Innovations and Challenges
in Language Learning Motivation

Innovations and Challenges in Language Learning Motivation. By Zoltán Dörnyei. Innovations and Challenges in Applied Linguistics. Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2020. Pp. 178. ISBN 978-0-429-48589-3. Kindle Edition. $44.44

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In the new book entitled *Innovations and Challenges in Language Learning Motivation*, Zoltán Dörnyei tries to rethink language learning motivation by bringing together the existing research challenges and offering some innovations and FUTURE trajectories in this field of research. Aside from the introduction and conclusion, the book is comprised of six chapters. Topically speaking, the first three chapters of the volume reflect on the theoretical challenges and innovation regarding motivation. In contrast, the second part, the last three chapters, addresses specific motivation theory approaches, such as unconscious motivation, vision, and long-term motivation.

The first chapter, "Fundamental Challenges I," tries to pinpoint the definition of motivation. Dörnyei starts the discussion by acknowledging the multitude of potential descriptions or conceptualizations of the term within the academic areas. Firstly, he raises a set of thought-provoking questions of how motivation is to be perceived as a 'trait' or a 'state,' which is followed by an innovation encapsulated in the "New Big Five" model that sheds some light on the distinction between the 'trait' and the 'state' (7). By delving into the plethora of theories addressing the concept of motivation vis-à-vis the temporality aspect, the chapter further discusses the theoretical challenges and innovations regarding the possibility to "capture time" (10). Lastly, the chapter leads to a discussion of the academic challenges in the distinction between conscious and unconscious motivation and mentions a potential agreement between, or the 'blend' of, the two to grasp the role both play in "guiding human behaviour" (17).

Starting from the perception of motivation as dynamic, the second chapter of the volume continues the problematization of its 'fluidity' by discussing the temporal dimension and eventually framing it within the Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST). The first section of the chapter discusses

the "theoretical dilemmas" (21) that arise around the impact of context on understanding motivation. Dörnyei reviews an array of theoretical psychological research problems that tackle the dichotomous relationship between personal and social implications on human behavior by reflecting on the emergence of social motivation and eventually highlighting the dynamic interconnectedness between a "person's agency and his/her background, history, identity, goals and motives" (32). In like manner, the second section advances the innovations regarding temporality by illustrating differential timescales in L2 learning. Additionally, it brings forward the element of 'proximal goals,' through which the strength of motivation can be exemplified. Thus, with all the implications regarding the trait/state dichotomy, temporality, or the motivational context, the chapter concludes by stating that the study of L2 learning motivation should be framed within the complex dynamic systems theory.

The third chapter addresses the 'applied' dimension in motivation research. It discusses the challenges and innovations reflecting on the relevance of motivation vis-à-vis processes in second language acquisition (SLA), its impact on language learning, and overall motivation assessment. In the first section of the chapter, Dörnyei criticizes the existing psychology that frames and conceptualizes motivation as essentially generic or too generalized. He asserts that a more nuanced method is needed and that motivation needs to be addressed from a more specific perspective, particularly within SLA discourse. The innovations he addresses stand for "fruitful research areas" in SLA, such as the "small lens" approach and the discussion of "undertheorized" "task-based" motivation (51). In a similar vein, the second section of the chapter forwards the discussion on enhancing motivation in a meaningful manner. Dörnyei proposes doing away with a 'carrot and stick' model by analyzing several ways that contribute to more "meaningful" approaches in motivating learners (54), such as motivational strategies, student engagement, remotivation, role models, and the role of technology. The chapter concludes by listing adjustments and innovations in the existing L2 learning motivation research methodologies and promises alternative directions concerning the dynamic nature of motivation per se.

The fourth chapter of the volume, "Research Frontiers I: Unconscious motivation," outlines the practical implications of the dual processes that affect human motivation, the unconscious and conscious, to open up the space for further research on 'unconscious motivation' vis-à-vis the framework of SLA (76). Dörnyei asserts that whether one of these processes has a more significant impact on human behavior is still somewhat debatable among scholars. However, some scholars in psychology have been advancing specific methodological approaches and instruments for researching the unconscious and its impact on motivation theory, which proved essential for the SLA framework (96).

"Research Frontiers II: Vision" zooms in on the 'future aspiration' as the most crucial aspect of vision. Dörnyei identifies vision as "sensory in nature" (103) and affirms its role in the construction of possible (future) selves that represent the foundation of his research on L2 motivation self-system. Applying vision in the social sciences, he posits that its possession is an outstanding feature that is different from the concept of goal and has a significant impact on people's inspiration, motivation, and engagement (114). Since vision undeniably arouses motivation in people, Dörnyei summarizes the chapter by stating that it can be perceived as a trigger or an instrumental element in fulfilling the desired outcomes.

As the title suggests, the sixth chapter, "Research Frontiers III: Long-term motivation and persistence," overviews the reasons behind the insufficient theorization of long-term motivation and outlines a framework for its construction out of the multitude of converging elements. Drawing a parallel between a "long car journey" (161) and long-term motivation, Dörnyei lists the set of factors necessary for the completion of goals, likening them to the efficient car, high-octane fuel, economic use of fuel, effective breakdown cover, and so on. These factors correspond to specific motivational terms that indicate that the entire process of long-term motivation reflects the strong vision essential in the ignition and reignition of motivation, leading to controlled and resilient behavior.

In conclusion, there are two fundamental contributions the book makes. Firstly, not only does it highlight the challenges and difficulties within the field of L2 motivation, but it also offers a set of practical solutions and innovations necessary for tackling these challenging situations. Also, it outlines three scholarly areas, or "unticked boxes," as Dörnyei puts it (167), that have not been dealt with extensively because of the complexity of the research work needed to be invested. Even so, Dörnyei emphasizes each of the three themes because he believes they can lead to a greater understanding of L2 motivation and serve as a foundation for or inspiration in the diversity of further research in motivation studies.

As mentioned above, since this book summarizes previous research on L2 motivation, offers research innovations, and overviews the future research trajectories, it can be said it is quite beneficial for anyone interested in, planning to do research, or having difficulties researching L2 motivation. It is also of great assistance for anyone researching within the fields of Language Learning Psychology and SLA, as well as those having an interest in interdisciplinary studies because Dörnyei, himself, sometimes tends to go back to specific philosophical questions to broaden the scope of motivation theory and take the discussion into a somewhat different direction than the one already present within the field of psychology and discourse of SLA.

Works Cited

Dörnyei, Zoltán. 2020. *Innovations and Challenges in Language Learning Motivation.* Innovations and Challenges in Applied Linguistics. Abingdon; New York: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429485893