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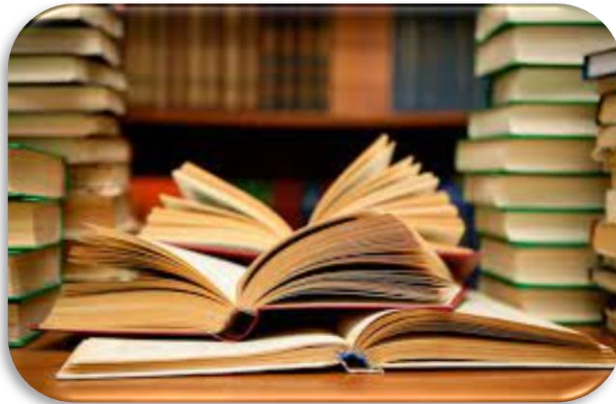
The Relationship between English Language Learners' Achievement Goals and Academic Performance: A look at Learners' Goal Motives

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ABSTRACT

The present mixed-methods study investigated the relationship between learners' achievement goals and academic performance. It also explored the goal motives of English language learners. The research, a cross-sectional survey, studied 372 BA University English language learners majoring in English language teaching, translation studies, and English literature at Islamic Azad University, Kerman and Zahedan branches. To collect the data, the learners' Achievement Goal Questionnaire (Elliot et al., 2011) was submitted to English language learners either in person or via email. Their academic achievement was calculated based on the university report including both theoretical and practical courses. In addition, a semi-structured interview was used to explore the learners' reflections concerning the orientations of their achievement goals. Correlations showed that achievement goals correlated positively with academic performance among English language learners. And among learners' achievement goals, task-avoidance goals, other-approach goals, and other-avoidance goals could predict learners' academic performance meaningfully. Besides, the qualitative findings revealed that English language learners' goals are motivated by prior experience, personality, academic achievements, and interests. In brief, the study of the academic goals of students can facilitate the identification of their goal orientations and therefore can become a support tool for teachers when selecting materials and adapting the contents of the curricular program accordingly.

Keywords: Academic performance, Achievement goals, Goal motives, Goal orientations

رابطه بین اهداف پیشرفت زبان آموزان انگلیسی و عملکرد تحصیلی: نگاهی به انگیزه های اهداف زبان آموزان

مطالعه ترکیبی حاضر به بررسی رابطه بین اهداف پیشرفت و عملکرد تحصیلی فراگیران زبان انگلیسی پرداخت. این مطالعه همچنین انگیزه های اهداف زبان آموزان را بررسی کرد. این پژوهش که یک پیمایش مقطعی است، ۳۷۲ نفر از دانشجویان کارشناسی زبان انگلیسی در رشته های آموزش زبان انگلیسی، مطالعات ترجمه و ادبیات انگلیسی در دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی واحد کرمان و زاهدان را مورد مطالعه قرار داد. برای جمع آوری داده ها، پرسشنامه هدف پیشرفت زبان آموزان (الیوت و همکاران، ۲۰۱۱) به صورت حضوری تحویل یا از طریق ایمیل به زبان آموزان انگلیسی ارسال شد. پیشرفت تحصیلی آنها بر اساس گزارش دانشگاه شامل دروس نظری و عملی محاسبه شد. علاوه بر این، از یک مصاحبه نیمه ساختاریافته برای بررسی دیدگاه های فراگیران در مورد جهت گیری اهداف پیشرفت آنها استفاده شد. بررسی رابطه ها نشان داد که اهداف پیشرفت با عملکرد تحصیلی فراگیران زبان آموزان انگلیسی رابطه ی مثبت دارد. و از بین اهداف پیشرفت فراگیران، اهداف اجتناب از کار، اهداف رویکردهای دیگر، و اهداف اجتنابی دیگر عملکرد تحصیلی فراگیران را به طور معناداری پیش بینی کرد. علاوه بر این، یافته‌های کیفی نشان داد که اهداف زبان‌آموزان انگلیسی با انگیزه ی تجربه، شخصیت، دستاوردهای تحصیلی و علایق قبلی بر انگیخته می شود. به طور خلاصه، مطالعه ی اهداف تحصیلی فراگیران می تواند شناسایی جهت گیری اهداف آنها را تسهیل کند و بنابراین می تواند به ابزاری حمایتی برای معلمان در هنگام انتخاب مواد و تطبیق محتوای برنامه درسی بر اساس آن تبدیل شود.

کلمات کلیدی: عملکرد تحصیلی، اهداف پیشرفت، انگیزه های اهداف ، جهت گیری های اهداف

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, educators and instructional counselors have attempted to recognize and comprehend the underlying factors that cause learners to succeed or fail (Vergara, 2020). Learning is a continuous practice that requires endurance, especially in the face of academic hardships and disadvantages (Binning et al., 2018). There is evidence that qualities other than intellectual capacity play a significant role in determining success (Heckman et al., 2014). Studies conducted on achievement goal theory (Senko, 2016) have reported that working in academic areas complies with the goals students adopt when they primarily hold on to their work (Bong, 2009). There has further been a growing interest in both achievement goals which reflect and represent learners' internal desires to treat themselves in a way to be capable of carrying out activities leading to develop, attain, or demonstrate the required and desired competence and their influential association with autonomous learning and academic-based performance (Covington, 2000).

Pursuing individual goals, once individuals set them after prioritizing in terms of their significance, their identity and everyday life will be respectively launched, shaped, and guided (Emmons, 2003). Furthermore, goal setting has a critical and undeniable role in fostering self-regulation and changing behavior in diverse domains including such fields as industry, education, sports, and health care (Epton et al., 2017). Drawing upon the significance of goal setting, it has been further revealed that it provides individuals with a meaningful direction in their daily activities and desires contributing to their sense of following a purposeful trend in life (Locke & Latham, 2013). However, not all goals are achievable. Scrutinizing the reasons over the last two decades, psychologists acknowledge that what threatens the attainment of goals is not being determined and adaptive while facing obstacles that result in putting futile attempts which undermine one's efforts and motivation (Wrosch et al., 2003).

In achieving goals, Locke & Latham (2002) suggest the association between goals and behavior (accomplishment) has the strongest influence on motivation to reach them. Motivation comes from a commitment to achieving goals (Human-Vogel & Rabe, 2015) because goals cannot be accomplished without effort. Furthermore, commitment demonstrates responsibility and dedication and is not only a moral obligation (Klein et al., 2012).

Among the numerous motivation constructs, researchers have recently called for investigating the applicability of goal constructs to language learning research. In L2 learning, goals have been shown to initiate and monitor self-regulatory processes (Rose et al., 2018; Zheng et al., 2018). It usually takes learners more than a year to learn a second language, requiring a lot of persistence and effort. Those learning a second/foreign language (L2) are especially under pressure to perform in front of others. Achievement goal theory can influence the learning of second/foreign languages (Bong et al., 2014). Accordingly, achievement-based activities result in different academic outcomes for individuals. Considering the mentioned issues on the significance of learners' goals, the present study adds the content to the semi-void container of studies in this regard – using a mixed-methods design, the present study investigated the relationship between learners' achievement goals and academic performance among English language learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Goals are cognitive representations of desired future states that guide an individual's actions. There is a hierarchy of goals, each of which has a different status. People can pursue multiple goals simultaneously. When learning a foreign language, a language learner may face a conflict between their desire to appear intelligent and their desire to master the language. Their lack of proficiency in public speaking prevents them from mastering it since they hide their lack of proficiency. Throughout the learning process, learners must manage and coordinate conflicts between multiple goals with varying priorities and salience levels. As a result of the hierarchical structure of goals with several layers of subordinate goals, this phenomenon has been attributed to the complex nature of the construct (Boekaerts et al., 2006).

To clarify the importance of goal setting particularly academic goals and their causal linkage, widely observed phenomena are the proliferation of study performance and the progress of academic consequences (e.g., Morisano, 2013). Latham and Brown (2006), for example, reported a positive influence of pursuing high specific learning goals on the grade-point averages of MBA students at the end of the academic year. In the same vein, an association was shown to be present between higher performance and students' self-set-specific goals when moderately difficult goals were selected (Alessandri et al., 2020). According to the recommendations provided by Richardson et al. (2012), the intervention strategies should be set up to include challenging goal-setting as well as interventions with a focus on performance targeting self-efficacy. Hence, following the theory of goal-setting, the more task-specific goals, the more task-specific outcomes will be. Furthermore, it was revealed that if challenging, specific, and concrete goals are accompanied by superordinate (i.e., abstract) goals, they can function as a prompter affecting motivating behavior (Höchli et al., 2018).

Empirically validated studies have shown the positive impacts of interventions in the area of goal-setting related to academic performance. Travers et al. (2015), for example, revealed that being engaged in a diary-based personal growth goal-oriented program influences students' performance and self-assessed academic growth. Likewise, Morisano et al. (2010) indicated that such narrations of goals increase academic and non-academic achievement retention rates, and a positive mood among academically "struggling" undergraduate students compared to those in a control condition. Notable findings of goal research, however, are contrasting single and multiple goals in both achievement settings focusing on the needs and demands of achievement and in academic settings with the concentration on the content of goals (Boekaerts, 2009). Drawing on well-proved documents, therefore, single goals are regarded inadequate in terms of personal concerns motivating student behavior (e.g., Dowson & McInerney, 2003).

According to self-determination theory (SDT), pursuing intrinsic goals enhances life satisfaction, whereas pursuing extrinsic goals reduces it. Vansteenkiste et al. (2004) demonstrated the positive consequences of pursuing an intrinsic goal in an autonomous context in a series of experiments with high school and college students. The researchers manipulated the goal content to be either intrinsic (e.g., "carefully reading the text about communication styles can contribute to your personal development") or extrinsic (e.g., "carefully reading the text can help your chances of getting a well-paid job in the future"). They also manipulated the learning context to be either autonomy-supportive (e.g., "you might decide to try to learn more about communication styles") or controlling (e.g., "you should learn more about

communication styles"). All three experiments demonstrated the benefit of pursuing an intrinsic rather than an extrinsic goal in the form of deeper engagement, better performance, and greater persistence in the task. Furthermore, there was an interaction between the goal and the context such that the advantages associated with an intrinsic goal were even greater in the autonomy-supportive than the controlling context.

In terms of the language teaching field, motivating participation in second language (L2) learning is inevitable for strengthening successful language learning. Language learners initiate learning new languages with a pre-set goal but do not follow a successful trend because they find no balance between their goals and all that went on inside the classroom. Based on goal setting theory (Locke, 1996), goals bring about human action, which occurs anytime the goals are established and pursued. A bulk of studies have suggested the positive effects of goal-setting on task performance, academic achievement, well-being (Barnard-Brak et al., 2010), and learner self-reliance (Pintrich, 2000). Consequently, the present study outlined to address the following research questions:

1) Is there any relationship between EFL learners' achievement goals and academic performance?
2) Which achievement goals predict EFL learners' academic performance?
3) What are English language learners' reflections on the orientations of their academic goals?

METHOD

Participants

The present cross-sectional mixed-methods survey was conducted on 390 English language learners at Islamic Azad University, Kerman and Zahedan Branch, but a sample of 372 BA English language learners participated in this study. Others did not answer the questionnaires. The sample was recruited between April and June 2021, with ages ranging from 18 to 36 years. 250 participants (67.2%) were female, and 122 participants (32.7%) were male. And out of 372 students participating in this study, 253 (68%) of them were students of teaching, 84 (22.5%) were studying literature, and 35 (9.4%) were students of translation studies. Participants were asked to complete the questionnaire at home and bring it back, or the questionnaire could be sent to them as an online questionnaire. Before completing the questionnaires, students were informed about the study aims and they were told that all their answers would be confidential and that they did not have to answer any of the questions if they did not wish to; none of the students declined to participate. Participants were also motivated to be honest in their responses. This is not only because their responses were treated confidentially, but also because all students were assured of receiving individualized feedback about the results of the study.

Instruments

The achievement goal questionnaire developed by Elliot et al. (2011) was administered to measure participants' achievement goals. The questionnaire comprises 18 items that assess six achievement goal types – task-approach, task-avoidance, self-approach, self-avoidance, other-approach, and other-avoidance. Each goal type is assessed by three items on a 5-point scale that ranged from 1 (being "Never or only rarely true of me") to 5 (being "Always or almost always true of me"). Task-approach items were designed to assess students' positively oriented task-focused achievement goals (e.g., "To know the right answers to the questions on the exams in this class"); while Task-avoidance items assessed negatively

oriented task-focused achievement goals (e.g., "To avoid getting a lot of questions wrong on the exams in this class"). Self-approach items assessed positively oriented self-focused achievement goals (e.g., "To perform better on the exams in this class than I have done in the past on these types of exams"); Self-avoidance items assessed negatively oriented self-focused achievement goals (e.g., "To avoid doing worse on the exams in this class than I have done on prior exams of this type"). Other-approach items accessed positively oriented other-focused achievement goals (e.g., "To do better than my classmates on the exams in this class"); and Other-avoidance items assessed negatively oriented achievement goals focused on others (e.g., "To avoid doing worse than other students on the exams in this class"). Participants' academic achievement was calculated based on the university report including both theoretical and practical courses.

To study participants' perspectives and attitudes toward their goal motives, the researchers used semi-structured interviews. The interview sessions were carried out in the participants' mother tongue, Persian so that the participants would feel more at ease and their messages would be conveyed more thoroughly. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. While the first categorization system was developed from the data, the data were translated from Persian to English by the researcher and double-checked by two colleagues to ensure loyalty to the original data. To begin the analysis, the researcher had to develop the essential elements in each interview to form an understanding of each participant's emotion regulation strategy. Therefore, first, the researcher read and took notes from the transcripts of the interviews. In the next stage, the researcher used open and pattern coding (Creswell, 2008) to analyze data and find the main groups and subgroups. It was the open coding that was at the center of the analysis through which the interpretative and Vivo codes related to emotion regulation strategies were highlighted. Through constant comparison between the open codes, similar codes formed the basis for a category or pattern code. Later, through the mutual discussion between the researchers, the final agreement between categories was obtained.

Procedure

The present research, a cross-sectional mixed-methods survey, examined the relationship between English language learners' achievement goals and academic performance at a certain point in time (April-July 2021). After introducing the research project in participating university meetings, appointments were made with all interested learners so they could obtain more information about procedures and technical issues. Prior approval was obtained from the English language department's head based on the universities' ethical guidelines. The questionnaire was submitted to more than 390 EFL learners either in person or electronically through their emails or an already designed Google Doc link of the questionnaires for those who were physically distant from the researcher. Some teachers remained reluctant to share their responses and refused to fill out the questionnaires, but 372 EFL learners completed the questionnaires. Having direct contact with most learners as a member of the research society formed a bond of trust between the researcher and participants. The participants were oriented to the objectives of the study, procedure, and limitations and then asked to participate voluntarily. To keep the participants' information confidential, all identifications were removed, and pseudonyms were used instead. All questionnaires were treated anonymously. And To study learners' perspectives and

reflections concerning their goal motives, 37 learners, 10% of the whole sample were invited to semi-structured interviews. Creswell (2008) reported that 10% of the whole sample is a safe sample for qualitative data analysis.

RESULTS

Quantitative Analysis

As Table 1 shows, all research variables had a normal distribution. Therefore, parametric tests were used.

Table 1

Normality of Research Variables

Variable	Skewness		Statistic of Skewness
	Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Error of Skewness
Academic Performance	-0.460	0.252	-1.83
Achievement Goals	0.269	0.252	1.07
Task-Approach Goals	0.216	0.252	0.86
Task-Avoidance Goals	0.577	0.252	2.29
Self-Approach Goals	0.302	0.252	1.20
Self-Avoidance Goals	0.177	0.252	0.72
Other-Approach Goals	0.483	0.252	1.92
Other-Avoidance Goals	0.393	0.252	1.56

Based on the results in Table 2, there is a meaningful correlation between learners' achievement goals and academic performance (r =0.784, n=372). Regarding R Square (R^2=0.62), achievement goals predict 62% of learners' academic performance. There is a meaningful correlation between task-approach goals and learners' academic performance (r =0.213, n=372). Regarding R Square (R^2=0.05), it means that task-approach goals predict 5% of academic performance. There is a meaningful correlation between task-avoidance goals and learners' academic performance (r =0.248, n=372). Regarding R Square (R^2=0.06), it means that task-avoidance goals predict 6% of academic performance. There is a meaningful correlation between self-approach goals and academic performance (r = 0.393, n=372). Regarding R Square (R^2=0.15), it means that self-approach goals predict 15% of academic performance. There is a meaningful correlation between self-avoidance goals and academic performance (r = 0.367, n=372). Regarding R Square (R^2=0.14), it means that self-avoidance goals predict 14% of academic performance. There is a meaningful correlation between other approach-goals and academic performance (r = 0.469, n=372). Regarding R Square (R^2=0.22), it means that other approach-goals predict 22% of academic performance. There is a meaningful correlation between other avoidance-goals and academic performance (r = 0.402, n=372). Regarding R Square (R^2=0.16), it means that avoidance-goals predict 16% of academic performance (Table 2).

Table 2

Pearson Analysis of Achievement Goals and Academic Performance

	Academic Performance		
	Pearson Correlation	P	R square
Achievement Goals	0.784	0.000	0.615
Task-Approach Goals	0.213	0.000	0.045
Task-Avoidance Goals	0.248	0.000	0.061
Self-Approach Goals	0.393	0.000	0.154
Self-Avoidance Goals	0.367	0.000	0.135
Other-Approach Goals	0.469	0.000	0.220
Other-Avoidance Goals	0.402	0.000	0.161

To predict academic achievement considering 6 components of achievement goals, the Multiple Linear Regression Enter Method was run. Based on the results in Tables 4-5, this model of regression was valid enough at the level of 0.01 (F = 92.004, P-Value of F<0.01). Considering the results, among 6 variables that entered this model, task-avoidance goals (β = -0.111, the p-value of t<0.05), other-approach goals (β = -0.153, the p-value of t<0.05) and other-avoidance goals (β = 0.078, the p-value of t<0.05) could predict academic performance meaningfully but others (P-Value of t > 0.05) couldn't. Regarding the adjusted R Square in Table 5 (Adjusted R2 =0.38), it can be said that achievement goals predict 38% of academic performance variance.

Table 3

Analysis of Variance or ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	653.400	7	93.343	92.004	.000
	Residual	369.299	364	1.015		
	Total	1022.699	371			

Table 4

R Square or Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.617	.381	.371	1.31677

Table 5

Results of Simultaneous Regression of Achievement Goals on Academic Performance

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-3.239	0.690		-4.697	.000

Task Approach Goal	0.001	0.057	0.001	0.024	0.707
Task Avoidance Goal	-0.125	0.073	-0.111	-1.727	0.008
Self-Approach Goal	-0.004	0.229	-0.003	-0.016	0.469
Self-Avoidance Goal	-0.342	0.206	-0.240	-1.658	0.941
Other Approach Goal	-0.183	0.58	-0.153	-3.139	0.002
Other Avoidance Goal	0.099	0.91	0.078	1.083	0.04

Qualitative Analysis

The analysis of the qualitative data is supported by quotations from the participants of the present study. The thematic analysis of the qualitative data revealed four main categories which will be looked at more thoroughly in the following sections. Some of the questions are: When it comes to setting academic goals, how do you go about them? In developing your academic goals for the future, what drives you?

Prior Experience

Those who have had prior experience with the English language set higher internal learning goals. The prior experience they had in the field acted as a driving force for them to achieve their goals.

I had taken English courses at different institutes before starting the course, and my linguistic background influenced my field achievements. The experience motivated me to pursue more academic goals.

Personality

Ambitious achievers and dreamers set challenging goals and are interested in developing and extending their learning.

As a person with high aspirations, I am a learner with dreams and desires for the future. My personality helps me reach more goals as I strive for more accomplishments.

Academic Achievements

Learning goals are set by students with strong academic achievements based on a demand for both skills and grades.

In my academic career, the more accomplishments I make, the more goals I set for myself. My academic success makes me confident that I can succeed, so I am stronger in my direction.

Interests

Students with an interest in the English language set more realistic goals that motivate their studies.

Having a strong interest in the English language motivates me to set high academic goals for myself. My passion for the English language makes me more determined to set realistic goals.

DISCUSSION

Using a mixed-methods survey with 372 English language university students, this study examined the relationship between learners' achievement goals and academic performance. Correlations showed that achievement goals correlated positively with learners' academic performance. And among achievement

goals, task-avoidance goals ($\beta = -0.111$, the p-value of t<0.05), other-approach goals ($\beta = -0.153$, the p-value of t<0.05), and other-avoidance goals ($\beta = 0.078$, the p-value of t<0.05) could predict learners' academic performance meaningfully.

Exploring which type of achievement goals FL learners primarily pursue can be a good starting point to better understand and predict diverse patterns of achievement strivings in FL education. Furthermore, which goals students pursued depended heavily on the salient characteristics of their learning environment (Lee & Bong, 2019). Achievement goal theory can offer instructional implications at both the individual and the classroom levels. In line with the current study's findings, Lou and Noels (2016) demonstrated the advantage of pursuing academic goals in L2 classrooms.

Pursuing individual goals, once individuals set them after prioritizing in terms of their significance, their identity and everyday life will be respectively launched, shaped, and guided (Emmons, 2003). In addition, studies have also shown the value of facilitating students' self-reflection on their value priorities. As explained by Rogers (1964), individuals tend to take in the value of others and society which lead them to lose touch with their own true values. Hence, they need help to be in touch with their own true values and to prioritize intrinsic over extrinsic values (Lekes et al., 2012).

However, not all goals are achievable. Scrutinizing the reasons over the last two decades, psychologists acknowledge that what threatens the attainment of goals is not being determined and adaptive in the face of obstacles leading to put unfruitful endeavors which undermine one's efforts and motivation (Brandstätter, 2003; Brandtstädter & Rothermund, 2002; Wrosch et al., 2003). The results in line with Sheldon (2014) sharpen the focus on the significance of goals and goal motives since goals are more likely to achieve which are in harmony with individuals' underlying traits, interests, values, and motives impacting positively on their well-being (Ryan et al., 1996; Sheldon, 2014). On the other hand, not reflecting one's internal desires and aspirations, goals are regarded as unattainable leading to merely a waste of time and energy (Sheldon, 2014).

Once students' dominant achievement goals in FL instructional settings are identified, it becomes possible for teachers and researchers to intervene if students indeed turn out to pursue performance goals heavily in FL learning. Achievement goals are context-specific constructs and which goals to adopt in given achievement situations depend on both individual learners' belief systems and prevalent classroom culture (Dweck, 2006). Besides, the qualitative findings revealed that English language learners' goals are motivated by prior experience, personality, academic achievements, and interests.

In brief, the study of the academic goals of students can facilitate the identification of their goal orientations and therefore can become a support tool for teachers when selecting materials and adapting the contents of the curricular program accordingly. Drawing upon the significance of goal setting, it has been further revealed that it provides individuals with a meaningful direction in their daily activities and desires contributing to their feeling of having a purpose in life (Locke, 2019; Locke & Latham, 2019; McKnight & Kashdan, 2009).

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Learners' goal motives have recently become of growing interest in educational settings and academic research. The congruence of learners' goals with academic performance can be associated with students'

perceptions of achievement as well as their motivation concerning their needs. The professional assessment of goal motives is a precondition for the application of the right teaching techniques to help the learners. The knowledge about individuals' motives indicates the focus on specific affective experiences to promote congruence between goals and the predominant individual motive dispositions. Due to the compelling role of learners' goal motives in the teaching and learning processes, it seems essential to explore the factors that may have some bearing on its construction since goals and goal motives play a leading role in directing behavior and in promoting the personal and professional well-being of the learners.

Notwithstanding its strengths, several limitations in this study should be noted. First, although the sample in this study is large, it is representative of the Iran context only, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural contexts. As such, it would be worthwhile to replicate the study in other cultural settings to cross-validate the results. It also consisted mostly of female university students. Generalization of the results might be limited to populations of similar educational attainment, age, and sex distribution. Future studies should be conducted with populations of different levels of academic attainments, different age groups, and different sexes.

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Appendix

Achievement Goal Questionnaire

Instructions: The following statements represent types of goals that you may or may not have for English language classrooms. Circle a number to indicate how true each statement is of you. All your responses will be kept anonymous and confidential. There are no right or wrong responses, so please be open and honest.

Task-approach goal items

To get a lot of questions right on the exams in this class.

To know the right answers to the questions on the exams in this class.

To answer a lot of questions correctly on the exams in this class.

Task-avoidance goal items

To avoid incorrect answers on the exams in this class.

To avoid getting a lot of questions wrong on the exams in this class.

To avoid missing a lot of questions on the exams in this class.

Self-approach goal items

To perform better on the exams in this class than I have done in the past on these types of exams.

To do well on the exams in this class relative to how well I have done in the past on such exams.

To do better on the exams in this class than I typically do in this type of situation.

Self-avoidance goal items

To avoid doing worse on the exams in this class than I normally do on these types of exams.

To avoid performing poorly on the exams in this class compared to my typical level of performance.

To avoid doing worse on the exams in this class than I have done on prior exams of this type.

Other-approach goal items

To outperform other students on the exams in this class.

To do well compared to others in the class on the exams.

To do better than my classmates on the exams in this class.

Other-avoidance goal items

To avoid doing worse than other students on the exams in this class.

To avoid doing poorly in comparison to others on the exams in this class.

To avoid performing poorly relative to my fellow students on the exams in this class.

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