



The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning™

2017

Volume 7/Issue 1

Article 3

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Recommended Citations:

APA

Safdari, S., & Maftoon, P. (2017). The Rise and Fall of Directed Motivational Currents: A Case Study. *The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning*, 7(1), 43-54.

MLA

Saeed Safdari and Parviz Maftoon. "The Rise and Fall of Directed Motivational Currents: A Case Study." *The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning* 7.1 (2017): 43-54.

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The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning, 2017(1), pp. 43-54

The Rise and Fall of Directed Motivational Currents: A Case Study

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received July 10, 2016

Revisions completed December 16, 2016

Published January 16, 2017

Key Words:

Directed motivational currents

Vision

Goal

Positive emotionality

Behavioral routines

ABSTRACT

Directed Motivational Currents (DMCs) characterise a novel perspective to intense and enduring motivational periods in L2 learning. It is different from other motivated behaviour types in terms of length, intensity, and structure. Owing to the novelty and innovative nature of the construct, the specific features of DMCs and their components are not sufficiently explored, and the existing empirical evidence is not adequate. The current article is a qualitative case study that relies on the results of interviews with a participant who experienced a unique period of DMCs. The participant went through a unique process that suddenly gave rise to a surge of motivation and that her motivation ceased abruptly. The findings confirm the existence of DMCs and the validity of its proposed structure. The empirical evidence supports the significant role of goal-orientedness, salient facilitative structures, and positive emotionality. Certain implications for further research and recommendations for pedagogical practices are also suggested.

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With the advent of the new second language motivation research trend, its complex and situated nature has been further scrutinised during the last decade (Boo, Dörnyei, & Ryan, 2015; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). In line with the new surge, Dörnyei and his associates (Dörnyei, Ibrahim, & Muir, 2015; Dörnyei, Muir, & Ibrahim, 2014; Henry, Davydenko, & Dörnyei, 2015; Muir & Dörnyei, 2013) have introduced a highly novel phenomenon known as Directed Motivational Currents (DMCs) which is concerned with periods of intense and enduring motivation in pursuit of a highly valued goal or vision.

A DMC is a potentially motivational surge that is caused by the integration of personal, temporal, and contextual factors, creating momentum to pursue a personal goal/vision which is especially significant and emotionally rewarding (Dörnyei et al., 2015). A DMC is unique in that individuals who are experiencing it perform at an exceptionally high level of productivity. Having been caught up in a DMC,

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individuals are able to work with increased energy, over and above what is expected from them (Muir & Dörnyei, 2013). Once launched, a DMC overrides all other inclinations and temptations and drives the individual towards the goal/vision at a staggering speed and with astonishing energy. It is so powerful that even the nearby people are able to recognise its influence on the individual's behaviour. Upon the attainment of the goal, the surge will cease, sometimes with a decrease of energy towards the end because of an understanding that the goal is within one's reach (Dörnyei et al., 2015).

Muir and Dörnyei (2013) provide some examples of such noticeable behaviours which are evident in people with a DMC. An instance that Muir and Dörnyei mention is the case of an obese person determined to lose weight: he enrolls at the local gym, controls his diet vigorously, and demonstrates decisive shifts in his habits. Another example of the case in point in an educational context is a student who has made his mind firmly to finish an important school project before the deadline: he suspends all his hobbies and funs, concentrates uncharacteristically, and does not seem to be getting tired even when staying up late at nights.

2. Theoretical Framework

According to Dörnyei et al. (2015, p. 98), a DMC is a "prolonged process of engagement in a series of tasks which are rewarding primarily because they transport the individual towards a highly valued end." It involves intensive goal/vision-oriented activities that overshadow everyday engagements of life and carries with it the excitement of a journey towards a desirable end state. Since DMCs are guided by personal vision and are affected by contextual elements, each DMC is unique by definition. However, several common features can be identified in each case. As Henry et al. (2015) summarise, a DMC consists of three major components: *goal/vision-orientedness*, *salient facilitative structure*, and *positive emotionality*.

2.1. Goal/Vision Orientedness

Throughout the DMCs process, a clearly defined superordinate goal or vision is present. This criterion distinguishes a DMC from other inherently motivating practices such as hobbies. Hobbies do not pursue a clearly defined goal, but are practiced for the sake of enjoyment which entails them. The presence of a goal or vision is a key factor in constructing and sustaining DMCs. For second language learners caught up in DMCs, using the language with ease and fluency might constitute their vision. It forms a part of their identity and permeates all their actions and behaviours (Ushioda, 2011).

Besides, drawing on Ajzen's (1988) theory, Dörnyei et al. (2014, p. 15) stressed the importance of "participant ownership" and deemed it vital for the creation of DMCs. Dörnyei and Chan (2013) highlighted the role of vision and imagery in personalising goals by stating that learners can own the goal by "adding to it the imagined reality of the goal experience" (p. 455). In line with this idea, Sheldon and Elliot (1999) emphasised that individuals' personally interesting goals are pursued with more energy and generate feelings of satisfaction.

2.2. A salient facilitative structure

The generated flow of energy must be managed and spent wisely. A DMC has a salient, recognisable structure which helps the individual to opt for the right course of action (Dörnyei et al., 2014). An adequately tailored pathway facilitates progression and renders the process self-propelling (Henry et al., 2015). In fact, a salient structure facilitates learning by connecting the motivational energy to concrete learning activities. In order for a DMC to possess facilitative structure, it needs several elements in place: *a clear start/end point*, *sets of behavioural routines*, and *regular proximal sub-goals*.

A starting point is where the individual has come up with a clear vision of the future target state and the social context has provided the prospect of attaining the target. There must be a conscious moment when a DMC is explicitly activated. That moment can be an event, an encounter, or an interesting opportunity (Muir & Dörnyei, 2013). Besides, a DMC is consciously turned off, either abruptly or gradually when approaching close to the target (Henry et al., 2015).

After the initial launch, usual routines of the individual learner are replaced by a new set of routines focused on achieving the goal. The new routines are fixed divisions of action that give rise to “motivational autopilot.” For instance, an L2 learner may plan to learn ten new words each day or practice listening to L2 podcasts on the way back home (Dörnyei et al., 2015).

The third element of the facilitative structure is related to the step by step mode of progression. A structured pathway is created through setting frequent and varied sub-goals which offer tangible feedback of progress. These proximal sub-goals serve to keep the motivation high, and the learner looking forward to the superordinate goal (Muir & Dörnyei, 2013). The proximal goals break the long-term journey into manageable chunks, which energise and direct the movement upon their gradual completion (Dörnyei et al., 2015; Murray, 2011).

2.3. Positive emotionality

As noted above, personalised goals/visions are closely connected to learners’ identities and any attempt to achieve them can potentially give rise to personal satisfaction and pleasure. The resulting sense of satisfaction and fulfilment creates positive emotionality. The performance of the tasks and activities may not be intrinsically pleasant and enjoyable. However, the overall emotional loading of the target goal/vision permeates all activities and steps associated with the superordinate target (Henry et al., 2015; Murphy, 2011).

2.4. Relevant Underlying Theories of DMCs

Although DMCs is a novel concept which has not been highlighted in the literature, its main tenets and elements have been extensively discussed within some mainstream theories of motivation. For instance, within goal setting theories, Locke and Latham (1990) have suggested that action is based on the goals that individuals set for themselves. Goals, when set, bring about cohesion of efforts and commitment to action (Locke, 1996). DMCs add extensions to goal setting theory by accommodating proximal goals, vision, and personalised goals.

Moreover, the generation of DMCs is possible only when an individual takes complete ownership of the goal/vision and leads the process. This is quite akin to Deci and Ryan’s (1985) self-determination theory which emphasises the importance of self-regulated and autonomous learning activities. Ryan and Deci (2000) hypothesised that autonomy is closely connected to motivation in that it fosters meaningful engagement and subsequently, creates feelings of ownership and control.

Vision, too, was an indispensable part of Markus and Nurius’ (1986) and Higgins’ (1987) possible selves theory. Possible selves represent an individual’s future-oriented vision of his/her ideal self (what the person aspires to become) and ought-to self (what the person believes he/she ought to become). Drawing on these conceptualisations, Dörnyei (2005, 2009) has built his L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) which offers a framework for vision in second language education.

Csikszentmihalyi’s (1988, 1990) flow theory features similar characteristics to DMCs. It is the ultimate task engagement when an individual gets totally engaged in his/her task at hand and loses track of time. Both flow and DMCs characterise full engagement, high interest, clear feedback and goal-orientedness. Egbert (2003) described the conditions for the initiation of flow as appropriate task

challenge, interest, feelings of self-control, and opportunities for concentration. Obviously, they bear some resemblance to what a DMC launch requires.

As mentioned before, Dörnyei and his colleagues have elaborated on the DMCs construct and came up with a general framework to explain their nature (Dörnyei et al., 2014; Dörnyei et al., 2015; Henry et al., 2015; Muir & Dörnyei, 2013). However, Henry et al. (2015) has attempted to provide the theoretical construct with empirical evidence for substantiating the new concept. Therefore, more empirical studies and investigations are required to establish the features of DMCs and validate its theoretical tenets. The purpose of the current investigation is to contribute to filling the gap by analysing a specific case of DMCs. The following interview is used to examine whether the major hypothesised features of DMCs will be observed and confirmed. In order to investigate the nature of the construct and the specific characteristics of this unique motivational experience, the following research question was addressed: What are the major features of a DMC identified in the behaviour of an individual caught up in it?

3. Method

3.1. Participant and Setting

The current research was conducted as a case study with one participant. Learners caught up in a DMC are not easily found. Therefore, the opportunity to come across one such case is a unique experience which a researcher cannot simply miss. The subject of the present study was selected based on opportunistic sampling for qualitative designs (Ary, Jacobs, Sorenson, & Razavieh, 2010; Dörnyei, 2007).

The subject was a 33-year-old Iranian Persian-speaking woman called Tina (Pseudonym). She was married to an engineer, had no children, and lived in the north of Iran. Tina held an M.A. in sociology. She graduated from university about 7 years prior to the commencement of the present study. In the meantime, she has been working as a part-time journalist for a local newspaper. Apart from her mother tongue, she had mediocre familiarity with English which manifested itself best at reading but not at speaking and listening. In the autumn of 2014, Tina's husband was offered an interesting professional opportunity to work for an Italian company. Having had some interest in the Italian culture and lifestyle, Tina became fascinated by the prospect of living in Italy. She had done some minor research studies on the Italian society and sociological issues during her M.A program. Therefore, she seemed to be potentially ready for such an experience. Upon her learning about the prospective life in Italy, she was deeply thrilled and excited and decided to prepare herself for the upcoming event by learning Italian as a priority. Tina started to learn the language vigorously and with full commitment as is the case about learners with DMCs. According to her husband's report and her own retrospective account, she demonstrated the characteristics attributed to a learner experiencing a DMC.

She had been through the learning process for four consecutive months, when we found out about her enthusiastic devotion to language learning. Her husband, a friend of the first researcher, described Tina's excitement about the journey and her astonishing efforts to learn Italian. Then, we were able to meet Tina to talk to her about her especial experience. Unfortunately, one month later, they discovered that the requirements for his employment could not be met and the whole plan was cancelled. After the shocking news had arrived, Tina was utterly disappointed and stopped learning Italian all of a sudden as if she had lost all her interest. Having been a sad misfortune for Tina, the event provided an opportunity for scrutiny. Therefore, after one more month, when her emotional condition had improved to some extent, and she had returned to normal mood, we asked her to share her experience of the rise and fall of the DMC. After she heard about DMCs, she eagerly consented to share her experience and contribute to the research project.

3.2. Procedure and Data Analysis

The data collection procedure consisted of three semi-structured interview sessions, each lasting for about 40 minutes. The interview began almost immediately after the second meeting with Tina (around one month after she had stopped learning). The interview sessions were carried out in Persian and were audio taped. The three sessions were conducted during less than a week with one or two days intervening between the sessions. Finally, the interviews were transcribed carefully which yielded a corpus of about 17,000 words. Following a thematic coding analysis (Dörnyei, 2007), the transcript was studied through four times. First, the text was read to gain closer familiarity with its general organisation while marking salient words. The second reading was accompanied by writing commentary notes in the margins of the transcript, next to the highlighted excerpts, to mark their content. The third time, having the main features of DMCs in mind, those statements which illuminated goal/vision orientedness, facilitative structure, and positive emotionality were singled out. Then the emerging common themes were identified. Finally, the transcript was read all over again for selecting the key extracts to be used for illustrating the main findings in the final report.

4. Results

In this section, after illustrating Tina's situation briefly, the data is presented in accordance with the major features of DMCs. All of the excerpts are translations from the original Persian transcript.

As described earlier, Tina was hoping to immigrate to Italy and continue her life there. Soon after learning about the prospective opportunity, her motivation to learn Italian commenced. She experienced a period of intense and ongoing motivation as soon as she decided to start learning the language. Since, in her town, there were no private language institutes offering Italian courses, she searched for a private tutor and managed to find a native Italian woman who had married an Iranian. Her would-be tutor lived in a neighbouring city about an hour drive from Tina's place. Tina started to meet her tutor three times a week to receive Italian lessons. This process lasted for more than five months when the saddening news arrived and when Tina stopped up learning Italian.

4.1. Components of the DMC

The interviews revealed the powerful effect of the DMC. As it is shown in the following sections, all aspects of Tina's life were overridden by the dominant motivation to learn Italian. All her daily energy and efforts seemed to be directed towards one discrete goal. The motivation to learn permeated through all walks of her life and turned to be her single most important preoccupation. The major features of a DMC are discernible in the data obtained from her.

4.1.1. Goal/vision orientedness

A DMC must be connected to a clear well-defined goal or vision. Tina managed to develop a strong and robust vision of the future which directed all her efforts towards the superordinate goal of learning Italian. Her vision was present throughout the period and never declined. She said that her vision began to develop only after she had heard about the new situation:

"After two days [from hearing the good news] I knew that I needed to learn Italian. Day after day, becoming proficient in Italian was my only thought. I repeatedly imagined myself speaking perfect Italian. I felt that learning the language would give something more than a mere language. It would make me a successful and active person."

It was interesting that she had a very vivid imagination when thinking about her future state. As Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) remark, vision includes sensory elements. The sensory element is obvious in her words. She described her daydreams and self-made scenarios about her future encounters with native speakers who would praise her mastery of Italian. Her imaginary power and her reliance on sensory vision can be seen from her accounts:

“Repeatedly, I imagined myself in the streets of an Italian city (as I had seen them in movies and pictures) talking to people, shopping and smiling. I could even feel the warmth of the unique Italian sun as I was walking in front of the shops.”

Also, she used some techniques to materialise her imagination. It was surprising that she had used a technique called *vision board* which is suggested by Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014, p. 47) as a useful technique in visionary training:

“I stuck my own photo on the wall and then began to stick pictures of Italian historical monuments, natural landscapes, and people around my own photo. It enchanted me to see myself there.”

Rather than instrumental or pragmatic reasons to learn Italian, Tina showed a desire to integrate in the society and affiliate with Italian speakers. Her dreams were being and living there. She demonstrated a high interest in the target culture:

“Although I had never been a cooking freak, I learned to cook one or two types of Italian food. I started to watch Italian TV channels and films and listened to their songs. I wouldn’t understand what they were saying, but I didn’t get tired. I managed to memorise some lines of the songs and sang them when I was alone.”

4.1.2. A salient facilitative structure

A strong vision requires a well-established clear route, a pathway which leads the learner through towards the superordinate target and does not let the motivational surge get wasted. As stated previously, a salient facilitative structure consists of three elements: *a clear start/end point, sets of behavioural routines, and regular proximal sub-goal*. Each one of the elements are distinctly identifiable as discussed below.

Tina’s starting point was absolutely clear so that she could easily recall the details. She was overwhelmed and enthused by the new situation and demonstrated the initial flurry of emotions. Her mood changed immediately, and she built a novel vision for her own future. The shift of attention and interest took place instantly:

“When I heard about it, I was filled with emotions. That night, I didn’t watch my favourite TV series and just thought of the upcoming journey. I surfed the internet and watched photos of Italy, its people, cities, etc. I could spend hours thinking of it. On the third day, I was determined to learn their language and was positive that I wanted to learn Italian. Then, I searched the internet and downloaded some free materials and found free online Italian lessons even before looking for a private language institute or teacher. I was just determined to do it.”

According to what she said, it seems that as soon as she had her own personalised vision of future developed, Tina felt the powerful current and made up her mind to provide herself with the necessary plans and materials to move towards the target.

Similar to the starting point, the end point of her DMC was abrupt and explicit. According to Henry et al. (2015), it is possible that a DMC cease gradually while getting close to the end point. In Tina’s case, it was sharp and abrupt. The shocking news arrived, and she knew that her vision could no longer work for her. In fact, the superordinate goal faded away instantly and that was the point when she quit learning. It is astonishing how suddenly such a powerful deluge of motivation that seemed invincible abated and ceased:

“First, I couldn’t digest the matter. I saw my dream vanished. I could see myself in the picture getting blurred and then wiped out. Until then, I felt so close to Italy as if I was a few minutes drive away, but all of a

sudden Italy got as distant as any other foreign country. I could feel the distance. The next day I should have gone to my tutor's home, but I called it off. It had lost its meaning. I couldn't see any reason why I should go there. Now I can compare my motivation to a rocket or a similar thing that flies swiftly but suddenly runs out of fuel and falls down right away."

Behavioural routines bring consistency and perpetuation. They are regularly repeated and create an established pattern. The individual learner and the people around him/her can easily notice the routines. They are not executed reluctantly but are performed willingly and normally as part of the learner's daily life (Dörnyei et al., 2014).

Tina's daily life accommodated a few such consistent behaviours. Attending private classes three times a week was one of them. Her attendance included other routines as well. She described her learning efforts during the one-hour journey to her tutor's home:

"I went to the tutor's home three times a week. I had to drive about two hours, one hour going there, and another hour returning home. While behind the wheel, I listened to Italian podcasts. I used to download mp3 radio programs or other stuff and listened to them all the way on my journey. I couldn't understand a word of it, but I liked to do it, thinking that I would get the rhythm at least. Later, when I was able to perceive some words or phrases, I was even more motivated to listen to them only and nothing else."

Tina also planned for other learning practices to happen as routines. She used mobile applications to foster her learning Italian and to evaluate herself regularly:

"I had a flashcards app installed on my smart phone. Every day I evaluated myself using the app. Before the supper, I would give ten minutes to check my decks of cards and review the vocabulary items."

The last component of a facilitative structure is the subgoals. Henry et al. (2015) believed that proximal subgoals function as checkpoints on the way towards the ultimate target. Subgoals provide an opportunity for the learner to self-check, receive feedback, and keep on track. Then, the individual is able to evaluate his/her progress and estimate the remaining distance. Overcoming such small and consecutive barriers create a positive air and further motivates the learner to proceed with confidence.

Tina indicated some of her proximal subgoals which show a kind of gradual progress in line with her developing competence:

"I used my flashcards app to learn at least ten words every day, which I exceeded the limit every now and then."

After gaining the basic competence to produce simple sentences, Tina began to write short paragraphs. Gradually, with her linguistic knowledge increasing, she wrote longer and more complicated texts. She could turn this activity into a system of proximal subgoals:

"After that, I set it as a regular goal to write a passage in Italian using the words I was learning. I tried to include as many of the words as possible. I would email them to my tutor to correct and return them to me the next week. Little by little I could compose more complex sentences. Also, I felt that my early mistakes do not show up (though new ones were popping up). I felt improving."

Receiving feedback played an important role in her course of learning. She remembered the encouragements of her tutor at the sight of her improvement. Her tutor noted her fading mistakes and underscored them. Her speaking and writing abilities flourished quickly, and Tina was enchanted to see her tutor's astonishment at her achievement:

"She told me that I was made to learn Italian."

4.1.3. Positive Emotionality

Following a highly personalised intrinsic goal, learners feel positive emotion (Dörnyei et al., 2015). Henry et al (2015) refer to eudaimonic pleasure as the result of actualising an individual's potentials in pursuit of their highly valued goal/vision. As discussed earlier, Tina's most salient experience was her positive

emotions towards what she was engaged in. She felt extremely satisfying feelings during her fulltime devotion to learning Italian. She was excited over the endeavour and highlighted it throughout the interview using highly emotional words:

“Everything seemed fantastic about Italy: its culture, language, and people. I felt the whole world was focusing in Italy. I heard about it more frequently on TV and in the news. I was aware that it was my own feeling, but it was all around me”

The most significant part of her emotionality was her robust, unending energy. She never felt exhausted or tired. She found joy and delights in anything she did about her vision. Even ordinary, less rewarding activities could not lessen her excitement:

“I wouldn’t understand much of the Italian movies that I watched every day. Even, at the beginning, I wasn’t able to get a single word out of them. But I felt good watching them. I could repeat them without knowing what they meant.”

Not every action was inherently enjoyable for her. She expressed her reluctance to drive on the roads outside the town in the preceding years. However, she did not feel negatively about it during her learning period and indicated that arriving on time in her tutor’s place was much more important to her. Her enthusiasm was so high that she was eager to work even harder and allot more time to learning-oriented activities. Tina recounted the situation laughingly:

“Three days a week, I went to my classes, but I was ready to take even more and go every day. There, I wouldn’t miss a second. Once, I asked my tutor not to serve tea and just stay with me to practice.”

The positive feelings connected to Tina’s vision overshadowed everything else. She experienced equal excitement and joy doing both easy and difficult L2 tasks. Overcoming barriers and passing through the checkpoints (i.e. accomplishing proximal subgoals) multiplied the positive emotions. She described her utmost positive emotionality when she could evaluate herself successful:

“I remember a time when something important happened. I was watching an Italian movie; it was almost three months after I had started. All of a sudden, I saw that I was able to comprehend a large portion of the movie. I don’t know whether they used easy language, or maybe they were using the words I had learned. I got it. I could feel my tree blossom. That was the highest joy I ever felt during the period. That was the moment.”

5. Discussion

The aim of this research project was to find the components of DMCs as proposed by Dörnyei and his associates (Dörnyei et al., 2015; Dörnyei et al., 2014; Henry, et al., 2015; Muir & Dörnyei, 2013). The findings indicate that the presence of an exceptionally powerful surge of motivation over a long period of time can be verified. The participant of the research experienced a sustained period of intense motivation as a result of forming a strong vision. The vision was further strengthened through vivid imagery practices. Tina utilised her robust imagination and drew on her sensory resources to consolidate the vision. She activated visualised scenes and situations that not only affected her visual and auditory senses but appealed to her tactile sense (the warmth of the sun). The well-defined goal and clear vision were evident in her behaviour and could explain her endless energy. Her vision was personalised and tailored to her own preferences. Besides, she had a clear ideal self that guided her actions. According to Markus and Nurius (1986), an ideal self is an individual’s personalized vision of his/her desired future state. They believed that the wish to attain well-imagined and tangible ideal selves exert strong motivational power to propel action. As rightfully stated by Dörnyei et al. (2015), goal-orientedness and existence of a personalised vision seem to explain the directional nature of a DMC.

Tina’s vision and superordinate goal deeply affected her emotions so that she experienced a lengthened period of positive emotionality. She reported to have enjoyed all relevant tasks and activities that contributed to her learning process. During the whole period of learning, no sign of fatigue or

lethargy was observed in her, and she never felt like getting tired or bored. Even those activities which she disliked (e.g., driving outside the town to get to her tutor's place) turned out to be among her routines and caused no complaint. She used to spend a lot of time on doing apparently fruitless activities, such as listening to incomprehensible listening files or movies. Yet, she was never tired or bored. This huge amount of energy and enthusiasm cannot be generated by anything except a very positive and extremely optimistic attitude towards the final goal. This again underscores the significance of goal-orientedness and idealised visions. Personally cherished goals function like a bright light flashing at the end of a dark tunnel. Regardless of how hard it might be to proceed through the invisible area, the certainty of reaching to it makes the stumbling and crumpling much less painful and even pleasant. Henry et al. (2015) reported a slowly appearing fatigue near the end of the period when the individual feels too close to the target. In Tina's case, however, the end point was abrupt and the motivational surge was not given the chance to stand the final test.

The other major element of DMCs is a salient facilitative structure. Learners caught up in a DMC are expected to be aware of explicit start/end points of the motivational deluge. They must be on a motivational autopilot and follow a set of fixed routines. In addition, they usually set proximal subgoals to keep themselves on track. The analysis of Tina's report, more or less, illustrated all three of the elements.

Regarding the start/end point, Tina was totally aware of the situation and perceived the crucial moments. Both moments entailed strong emotional reactions. The initiation of the DMC was accompanied by intense excitement and enthusiasm. Similarly, the final point was explicitly noticed by her. It left an immediate effect on her which brought feelings of extreme disappointment and despair. Her motivation ceased to exist all of a sudden. It was instantly faded away and turned off. Interestingly, vision and goal played the most influential role. According to her own words, as soon as the vision vanished, the flow of energy and motivation stopped, and her perception of the situation changed drastically. Thus, the personalised vision was more than a mere wish or dream. It was the main pillar of the DMC. As soon as the column was removed, the whole structure collapsed. As discussed before, a vision is not merely a simple set goal or fancy dream, rather it consists of goals which are enriched by adding sensory elements and imagined realities (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014). It is personally significant and endeared so that the generated vision affects the identity of the owner and overshadows all his/her actions. Therefore, it is not surprising that Tina's sudden loss of the DMC immediately followed her vision suppression.

She demonstrated a few routines during her motivated period. However, she did not mention a lot of such daily routines. Except for a few routines, she seemed to be devoted to her vision in a general sense. In fact, she was spending a large portion of her daily time on L2 learning activities of various sorts, but did not show any salient or remarkable tendency towards pursuing a fixed set of daily learning activities. Does it mean that presence of a set of behavioural routines is less significant than the other components? Is it related to learners' individual differences? Could it be related to different enduring learning styles? Do learners' tendencies towards employing specific learning strategies explain this fact? It needs further research studies that focus on specific elements of DMCs and explore the relationship between DMCs and individual differences.

Tina set some clear proximal subgoals. It is interesting that she gradually matched her subgoals with her developing competence. She would set higher or more difficult goals as time passed. It was visible in her anticipation to write longer and more complex texts. In spite of the fact that she did not mention a lot of proximal goals, the ones she named possessed the characteristics of the typical proximal subgoals as described and exemplified by Dörnyei et al. (2014, 2015). The feedback she received through accomplishing goals was momentous and pushed her forwards on the track. Also, it added to her delight and joy of chasing the target.

The findings of this study confirm the construct of DMCs. All the components and elements of DMCs were found to be present in Tina's case. However, the weight of each components seems to be different. In this specific case, directionality and goal-orientedness seem to be the most influential factor. Nevertheless, regular routines and, to a lesser degree, proximal subgoals appear to be less crucial. The findings open up an exciting research agenda to explore the nature of elements of DMCs: How might the elements of DMCs possibly gain priority in different contexts and in different individuals.

6. Pedagogical Implications and Conclusion

Highly motivated learners who demonstrate elements of DMCs in their learning behaviour are rare indeed. Moreover, it becomes even less common in educational classroom settings where a large proportion of students attend their classes out of compulsion, force, or lack of motivation. Thus, creating true DMCs in a pedagogical sense is an absolutely difficult undertaking. Apart from individual differences that may render a student less prepared for such a unique experience, creating a DMC at collective level is another arduous goal.

Notwithstanding the complications, teachers have some options to strive for a DMC in their classes. Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) suggested some techniques for building collective vision in language classrooms. They explained that teachers can help the class to create a shared vision by setting collective goals, which affect both the group and the individual learner simultaneously. Project works are thought to be appropriate means for fostering such collective visions, where L2 learners can create shared goals. This can also provide an opportunity for less motivated students to become affected by other more willing peers in the context and try to join others. In order for to take effect, teachers need to create a positive atmosphere, constructive interaction, and supportive feedback to optimise the context. Regarding the cognitive factors, teachers must use tasks which are suitably challenging activities and tasks that are visibly related to valuable superordinate goals. Dörnyei, Henry, and Muir's (2016) book is the first cohesive attempt to offer guidelines for creating such a situation in the language classroom. They suggest group projects and DMCs-generating frameworks that are appropriate for L2 learners in pedagogical contexts.

Future lines of research will need to explore DMCs at two general levels. First, researchers must delve into the nature of DMCs to discover its structural aspects. Besides, they must look for varieties of DMCs in different individual, contexts, and communities. A significant question can be put forth about the potential influence of individual and contextual factors on the effectiveness of different components of DMCs. The second level of enquiry is concerned with the pedagogical application of DMCs. Researchers should look out the appropriate methods of nurturing such periods of intense and enduring motivation. Harnessing the exceptional power of DMCs can herald a crucial boon in L2 learning and teaching.

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