



**Dornyei, Z., Henry, A., & Muir, C. (2016).
Motivational Currents in Language
Learning: Frameworks for Focused
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One of the most prolific times in the course of foreign language pedagogical researches can be dated to the 1990's as well as to the beginning of the 21st century. One of the theoretical leaders and thinkers was at the time Zoltan Dornyei along with his colleagues and students at the University of Nottingham. The latest book by the authors Dornyei et al approaches the motivation of foreign language education from a different point of view: the foreign language classroom and the student become the primary subject of the theory. The authors of the book *Motivating Currents in Language Learning Frameworks for Focused Interventions* look upon theory and reasoning from the practice of teaching and second language acquisition. This pragmatic attitude characterises the book, which also displays outstanding didactic features.

At the beginning of the book the authors precisely establish the framework, which define the purpose, the relation and the forms of language teaching through the book. It is composed of 9 chapters, which display a linear and maintained logic, yet the chapters focus separately on the notion and various features of Directed Motivational Current (DMC). The first chapter, the Introduction highlights the authors' intention of characterising the phenomenon of DMC as a motivational construct to be observed in classroom environment, in the practice of teaching and learning as well as in various stages of language acquisition. The authors believe that DMC can and has to be differentiated from the phenomenon of flow coined by Csikszentmihalyi. This comparison is one of the most important features and one of the most intriguing statements: it facilitates the understanding of DMC for the reader by explaining what this phenomenon does not involve. One of the most essential features of this theory is that it places language pedagogical motivation in the framework of time progress and sustainability: the key component of DMC is its relation to and appearance in the course of time.

According to the authors of the book it is characteristic of the notion of flow that it seems to be an intrinsic motivation that drives it, where the sole source of achievement and

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happiness is the activity itself as well as the energy that establishes the act. However, the phenomenon of DMC does not only include engagement, but the network of tasks to be carried out as well, since it is the quintessence of DMC that the learner/participant reaches his/her goals and aims by accomplishing the set tasks and duties. The notion of DMC synthesises all the parts and pieces: the source of motivation, the set tasks, short-term/partial aims, vision, long-term goals. It also depicts the motivational flows as positive psychological dynamisms and as process of learning. It can be seen as indispensable features, which help the motivational flow become capable of supporting and initiating long-term learning aims, which can be accomplished in strongly motivating and sometimes in less motivating tasks.

The second chapter of the book is of crucial importance regarding the comprehension of the notion of DMC. It touches upon the question of how and when DMC appeared in the foreign language pedagogy research. The book by Dornyei and Kubanyiova (see a review in *Iskolakultura*) emphasised and explained the role of vision in foreign language education and motivation, thus it served as the cradle for the notion of DMC. This chapter provides various explanations for clarifying how DMC evolved from vision and goal-theory, furthermore how this concept unites activity and goal-setting, thus it does not utilise and employs the resources of the student, but – according to the authors- it amplifies them. The secret and the power of DMC lies in this unity: it is a motivational construct, which integrates the starting point of motivation, the motivational force and the relating learning styles. The authors of the book provided an explanation for why they believe that there are serious limits and boundaries to the notion of learning autonomy, and how DMC moves beyond it: separating motivation and motivated behaviour has enabled the examination of a more narrow motivation spectrum and learning features.

Chapter 3 and 4 are focusing on the details and the components of the concept itself. The feature of 'directed' is the centre of these chapter. One of the most important elements of the motivational flow is to formulate a clear-cut and straightforward goal. DMC is always and in every case a motivational construct of directed kind. One of the most important aspects of goal-setting is that it is identical with the interest, the belief-system and the values of the participant, since these are the most efficient and crucial points of linkage and relationship which can establish engagement in the long-term. The notion of DMC presupposes the idea that tasks, goals as well as sub-tasks and sub-goals can initiate the achievement and realisation of one's aims: to maintain motivational energy and learning for a longer period.

There are several requirements and conditions which presuppose the phenomenon of DMC. A participant or a learner will experience DMC only in that case if the process and the result is his or her ownership. The authors believe that it cannot be accomplished without engagement, or without a conscious goal-setting and a future vision of the outcome.

Chapter 5 focuses on the various motivational properties of DMC. It emphasizes the characteristic that DMCs are part of everyday life, they are “recurring behavioural routines” and thus they became autopiloted. The authors point out that it is of uttermost importance that the goal pursuit is based on “automatized behavioural routines”. This term leads to the psychological notion of non-conscious self-regulation, which is defined by the authors as “human behaviours that is influenced by processes that are not fully under conscious volitional control”. Why is it crucial? This statement refers to the goal pursuit of the learner, which signals such a high level of involvement and dedication that the behaviours become habitualized and routine-like. The authors claim that in the framework of DMC, setting and progressing along the sub-goals is a more important element than the long-term aim itself. Sub-goals serve as checkpoints, as well as the velocity of goal achievement. DMC admittedly contributes to the positive well-being of the participant and the learner. The authors of the theory believe that DMC is a highly self-concordant, accessible and regularly activated action, which allow the sense of enjoyment and involvement of the learner. It is a motivational construct underlying the activity and the process of learning.

However, we have to conclude that the book’s most outstanding feature is that it does not stop at the theoretical explanation: Chapter 9 provides a pragmatistical approach to the DMC. It examines and presents ideas for observing and generating DMCs in the language classroom. The authors claim that one of the most effective educational tools in language pedagogy is teaching through projects. Employing projects does admittedly requires new skills and mindset from the teacher, however, it can result in tremendously enhanced engagement and enjoyment for the learners. Chapter 9 profoundly approaches and highlights the most significant aspects of project-based methodology, reflecting upon the relationship between student and teacher, the professional role, collaboration and eventual failure as well. This Chapter offers 7 frameworks for group projects, with clear-cut goals and sub-goals, as well as detailed description. For those interested in the practical issues of motivational theories, this final chapter is a must-read.

Overall, it can be concluded that the concept of DMC is a new and an old construct at the same time: it brings on new aspects and vision, it integrates elements of previous motivational constructs, however, it coordinates already existing notions and details. The most important and refreshing aspect of the book is that it establishes a relationship between motivation, engagement and goal-setting. The authors share the viewpoint that the elements of this notion cannot be examined separately, it has to be looked upon from a holistic point of view. DMC thus becomes a directed, highly cognitive, conscious and rather controlled unit integrating various elements of previous motivational theories and constructs.