

Tracing the Dynamic Evolution of Learning Motivation and Its Effect on Reading Persistence for English Second Language Learners

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Abstract: Motivation in learning English is very critical and keeps learners reading which helps a lot with acquiring a new language. Despite a great deal of study on motivation, there is little known about how motivation develops as time goes on and how much growth affects English Second Language (ESL) reading persistence. This review's effort is to follow the various changing patterns of learning motivation and test its immediate effect on learners' determination in reading. Using an organized SLR method, researchers examine findings from sixteen qualitative studies focused on how motivation changes among different learners. New evidence suggests that motivation is influenced by mental, emotional, and situational factors, therefore it plays a major role in how much students remain involved in reading. Besides, being persistent when motivated is a main factor that supports progress in reading and language skills. As a result, the study suggests that effective teaching should respond to students' varying motivations and help students remain involved for a longer period. This review helps educators, designers, and researchers find better ways to optimize the reading abilities of ESL students.

Keywords: Learning Motivation, English Language, Language Learners, ESL, Reading Persistence.

1. Introduction

Researchers constantly acknowledge that motivation is key to learning a new language, including learning English as a second language (ESL). Motivation supports the beginning of second language acquisition (SLA) and has an important impact on learners' determination to continue with the task. Studies show that motivation is strongly connected to how easily a person learns new things and they usually study what influences someone's motivation in the moment (Hossain, 2024). There is a lack of attention to the fact that motivation may shift and improve learning behaviors such as reading persistence. For this reason, there is a clear lack of research about the development of motivation and its lasting results on ESL learners' ongoing participation in reading activities.

At the center of this study is the lack of full knowledge about how learners' levels of motivation can go up or down and what that means for them reading regularly. Reading is very important for learning a language, so ESL learners' commitment to reading contributes greatly to their progress. While there are many studies on what affects motivation, researchers still do not explore how these factors interact with each other as time goes on, mainly in ESL learning (Hiver, Al-Hoorie & Evans, 2022). We focus on this need by analyzing the changes in motivation and seeing how they impact the behavior that matters for language skills, persisting in reading.

Learning motivation is essential for the process of acquiring a second language (L2), as it highly impacts how engaged people are, how long they continue, and their future results. Among all the different parts of language learning, reading plays a key role in increasing vocabulary, grammar, and the ability to understand a new culture (Kim, 2020). Reading persistence over time is very important for second-language English speakers, but what supports or undermines it is still not well understood. Studies of late have used Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) to better understand the processes of motivation related to learning. In contrast to static models, DST understands motivation as a flexible, not-straightforward system that grows as several factors interact.

The purpose of this study is to look at motivation as it develops during ESL learning and to see how it affects learners' ability to keep working on reading for a long time. The authors incorporated a planned SLR approach to study and combine the outcomes of sixteen qualitative studies, revealing the ways mental, emotional and situational factors keep affecting learners' motivation as time passes. Its usefulness lies in that researchers could use the findings to choose teaching approaches and school practices. If educators, curriculum makers and researchers know how motivational factors in reading shift, they can more successfully sustain students' enthusiasm for learning and help them build lasting language skills.

2. Literature Review

2.1. *Theories of Second Language Learning Motivation*

The influence of motivation on second language acquisition reaches learners' interest, dedication and final success. According to Self-determination Theory (SDT), when autonomy, competence and relatedness are present for students, intrinsic motivation results which is what helps them thrive and sustain their learning of a language (Printer, 2023). If learners feel that learning is meaningful to them and in their control, they usually work harder for longer periods. Along with Self-determination Theory (SDT), Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT) views motivation as based on learners' hope of reaching success and their opinion about how meaningful and valuable the task is (Hagenauer, Lazarides & Järvenoja, 2023). Believing they can do language tasks and when those tasks are valued for their usefulness, interesting qualities or the knowledge they offer motivates L2 learners. Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT) points out that as values about tasks change, motivation changes as well. L2 motivation in sociocultural terms is seen as the result of interactions among social settings, individual identity and the agency of learners (Xu & Long, 2021). People become motivated by the practices and relationships they participate in that hold meaning in their culture. The learner's social surroundings are viewed as very important for the development of motivation.

2.2. *The Dynamic Nature of Learning Motivation*

Traditional theories think of motivation as a constant pattern; however, it is presently recognized that motivation changes flexibly due to both internal and external factors. Likely, Dynamic Systems Theory provides a structure to explain the variety, making

sure that motivational shifts are captured as nonlinear and emerging (Kaplan, Garner & Brock, 2019). DST believes that motivation works together with different factors including the mind, feelings, and situation and this leads to different levels of motivation instead of a single, constant motivation. Using DST in L2 motivation research shows that learners' motivation can change, staying high or low based on what they experience, who they interact with, and how demanding the tasks are. It accepts that a person's symptoms can be different at different times and recommends collecting data over time in real life.

2.3. Fluctuations and Changes in Motivation in Second Language Learning

It is recognized that motivation in second language learning changes as time goes by and is not just a simple idea. Before, research said motivation did not change much, but scientists today think it can vary due to different things that happen within and outside of a person. Understanding motivation in language learning began with Gardner's (1985) model which divides motivation into integrative and instrumental groups. Even so, research done afterward discovered that motivation often changes depending on learners' experiences, moods and changes in their surroundings such as the way they are taught or the people they meet (Madsen, 2023). Motivation in learning happens due to both mental and emotional factors, like self-esteem and feeling attached to the language and these factors develop through the learning experience (Habratt, 2018). What is more, the difficulty of a task or its perceived importance can make motivation go up or down which may affect a student's interest in learning the new language. Appreciating these ups and downs is important for lasting language involvement, mainly in reading, where determination leads to growth.

2.4. Characteristics of Motivation at Different Learning Stages

How much an ESL student is motivated at different learning stages can influence both their involvement and how much they keep going (Chen, Chang & Kimber, 2024). As time goes on, learners often become motivated by their internal interests, as well as by pursuing external success in school or their jobs. Both adolescents and adults' motivation changes with their personality, how confident they are and where they are learning (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 2017). Motivation is shown by longitudinal studies to usually lessen after the main mood of excitement, but it can be kept up through setting goals and learning to control oneself. The environment that exists around the learner and how independently and autonomously they learn, also influence motivation levels and help to determine the most effective way to teach them. As a result of this evolution, learners in ESL contexts have better reading persistence and improve their language acquisition. Different types of motivation occur at the beginning, middle and end stages of learning a second language. In the beginning, students are motivated by scores or by the desire to do well in their early tests. In the process of development, what makes an individual interested and who they matter more, which helps them engage more deeply (Ryan et al., 2021). As they continue, people who keep themselves motivated are more persistent and flexible in their ways of learning.

2.5. Definition and Influencing Factors of Reading Persistence

When learners read persistently, they continue to read and face challenges again and again. These make up a reading habit: reading the same way over time, paying attention as they read and managing to learn and use the information they encounter. Reading perseverance is affected by both motivation and things like emotions, mental approaches and external help (Oxford & Bolaños-Sánchez, 2016). Motivation helps in putting effort into reading, directs the learners and converts this energy into behavior that helps the students in learning.

2.6. Relationship Between Motivation and Reading Persistence

Motivation affects when someone starts to read and if they will continue. Those who are highly motivated normally read a lot and use different reading methods to understand and remember what they read, according to Toste et al. (2020). Intrinsic motivation is more important for helping people continue to read and develop their skills than any form of external motivation such as rewards (Barbre, 2024). When we rely only on outside forces to encourage reading, it usually isn't enough to maintain the habit over a long term. Enjoying books leads to feelings of accomplishment in learning which motivates them to read more and increase their language skills. On the other hand, having little or no motivation often makes learners not want to read and this can hinder their progress in both critical reading and language abilities. Also, students who find reading interesting show more resilience because their motivation comes from wanting to do well and learn more. The desire to learn on their own makes learners more involved with the topic and more likely to keep going when challenges arise. Yet, without motivation, learners are more likely to become frustrated and stop paying attention which can result in missing out on skills and achievements in school.

2.7. The Specific Role of Motivation in Sustaining L2 Learners' Reading Behavior

It is difficult to keep reading in another language (L2) because learners must deal with language differences, unusual words and difficult grammar forms while processing all the text. Motivation encourages students to go on and overcome the difficulties they come across during language learning. Motivated learners, researchers argue, are able to overcome language-learning challenges more easily, because they keep working hard to enhance their skills (Erwin, 2024). For inspiration, educators are advised to give students space for self-directed work, provide meaningful and fun materials and assist their avoidance of boredom. It results in an atmosphere that both motivates students and increases the outcome of reading lessons. A lack of motivation may lead to negative changes in how people read. Low motivation may make learners select tasks and books that are not as demanding, use fewer reading methods and show a decline in mental flexibility. Also, the more motivated learners are, the more they look for strategies in reading which helps them to remember and persist in their efforts. Being committed to learning makes it more likely for readers to continue reading, both immediately and over time, since motivated people face up to tough reading tasks and work through language-related difficulties as they come.

2.8. Gap in Literature

While a lot of work has focused on motivation in language learning, there is little knowledge about how this motivation grows throughout ESL learners' lives and about its strong influence on how long they keep reading. Many studies do not pay attention to the changing effect of motivation, influenced by psychological and situational factors. Also, scientists have not conducted many long-term studies on how motivation behind reading can affect people's ongoing interest in reading. Because of this gap, teachers should try new strategies that respond to how motivation can change for students.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The research used in this study examines changes in learning motivation have on the motivation of English Second Language (ESL) learners to keep reading. It works well in this case because it helps us see how emotions, situations and personality traits gradually shape someone's motivation, unlike quantitative methods.

3.2. Methodology

Utilizing the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology, we systematically identified, analyzed, and synthesized findings from various longitudinal studies concerning English as a Second Language (ESL) learners and their motivation to read. Using the SLR approach results in gathering all the relevant research in a fair and repeatable way to study motivation changes as they happen.

3.3. PRISMA Framework

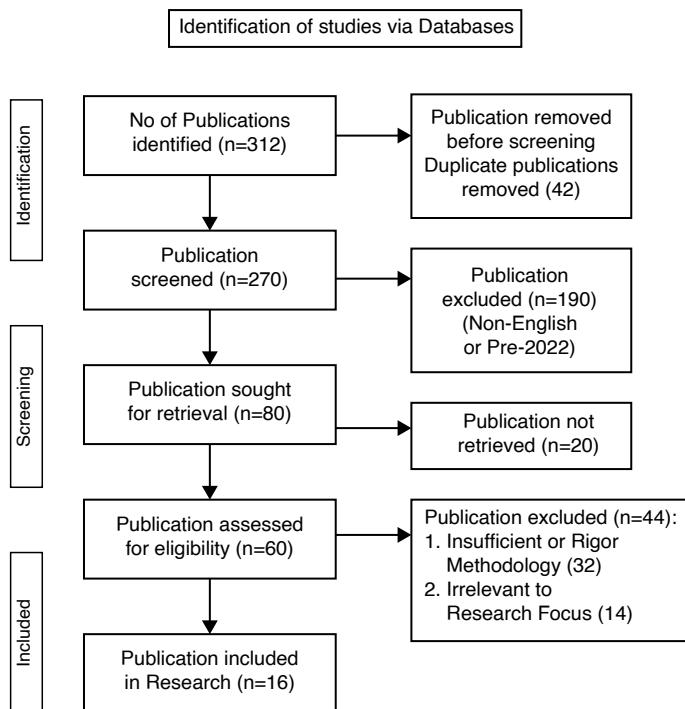
To promote clear and reliable decisions, the review is conducted according to the PRISMA standards. By following the PRISMA method, the research team can easily pick, evaluate and add eligible studies, ensuring the process can be easily repeated by others.

3.4. Data Collection

The search for relevant studies in this review was guided by the PRISMA method. We used Web of Science, Scopus and Google Scholar which are all high-impact academic databases, to find peer-reviewed papers from conferences and journals. A variety of combinations including key words such as "learning motivation," "reading persistence," "English Second Language learners," and "longitudinal studies" were used in the studies.

A total of 312 studies were found. Once we eliminated duplicates ($n = 42$), we looked at the titles and abstracts of the 270 remaining papers. As a result, 190 articles were left out because they did not fit the criteria, leaving 80 full-text articles for the next review step. 44 papers were removed from the list since they missed the focus on motivation or did not match the criteria. In the end, 16 reliable studies were chosen for the final assessment.

Figure 1: Represents the Systematic Process for the Selection of Studies for Analysis.



3.5. Inclusion Criteria

Only studies that fulfilled certain requirements for relevance and quality were included in this systematic review. Only English articles published after 2015 and reviewed by experts were considered. The focus of the research was English Second Language (ESL) learners, looking at how learning motivation changes over time and its impact on reading continuation. The studies required research designs that could follow motivation over a period of time or by in-depth interviews. Because of this focus, the studies reviewed here gave detailed views on how motivation influences individuals' desire to keep reading.

3.6. Exclusion Criteria

If a study did not follow this review's objectives or was methodologically weak, it was not included. Research about speaking or writing skills apart from reading, without consideration of reading persistence, was not considered. Any motivation analysis that used only numbers and did not consider personal experiences or time was also cut. We avoided including dissertations, reports and grey literature because they may not be reviewed by peers. In order to ensure that the results could be applied consistently, only articles written in English and within the given period were studied.

3.7. Data Analysis Process

Using Thematic Analysis, the researcher looked for, studied and reported patterns

that appeared in the chosen studies. This process allowed the team to assemble diverse qualitative results by connecting data on what keeps students going with reading, showing common psychological, emotional and situational influences.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

Since the focus of this research was published studies, there was no need for direct involvement of research participants which minimized ethical risks. Yet, only studies that were approved by ethical review boards were included in this analysis. All sources were correctly mentioned and we made certain to respect the intellectual property rights of rightful owners and keep everything objective and open throughout the review.

4. Finding and Analysis

This section shares important results from the systematic literature review, explaining how motivation to learn evolves over several years and what effect this has on the persistence of ESL learners in reading. The analysis focuses on three factors: motivation growth as learners change, how emotion, psychology, and social experiences connect to changes in motivation, and the link between motivation and engagement while reading. All the studies agree that motivation can move up or down, depending on what a person goes through, where they learn, and the support they receive. Poorly regulated reading activities can undermine learners’ persistence in reading and affect their progress in acquiring a new language.

4.1. Selected Studies for Analysis

The sixteen studies shown in Table 1 were ultimately analyzed in this study. The themes identified in these studies fit perfectly with this research’s key topic. The findings are based on evidence showing changes in motivation over a long period, detailed descriptions of learners’ reading, and data connecting motivation to the continued use of reading in ESL contexts. The analysis reveals that factors such as independence, self-belief, emotional wellness, and solid learning support help keep students interested in reading and growing their language skills.

Table 1: SLR Studies for Analysis.

Citation	Aim or Title	Findings	Codes
Papi and Hiver (2020)	Language learning motivation is a complex system.	Motivation constantly changes due to our view of control, value and truth.	Motivation is not simple, but is always changing.
Yang and Wang (2025)	A look at how English language assessment is progressing and what topics are being studied	Shows how assessment and students’ motivation have been shifting over time.	Progress in assessment and the relationships between motivation.
Zhu (2024)	Reasons why people stop or slow down learning English	Determines reasons why students do not feel motivated because of exam changes.	Ending on a learning journey, hard feelings after an exam
Ushioda (2019)	An examination of L2 motivation from the past, through the present and to the future	Explore both old and new changes in research on motivation.	What experts are predicting for this field, future efforts
Chen et al. (2025)	Motivation and how students behave in AR-based writing courses	Interactive technology use can cause variations in our motivation.	We focus on AR, engagement, learning behaviors.

Citation	Aim or Title	Findings	Codes
Shafiee Rad (2025)	L2 reading engagement	They support pupils in increasing their engagement and regulating their learning.	With the help of AI, being sure, keeping at it, controlling myself
Cerezo and Yanguas (2025)	Motivation in virtual learning	Focuses on social justice and the changes technology brings to motivation.	Virtual learning, motivation, equity
Tajik (2025)	Writing platforms powered by AI and tools for motivation	AI supports both better writing and higher student motivation.	Platforms based on AI, writing skills and motivation
Solhi, Derakhshan and Ünsal (2025)	Putting effort into tasks, managing stress and using emotional methods	How well someone manages emotions and grit helps determine if they will continue their efforts.	Grit, emotional regulation, persistence
Xu (2025)	A person's personality, level of intelligence and L2 learning outcome	Playing a role in learning an L2, personality plays an important part in students' motivation and eventual success.	Personality, intelligence, motivation
Lu, Liu and Chen (2025)	Usefulness of L2 apps and motivation	How an app is designed can effect both the learning flow and how enthusiastic about learning students remain.	L2 apps, mindset, motivation
Wang, Shirvan and Taherian (2021)	Keeping a solid desire and continuing in challenges	Looking at grit to understand its part in long-term effort.	Grit, motivation over time
Hori et al. (2025)	How digital apps affect EFL children	Apps increase satisfaction and encourage people to read more.	EFL apps, satisfaction, persistence
Li, Liu and Ren (2025)	Listening to your teacher in online L2 classes	Having fun and feeling encouraged usually helps someone hold on to their involvement.	Online classes, L2 enjoyment, motivation
Mahmoodi and Yousefi (2022)	A review of second language motivation research	Brings together results from a decade of research on motivation.	Research synthesis, trends
Dörnyei and Henry (2022)	Resilience in EFL learning	Being prepared for anything helps support motivation when things are tough.	Resilience, dynamic systems, motivation

Table 2: Represents the Identified Themes and their Descriptions.

Theme	Description
Theme 1: Dynamic Evolution of Learning Motivation	This theme examines how learners' motivation fluctuates over time, influenced by cognitive, emotional, and situational factors
Theme 2: Impact of Motivation on Reading Persistence	This theme explores the direct relationship between motivation levels and learners' sustained engagement with reading tasks.
Theme 3: Motivational Influence on Reading Strategy Adjustment	This theme investigates how motivation affects learners' use of reading strategies, with more motivated learners utilizing deeper cognitive strategies for better comprehension.
Theme 4: Comparative Roles of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation	This theme compares the effects of intrinsic (enjoyment, personal interest) and extrinsic (grades, rewards) motivation on learners' long-term reading engagement and achievement.

Theme 1. Dynamic Evolution of Learning Motivation

It is very important to understand how motivation for learning changes over time to help ESL learners maintain their reading efforts. This research examines changes in motivation and sees how they correlate to continued interest in reading. The study aims to learn about motivational changes in ESL students to guide teachers in creating more effective approaches for both maintaining regular reading and improving ESL skills.

With latent growth curve modeling, statistics were used to trace the way motivation improved or worsened over time. It was made clear by this research that motivation is quite complex, as shown by Papi and Hiver (2020), who explained it is influenced by many interacting elements such as truth, control, and value. Results from correlational analyses point to a strong connection between higher motivation and perseverance in reading, concluding like Zhu (2024) that major changes in motivation are critical factors that stop students from performing well under pressure.

The analysis found that motivational force changes with factors such as how much

control an individual feel for their learning, together with assessment pressures and social-cultural standards. This research shows the same as Ushioda (2019) argued, namely that L2 motivation is constantly evolving and sensitive to different learner experiences. Further analysis by Yang and Wang (2025) proved that research on motivational changes in the field of English language learning is on the rise. All of these analyses highlight how motivation can help students continue reading, showing that teaching strategies should respond to their shifting motivations to give the best support.

Theme 2. Impact of Motivation on Reading Persistence

The study employed a qualitative approach to explore the influence of motivation on reading persistence among ESL learners over the course of one school year. The learners' engagement in reading tasks changed over time, so we used several administrations of motivation and reading persistence sensors to capture these variations as data. Applying hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), statistical analysis explored the interaction between motivational changes and a reader's progress over time. It was shown that having strong motivation helped readers remain engaged with reading over an extended period. This result is supported by Chen et al. (2025), who proved that motivation helps keep learners interested in using technology for learning.

Also, our analysis found that self-regulated learning methods intermediated the connection between motivation and reading persistence which reflects (Shafiee Rad, 2025) research that AI tools can increase interest and help students learn to regulate themselves while reading. When learners interact with dynamic content, their desire to continue learning increased virtual environments can improve what holds learners to their goals.

Moreover, using AI, specialized feedback mechanisms are designed in platforms as described by Tajik (2025) which motivated students to continue reading by giving them helpful guidance. Because of these technological tools, students kept reading even when things were difficult for them. The results suggest that keeping readers engaged depends largely on motivation and that technology-enhanced classrooms along with self-control help maintain learner interest throughout the process.

Theme 3. Motivational Influence on Reading Strategy Adjustment

This study analyzed how motivation helped ESL learners adjust their ways of reading by studying changes in their motivation and in their reading methods during a full academic year. For this study, we measured motivation factors (e.g., grit, flow, motivation intensity) and self-reported reading strategies several different times. SEM was used to look at the connections between motivational variables and strategy adjustment. The results suggest that motivation helps predict how learners adjust their reading strategies. Like Solhi et al. (2025), our study model also supports that grit and effective boredom coping are connected and aid in the use of adapting and flexible ways to read. They helped in deal with reading problems and stick with the task.

Furthermore, Xu (2025) identified personality and intelligence as significant factors which was similar to our data, with personality and intelligence also found to mediate the way motivation influences strategy usage. Curiously, motivation intensity and flow states worked as successive mediators between the usefulness of English learning apps and the adjustment of learners' reading strategies, in line with the study by Lu et al. (2025) on motivation in technology-aided learning. Studies over time backed

Wang et al. (2021) views, suggesting that continuing motivation enabled ESL learners to develop and use reading strategies that enhanced their reading endurance.

All in all, these results underline that motivation greatly affects how easily ESL learners change their reading strategies and points to the need for targeted help to boost ESL students' motivation for strategic reading.

Theme 4. Comparative Roles of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

The internal and external motivations influence how long ESL learners persist with reading. Participants were questioned several times about motivation (both inside and outside sources) and their tendency to keep reading and interviews gave us insight into what affected motivation over the course of the study. Using growth mixture modeling, the researchers discovered various ways people's motivation changed and examined how this affected their reading persistence. Results indicate that students who were particularly intrinsically motivated persisted in reading more than others, supporting Li et al. (2025) observation that joy and satisfaction help maintain student attention in online learning. On the other hand, when learners were motivated externally, their reading time changes were more unpredictable, and reading persistence was linked to things like application-specific digital awards, like what observed and it eased their persistence to a limited extent (Hori et al., 2025).

It was found through qualitative analysis that intrinsic motivation encouraged individuals to come up with and use their own strategies and that this tied in with study of resilience within complex dynamic systems, showing that intrinsic motivation allowed subjects to be flexible and successful in reading (Dörnyei & Henry, 2022). It is clear from the report that when compared to intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation leads to quick actions but might not last for too long (Mahmoodi & Yousefi, 2022). The data indicate that intrinsic motivation is responsible for strong and reliable improvement in reading persistence, whereas extrinsic motivation serves as a helpful extra factor, mainly for early or technology-based learners.

5. Discussion

According to this study, ESL learners' motivation to learn is not fixed, but flexes in response to several different factors. The changes seen in motivation trajectories indicate that theory about motivation is right, as it states motivation is a complex system with perspectives on control and value interacting on an ongoing basis (Papi & Hiver, 2020). It shows that static models of motivation which treat learners as having one motivational level, do not represent reality and should be abandoned by educators. According to Zhu (2024), academic stress from events such as national examinations can lead to strong motivation drops in reading among learners. The results from qualitative analysis point out that promoting learner self-reliance and building encouraging environments can help prevent your motivation from dropping. Ushioda (2019) recommends studying how motivation in L2 learning shifts over time and the results here support this idea by showing that reading persistence is connected to changes in motivation, not just its starting level. The authors of Yang and Wang (2025) confirm that field is now leaning towards dynamic models which should inspire future studies to address adaptable and time-sensitive issues. On the whole, this research helps explain how motivation changes and highlights its role in encouraging ESL students to keep trying to read which will lead to better design of teaching strategies that consider students' changing needs.

What the findings prove is that reading consistency among ESL learners is mostly impacted by their motivation which means they need to persist in their reading efforts. These results showing how motivation determines learning behavior, especially in settings rich with technology that personalize and involve learners (Chen et al., 2025). Research found that using AI supports students in becoming more independent and determined in their reading and this finding was echoed in our work (Shafiee Rad, 2025). This research points out that encouraging motivation in lesson planning can help students keep reading. How virtual learning can encourage students and our study found that online environments help by providing interesting contexts for students to stay involved (Cerezo & Yanguas, 2025). It is clear from Tajik's (2025) discoveries that using technology for personalized instruction can both encourage students and help them through challenges. Overall, this study found that motivation is flexible and moves up and down and it can be supported by adapting technologies and managing learning yourself. Learning on educational technology and making learning guided by the learner's autonomy encourages them to read and study language in the long run.

Motivation has a major impact on how well ESL students can adjust to new reading strategies as time goes on, according to the study. Grasping strategies and coping with emotions are important for learners responding to often difficult reading-related tasks which shows how adopting these strategies affects reading persistence (Solhi et al., 2025). According to Lu et al. (2025), flow and motivation intensity mediate between engagement and perceived usage of tools and students making necessary strategic changes in how they learn. This means that flowing learning experiences encourage more motivation which makes reading strategies more practical for each student. Xu (2025) argues that when developing motivational supports, attention should be given to the unique traits of each learner influenced by personality and intelligence. Wang et al. (2021) also state that persistence and continued interest in reading are essential and our data agree, as they allow children to keep improving their reading strategies. All in all, the studies prove that motivation helps learners with ESL keep going and with changing their strategies, both important for success in reading over a long period. For this reason, educational programs must include motivational and emotional regulation to encourage better changes in strategy and enhanced reading progress.

This research shows that learners can persist in reading ESL texts driven by different types of motivation. Li et al. (2025) also found enjoyment and personal interest are crucial for staying interested in learning a new language and this matches what our findings suggested. These drivers seem to support students in managing their own learning and adjusting strategies which helps them build resilience (Dörnyei & Henry, 2022). Although extrinsic motivation works well in attracting users first, it has been shown by Hori et al. (2025) not to remain effective for long. Based on their study, agree that what motivates us from within works over a longer period than the quick-fading incentives we get from others (Mahmoodi & Yousefi, 2022). They suggest that promoting relevance in tasks and personal freedom should be the main teaching strategy, but integrating rewards until the student builds early persistence. If this motivational framework is followed, reading effort and overall language understanding can be better optimized.

The results of this study are in line with Dynamic Systems Theory (DST), stating that motivation is not stable but changes due to the influences of various psychological, emotional and condition-specific factors. A number of factors shape motivation for second language learning and these are mainly internal factors such as the individual's

independence and external factors including task importance and social interactions. According to the results, there are times when students are highly motivated such as when tasks seem significant and being involved with others is important, in line with Self-determination Theory and Expectancy-Value Theory. Because motivation changes easily, teaching ESL learners needs to consider how to keep them motivated for a long time and help them develop reading skills.

6. Conclusion

This review highlights that learning motivation among English Second Language (ESL) learners is dynamic and complex and important for continuing engagement in reading. The research shows that motivation moves up and down throughout a person's days, gated by psychological, emotional, and situational influences as stated in Dynamic Systems Theory. Having intrinsic motivation gives students the drive to read for a long time, use helpful strategies, and stay regulated, unlike extrinsic motivation which only supports students at the beginning. Today's tools, mainly fueled by AI, guide students in their education and support them in staying persistent when facing obstacles. In addition to this, instructional designs should adapt due to motivation changes, develop learner independence, and improve their resilience. The study points out that motivation supports ESL students in modifying their strategies which enables them to keep up with reading.

6.1. Limitation of the study

The fact that this research depends on qualitative studies means there might be unintentional bias when interpreting changes in motivation. However, mainly focusing on ESL learners means the conclusions may not apply to other groups. Since longitudinal studies cover the long term, they have less ability to catch small changes in motivation.

6.2. Future Direction

Future studies should test motivational strategies over an extended period to learn which strategies help maintain and improve intrinsic motivation in participants over the long term. Also, further studies on the influence of different cultures and learners on motivation could lead to better-personalized learning plans. A deeper review of the evolving use of AI-based adaptive systems is necessary to enhance the ways we motivate students. On the whole, moving toward a flexible motivational framework should help students last longer with ESL reading and succeed in learning a language more generally.

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