with his project. It can be concluded that the gratification in his process has been very high. During the interview, Holmes mentioned that getting good grades was a source of motivation and he indicated he liked learning the English language.

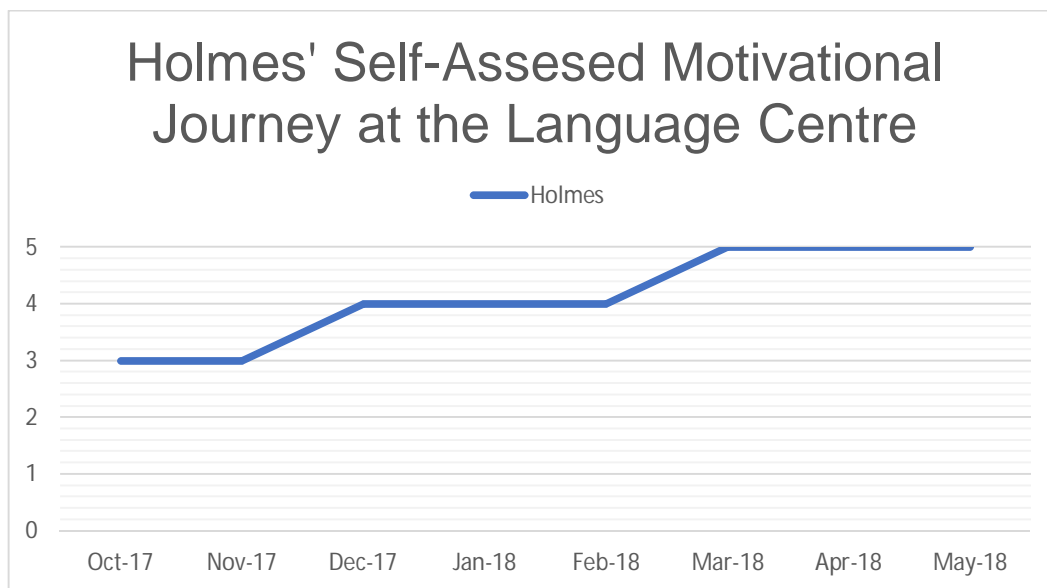


Figure 1. Holmes' Motivational Journey.

In Figure 2, Hudson's self-assessed motivational journey started at a high peak in January 2018 where very intense motivation which keeps on through until March 2018. Then, in the month of April, she felt a decrease in motivation just to feel more motivated again in May. Her high motivation can be reflected in part to her strong agreement with work to achieve her goal not boring.



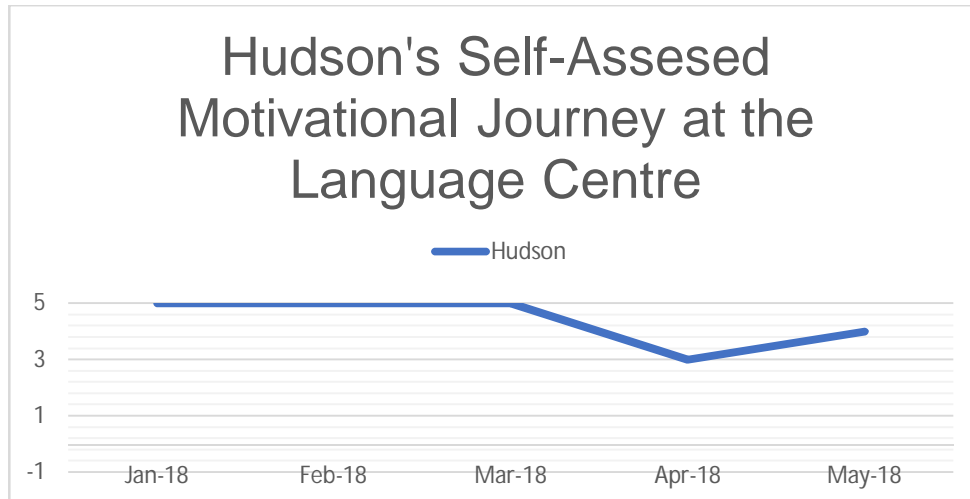


Figure 2. Hudson's Motivational Journey.

In Figure 3, Watson has been experiencing intense motivation for the prior couple of months at the language centre. Nevertheless, her first month was half way in her motivational journey while it increased for the month of May. Even though she has not experienced very intense motivation, she mentioned she liked learning English and she agreed with having good memories of this intense period of motivation.

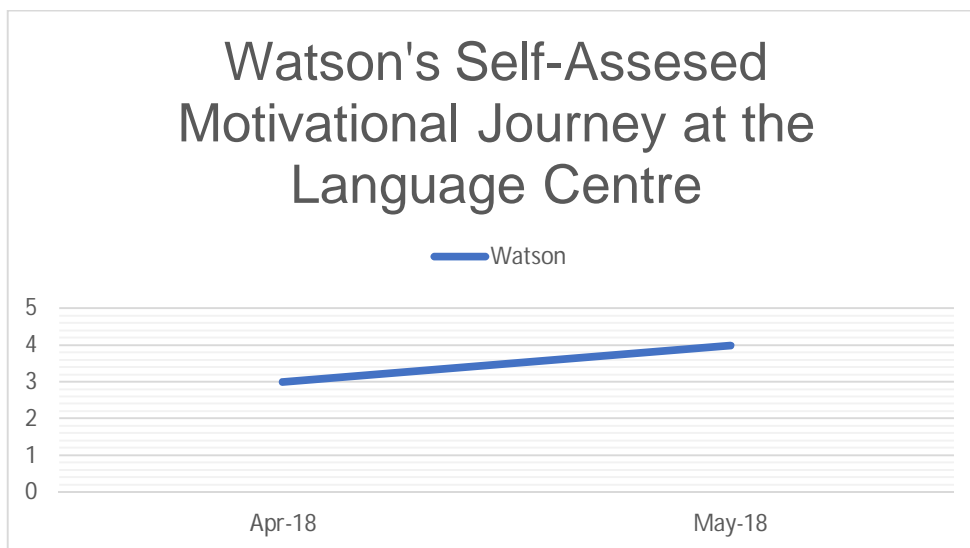


Figure 3. Watson's Motivational Journey

### 5.6. DMC Analysis

The information formerly given during the results section shows that the participants of the study had a DMC which could be identified. Moreover, proof of them having goal/vision orientedness, salient facilitative structure and positive emotionality has been provided and is synthesized next. This section is of significance since it gathers the information more specifically of participants having a DMC or not.

**Holmes.** In this participant's case, he possesses goal vision towards a main goal. The participant wants to take a postgraduate in Europe which makes English a requisite for accomplishing the goal. Also, Holmes showed progress by understanding scientific articles related to his field of knowledge. He indicated to have subgoals and a routine towards learning the language. Additionally, Holmes

has good memories of the intense motivational period and has felt rewarded in different ways throughout the process.

**Hudson.** Hudson has a main goal which is carrying out an internship using the English language. Nonetheless, a lot of other goals fuel her drive; as an example, writing articles, attending congresses and communicating with international researchers. In her case, learning English is needed to achieve all those main goals. In addition, she showed progress in terms of her speaking abilities and her social skills in English. Some of her subgoals were to improve all areas of English; -speaking and writing- she mentioned. Likewise, she followed a routine and considered learning an enjoyable experience.

**Watson.** Watson's case was probably the most curious one in terms of her answers depending on the statement and that she did not feel she had an intense motivation towards learning English when she actually needed it to achieve her main goal of studying abroad. However, with the gathered data we can conclude that indeed Watson had a DMC and all features for a DMC to happen were present. First, her main goal is the one aforementioned. Some of her subgoals are to speak in conferences, talking to colleagues, and writing scientific articles. She also felt the progress she has made in her English writing skills. She agreed that the project became an important part of her life despite the difficulties and that she has found emotionally positive speaking fluently and understanding without help.

## 6. Implications for my current/future learning

The implications for my current learning have been considered as well as many questions that have arisen from this research project. The two most relevant implications for my current learning and teaching are the following:

*Knowledge of Students' DMCs.* Knowing a student's DMC would help me as a teacher to try to sustain the student's intense motivation for a longer period through small actions that could have a big impact. As an example, taking a few minutes before the class to talk to Holmes about international tests could fuel the fire of his DMC. In addition, if I know the students DMCs, I would consequently know their subgoals which I could aid by providing the necessary tools. If a student's subgoal is to improve their pronunciation, giving a little bit of more emphasis during the class, providing the student with extra material or suggesting an application for pronunciation could go a long way in helping sustain their motivation extrinsically. Nonetheless, in the recommendations section I will further comment on what would happen and how important it would be to know if a student does not have a DMC.

*Possibilities of DMCs.* It turned out interesting the variety of DMCs students have and how intrinsic motivation can result so varied. In addition, I did not take into consideration before the start of the project the possibility of students having multiple DMCs where learning English could be a common path towards that goal. Also, it is important to take into consideration what actions can be taken by a language centre to ignite students' DMCs. As an example, open-to-the-public activities like an intercultural night, a movie night, a job fair, a scholarship fair, informative stands. On the other hand, activities could also help current students to develop a DMC or fuel the one they already have. An exchange program, a full immersion scholarship per year, a scholarship to prepare for international testing, among others could be a possibility to either sustain or ignite a DMC.

*Relevance of L2 Vision.* As I was conducting the interviews, I realized how motivated and excited the participants were when sharing their answers to the questions of how and what they visualize when they imagined themselves using advanced English. Despite L2 vision being more researched than DMCs, there is still a lot of room to cover. Nonetheless, its importance is out of the question (Boo, Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015; Dörnyei, 2008; Dörnyei and Chan, 2013; Ushioda and Dörnyei,

2017; Waninge, Dörnyei and de Bot, 2014). Thus, through the use of technology, L2 vision could be explored further as a motivational source.

## 7. Recommendations

*More general research on DMCs.* Despite research being vast in terms of motivation, the topic of DMCs has not been researched in depth. The definition, implications, impact, and theory has been researched and presented by the pioneers of DMCs. (Muir and Dörnyei, 2013; Henry et. al., 2015; Dörnyei et. al., 2015; Muir, 2016). Moreover, research on DMCs could be developed in countries with different socio-economical needs where it would be interesting to compare if there are any differences, and how intense motivation changes according to each population. Moreover, a longitudinal study of DMCs where a student starts at an A2 level in the CEFR and concludes until they are advanced students to analyse their motivational high and lows and the longevity and/or adaptability of one.

*Self-unidentified intense motivation.* During this project I encountered the case of Watson which was incredibly curious since she met all the features of having a DMC yet she did not think she had an intense motivation towards learning English. It would result useful to research the relevance of acknowledging or ignoring having an intense motivation which met all DMC features. Is it relevant for the English learner or goal-getter to understand the process they are going through? Does the result of goals achieved change regardless of knowledge or lack of thereof in terms of intense motivation? What could be some effective strategies for learners to understand their motivational process?

*Ignition of a DMC.* Research on how to have high probabilities of a DMC ignition could help the L2 learning community vastly. It could also even help how language centres approach their registration process to a recruiting/registering process. In a previous section, possible ideas on how to ignite a DMC to possible future students were provided but yet to be proven. The ignition is the first step towards a DMC (Muir and Dörnyei, 2013; Muir, 2016); hence, its relevance.

*What if there is no DMC?* Another question for future research came to mind on what happens with English learners that do not have a DMC, or do not meet the features of a DMC. How long does their journey learning a language last? Do they have options for succeeding despite not having a DMC throughout any part of the process? How much does a DMC influence in success while learning English as a Foreign Language?

*Group DMCs.* As previously researched by Muir (2016), a group DMC can be highly successful. Therefore, further research on group projects as motivational currents is relevant for the English instruction community.

## 8. Conclusions

The three participants had a clear DMC and that intense motivation made them thrive towards learning English as a Foreign Language. In addition, all the characteristics needed for having a DMC were met by all of them. The three most important aspects of a DMC were goal setting, L2 vision -highly related to emotionality- and a path towards achieving a goal. Furthermore, because of the constitution of a DMC, it is concluded that a DMC is a key factor in the participant's attitude towards a goal and its subgoals. L2 vision became an extremely relevant factor for a DMC since during the interview, the participants showed their happiness and excitement towards explaining how they visualized themselves using an L2. It should be considered or researched if L2 vision should be a component by itself and not just an accessory to DMC components.

The participants self-assessed their motivational journey of the time spent at the language centre showing several differences in terms of intensity and of course time they had spent at the

language centre. An important conclusion is the small effect a language centre might have as extrinsic motivation towards a DMC since all participants mapped out different journeys in some perpendicular periods. It also portrays how relevant individual differences are in a DMC.

In addition, a proper learning environment is needed to develop a DMC related to learning English as a foreign language since as collected in the interviews and questionnaire, tasks are sometimes difficult to achieve. On the contrary, if the environment is constantly discouraging the participants, it might affect their fuel towards achieving not only their goal but subgoals. I believe that is when the role of the teacher and language centre becomes so important as they accompany the learner in the process; nevertheless, -as mentioned before- not necessarily a key element.

Setting subgoals in the class could be highly beneficial to aid strengthen the learner's path towards the main goal. In a more general way, setting group subgoals, a goal or a group project in the class, could be as valuable as doing it individually.

To conclude, developing this assignment was important as not only to experience DMC theory at first hand, but to comprehend the mindset of the participants and their drive. DMCs require more research in order to give them more importance than the one they already have in the present.

Since DMC's are a relatively new topic, there are not any extra sources for further reading than the ones included here.

## 9. Acknowledgements

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