L2 Motivation and Digital Technologies

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# Abstract

This chapter uses Self Determination Theory (Deci Ryan, Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behaviour. New York: Plenum Press, 1985) as a lens through which to review research describing motivational influences associated with digital technologies. Motivational effects are traced to pleasure generated from technology use (intrinsic motivation), and to the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs that generate and sustain high-quality motivation; the manner in which digital technologies enable learners to connect to others (relatedness); experiences of agency and independence in using the L2 in digital spaces (autonomy); and the generation of linguistic self-confidence (competence). Adopting an interdisciplinary position, it is suggested that in addition to understanding the effects of these “psychological nourishments” (Rigby Ryan, The Routledge handbook of media use and well-being (pp. 34–48). New York: Routledge, 2017), there is a need for broader conceptualizations of motivational influences. Three concepts with particular relevance to L2 motivation are identified: the development of L2 vision through learners’ engagement with digital media, influences stemming from appraisals of verisimilitude when a digital technology forms a part of learning, and the effects of personal validation seeking when L2 media is created in networked environments.

# Outcome

"[I]motivation research has not played any significant role in the exploration of interrelations between language learning and technology use, or why motivation researchers have shied away from empirical investigations when scholars in other areas of SLA have long been alert to the importance of these relationships...on the ways in which digitally mediated practices shape the representation of meanings and identities). Adopting a forward-looking stance, in this chapter we have argued that self-determination theory can provide an important foundation for understandings of learner motivation that arises through interactions with technology." (Authors, 613-614)