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Examining International Students’ Motivation to Read in English From a Self-Determination Theory Perspective

Motivation is thought to contribute to better text comprehension (Grabe, 2009), but L2 reading motivation of adult ESL students in the US is an underexplored area of research. The current study adopted self-determination theory—the concepts of intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, and controlled motivation, in particular—to examine IEP students’ motivation to read in English. The study also explored the relationship between the students’ L2 reading motivation and classroom instruction. The survey results of the study indicate that these students’ motivation to read was characterized more strongly by two relatively autonomous forms of motivation (i.e., intrinsic motivation and identified regulation). The content of the reading and engaging in peer discussions stood out as the classroom experiences that affected the students’ motivation to read in English. Pedagogical implications based on the study outcomes include providing the students with opportunities to compare their L1 and L2 reading experiences.

Second language (L2) reading motivation is attracting recent attention worldwide (e.g., Al Seghayer, 2013; Dhanapala & Hirakawa, 2016; Kim, 2011; Netten, Luyten, Droop, & Verhoeven, 2016; Pirihi, 2015), but surprisingly little research has been conducted within the US Intensive English Program (IEP) context. Motivation is thought to contribute to better text comprehension, both directly and through an increased amount of reading (Grabe, 2009). Therefore, it is imperative that ESL practitioners and administrators gain a solid understanding of their students’ motivation to read in English and how it relates to their classroom experience. This understanding may also be

generalized to students in junior college and community-based adult ESL programs if they share IEP students' L1 literacy experiences, educational backgrounds, and purpose for studying English (academic and occupational, rather than basic survival).

The purpose of this article is to examine IEP students' L2 reading motivation within the framework of self-determination theory, or SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2017). SDT, whose central concepts are intrinsic motivation and several types of extrinsic motivation, has been adopted to study human motivation in a wide range of settings, including education (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The notions of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, in fact, have been used to characterize students' motivation to read both in L1 and L2 (e.g., Grabe, 2009; Schiefele, Schaffner, Möller, & Wigfield, 2012). However, in reading motivation research, these concepts appear to be often used in combination with other theories, which could hinder research outcomes from being interpreted within a consistent theoretical framework. The exploratory study reported in this article, instead, attempted to adopt SDT as the sole theoretical foundation to illustrate the potential usefulness of the theory to understand adult ESL students' motivation to read.

The article will first explain key concepts of SDT, followed by a brief review of L2 reading motivation research with adult ESL students in the US. It will then describe a study that adopted SDT to examine international students' motivation to read in English and its relationships to their classroom experience in an IEP in the US.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation Conceptualized in SDT

SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2017) proposes that *intrinsic* motivation originates in individuals' innate desire to explore and understand the world around them. Intrinsic motivation is independent from one's desires to engage in activities because of societal values and expectations; thus, it is fundamentally different from extrinsic motivation. When applied to teaching, students are considered *intrinsically* motivated when they engage in learning activities purely for the sense of enjoyment. Thus, in the domain of reading, intrinsic motivation "can be defined as the enjoyment of reading activities for their own sake" (Guthrie, Coddington, & Wigfield, 2009, p. 322). The reading experience itself satisfies their curiosity, gives them a sense of involvement, and is fun, though not necessarily "easy."

Unlike intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation has four subtypes, depending on how strongly it is internalized into one's sense of self: *external*, *introjected*, *identified*, and *integrated* regulations (Ryan & Deci, 2017). As shown in Figure 1, the four can be best understood when placed along the continuum of autonomy-control, with exter-

nal regulation being the most controlled and integrated regulation the most autonomous type of extrinsic motivation. (The continuum should represent intrinsic motivation as the most autonomous form of motivation.) Students who engage in learning activities only to receive good grades are thought to demonstrate a less internalized type of extrinsic motivation, compared to those who engage in learning activities because they understand the values associated with the activities. In the domain of reading, De Naeghel, Van Keer, Vansteenkiste, and Rosseel (2012), who studied school-age children's L1 reading motivation from a SDT perspective, noted that "if children consider reading as personally relevant or identify themselves with the value of reading, their tendency to engage in reading activities has been internalized. As a result, they experience a sense of psychological freedom when reading" (p. 1007). As De Naeghel et al. point out, SDT differentiates this type of extrinsic motivation, *identified regulation*, from more controlled types of extrinsic motivation, namely, *external regulation* (motivation to read to meet external demands, such as course requirements; to earn rewards, such as a sticker; or to avoid punishment, such as failing an exam) and *introjected regulation* (motivation to read because of a sense of guilt, shame, or pride). These extrinsic motivations, however, are "phenomenologically distinct" from intrinsic motivation because of their focus on instrumentality (Guay et al., 2010, p. 714). *Integrated regulation* is the most internalized (thus, most autonomous) form of extrinsic motivation and is similar to identified regulation in that individuals engage in activities because of the values associated with the activities. For the extrinsic motivation to take the form of integrated regulation, however, the importance of the activities must be fully assimilated into the individuals' own value and belief systems, rather than being something imposed by the surrounding environment, such as school or society at large.

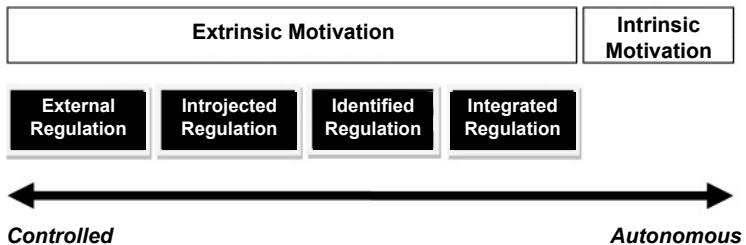


Figure 1. Intrinsic motivation and four subtypes of extrinsic motivation proposed by SDT.

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation both imply the existence of intention that drives behaviors, while the lack of such intention is represented by the concept of *amotivation*. SDT proposes more than one type of amotivation based on its cause. A lack of competence, control, or value can lead to amotivation, and so can a resistance toward being controlled (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Last, the theory emphasizes the crucial role of social context. For optimal motivation, SDT suggests that the environment must fulfill an individual's three basic psychological needs—a sense of *autonomy*, *competence*, and *relatedness* (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Therefore, to nurture intrinsic motivation and facilitate internalization of extrinsic motivation in the classroom, teachers are encouraged to provide these three key nutrients by providing abundant opportunities for students to feel in control of their own behaviors, capable of engaging in target activities, and connected to others.

Reading Motivation of Adult ESL Students in the US

Reading motivation research in the US has been extensive with school-age children learning to read in their L1 (i.e., English), but research along this line with adult ESL students is scarce. A few studies (Komiya, 2013; Ro, 2016; Ro & Chen, 2014) examined adult ESL students' L2 reading motivation, shedding some light on the nature of their motivation, as well as how it may relate to actual reading behaviors and classroom experience. The insights provided by these studies, however, are still limited.

Working with international ESL students, Ro (2016) and Komiya (2013) both illustrated that students' L2 reading motivation is multidimensional; that is, L2 readers were believed to possess more than one "type" of motivation. Ro (2016), who adopted the expectancy-value model of student motivation (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) and Gardner's (2001) concept of integrative orientation, proposed five such motivation types (i.e., expectancy of success, intrinsic value, extrinsic utility value, cost, and integrative orientation). Komiya (2013) also identified five types of L2 reading motivation (i.e., intrinsic motivation, extrinsic drive to excel, extrinsic academic compliance, extrinsic test compliance, and extrinsic social sharing), using Wang and Guthrie's (2004) model of L1 reading motivation as her study's theoretical framework. What these research outcomes indicate is that adult ESL students' L2 reading motivation is driven by different factors, for example, the likelihood for the successful completion of the activity, interest in the content of reading, the value associated with the reading activity, and the desire to do well in class. These various kinds of motivation, of course, coexist in one

individual; it is not suggested that a student enters a classroom with only one type of motivation. This multidimensional nature of reading motivation is consistent with extant motivation research findings with young L1 readers (see Schiefele et al., 2012) and with L2 readers outside the US ESL setting (e.g., Kim, 2011; Lin, Wong, & McBride-Chang, 2012; Mori, 2002; Takase, 2007).

Ro and Chen (2014) and Ro (2016) further explored how motivation may relate to reading behaviors and classroom experience. Ro and Chen (2014) focused on adult ESL students' attitude toward reading, the construct considered to be "one of the multifaceted characteristics of motivation" (p. 50). They found that the proportion of students who reported positive attitudes toward L2 reading combined with more frequent L2 reading (45%) was much higher than for those who reported positive attitudes but less frequent reading (17%), suggesting that the students with positive attitudes tended to read more. Ro (2016) also examined the relationship between reading amount and motivation. The students in his study were enrolled in two classrooms where extensive reading activities were implemented and a motivation survey was administered at the beginning and the end of the semester. In one classroom, the students showed a significant change in one type of motivation (i.e., cost) through time, indicating that those who started to value reading more read more. Ro also examined how the teachers' instructional approaches may have influenced the students' reading motivation. In the classroom where the teacher encouraged students to read a lot and enjoy the experience, the students' intrinsically oriented motivation (i.e., intrinsic value) showed the greatest gain. In the other classroom, where the teacher emphasized the benefit of extensive reading for L2 development, the students' extrinsically oriented motivation related to the perceived usefulness (i.e., extrinsic utility value) notably increased. These research findings provide two important implications. First, adult ESL students' L2 reading motivation does change in response to their teachers' classroom practices. Second, to study L2 reading motivation, it is necessary that different subtypes of motivation are considered (*In what ways are our students motivated?*), instead of regarding motivation as a unitary construct and paying attention only to its overall magnitude (*How much are our students motivated?*).

Although the outcomes of the above studies are valuable, L2 reading motivation research with adult ESL students in the US is still at its preliminary stage. For example, Komiyama (2013), whose study involved IEP students across the US, provides a limited understanding of the nature of these students' L2 reading motivation because of the study's underpinning theoretical framework. The Wang and Guthrie

(2004) model used in her study was originally developed for young L1 readers, and as such, the model was unlikely to adequately depict the dominant aspects of motivation for adult ESL readers with well-established L1 literacy. Choosing to read in English (instead of the L1) so that one can become more familiar with the L2 would be a good example of the type of motivation not so relevant for young children learning to read for the first time in life, but very relevant to adult international students studying English in the US. Also, though intrinsic and extrinsic motivation have been used to characterize the motivation to read, these concepts have been thought to function as part of another theory (e.g., expectancy-value theory) and in combination with other theories (e.g., concepts of socially oriented goals; see Wentzel, 1996, whose work became integrated into Wang & Guthrie, 2004). Last, research has just begun to seek connections between students' reading motivation and how it may relate to their experience as ESL students. The present study attempted to contribute to the existing body of research with adult ESL students in the US by describing IEP students' L2 reading motivation based on SDT and exploring possible links between their motivation and classroom experience.

The Current Study: Methods

Two research questions were posed for the study:

1. What motivates IEP students to read in English?
2. What kinds of classroom experiences may impact the students' motivation to read in English?

The current study followed Guay et al. (2010), who adopted SDT to study reading motivation, and who focused on three types of motivation: intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, and controlled motivation. Intrinsic motivation, the most autonomous form of motivation, represented students' desire to read for its own sake. Identified regulation, the relatively autonomous form of extrinsic motivation, represented their desire to read because of the values associated with the target activity. (Following Guay et al., we did not include integrated regulation in the study because of the anticipated difficulty in measuring it with the current study participants.¹) Controlled motivation comprises two less internalized forms of extrinsic motivation (i.e., introjected and external regulations), representing the desire to read because of external control (e.g., rewards and punishments) or internal feelings (e.g., guilt, shame, and pride). Study outcomes were examined using these three types of motivation, as well as amotivation (i.e., the lack of motivation to read).

Participants and the Classroom Setting

A total of 17 students (6 males, 11 females) participated in this study. The students were enrolled in a high-intermediate/advanced ESL course on reading and vocabulary, offered by a university-affiliated IEP in California. The participants' ages ranged from 21 to 51 ($M = 25.9$, $SD = 7.7$). They were from seven countries: Brazil ($n = 1$), China ($n = 1$), Japan ($n = 2$), Korea ($n = 5$), Saudi Arabia ($n = 4$), Taiwan ($n = 3$), and Vietnam ($n = 1$).

The eight-week reading and vocabulary course met for two hours twice a week. As reading assignments, the students read a book chapter each week, as well as articles related to the theme of the book. The typical progression of the class was as follows: On the first day of the week, the students took a short comprehension quiz on the book chapter they had read at home, engaged in a small-group discussion on the chapter, and then completed a vocabulary activity in groups. For homework for the second day, students were assigned an article related to the theme discussed in the book. On the second day, students discussed the article in small groups, watched a TED Talk that further explored the theme, and were given time to compare all three materials (i.e., the book chapter, the article, and the TED Talk). Each week, students also wrote a one-page response to the book chapter for the week.

Instruments

For this study, we developed a reading motivation survey that included 16 items, to which the participants responded on a four-point Likert scale (*a lot like me; a little like me; a little different from me; very different from me*). To develop these items, we first asked a group of students, enrolled in the same IEP program but during the previous term, to respond to the question "*What motivates you to read in English?*" as a class activity. The students' responses were then sorted into groups using the concepts of intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, and controlled motivation. Similar responses were consolidated into one survey statement. This process yielded five items each for intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, and controlled motivation. One item, which also emerged from the class activity, was included in the survey to represent amotivation. See Table 1 for the list of the 16 items.

Two surveys were used in this study and were administered at the beginning and at the end of the course. Both surveys included the 16 Likert-scale items, semirandomized. (The first five items of each survey consisted of the shortest items to make the survey easy for the students to take.) The Likert-scale items were followed by an open-

Table 1
Likert-Scale Survey Items

<i>Types of motivation</i>	<i>Items that followed the prompt: What motivates you to read in English?</i>
Intrinsic motivation	<p>If the reading is (or looks) fun.</p> <p>My interest in the topic, content, and/or story.</p> <p>I enjoy escaping from reality and get involved in the reading.</p> <p>I'm curious about people's imaginations, experience, and/or knowledge.</p> <p>When I can relate the reading to myself—my feelings, hobbies, interest, future studies, etc.</p>
Identified regulation	<p>I want to expand my vocabulary.</p> <p>It helps me learn how to write better.</p> <p>It helps me improve my reading skills.</p> <p>I want to learn, practice, and improve my English skills.</p> <p>It helps me achieve my future academic and/or career goals.</p>
Controlled motivation	<p>I want to pass the class.</p> <p>I have to do it for my class.</p> <p>Other people force me to read.</p> <p>I want to do well on tests (like quizzes, exams, and/or the TOEFL).</p> <p>Competition with others. If my friend reads more than me, I get motivated to read.</p>
Amotivation	<p>I don't like reading. Nothing motivates me to read.</p>

ended question, “*What are other reasons that motivate you to read in English?*” In the second, end-of-the-course survey, the students also responded to an open-ended question: “*Think about your experience in this class. Did anything we did influence your motivation to read in English (texts we read, our group and class discussions, assignments you completed, extra readings you did for the class, etc.)? If yes, please explain.*” These open-ended questions were included to gain insights into their motivation that the Likert-scale items might not be able to capture. Data on the students’ age, gender, country of origin, and L1 were gathered in the first, beginning-of-the-course survey.

Procedures

The participants completed the two surveys in class. They took the first survey during the first week and the second survey during the last week of their eight-week course. Because of the small number of students enrolled in the course, we repeated this procedure twice in the same reading and vocabulary course. Nine students (3 males, 6 females) took the surveys in the Fall 2016 semester, and eight students (3 males, 5 female) did so in the Spring 2017 semester.

Analysis and Results

What Motivates Students to Read in English?

To answer the first research question, we examined both the participants' response to the 16 Likert-scale items and additional reasons that they provided in response to one open-ended question. First, we averaged the responses to the Likert-scale items that represented intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, and controlled motivation separately, and compared them with one another descriptively. The results, as shown in Table 2, were that the average score was the highest for identified regulation. Intrinsic motivation was the second highest, followed by controlled motivation. Their score for amotivation was the lowest. This pattern was observed in the surveys administered both in the beginning and at the end of the course.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of the Participants' Responses
to the Likert-Scale Items

<i>Type of motivation</i>	N	<i>Survey 1</i> <i>(Beginning of course)</i>		<i>Survey 2</i> <i>(End of course)</i>	
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Intrinsic motivation	17	3.25	.46	3.23	.54
Identified regulation	17	3.41	.32	3.53	.49
Controlled motivation	17	2.75	.70	2.75	.57
Amotivation	17	1.53	.94	1.65	.79

Next, we reviewed the students' responses to the open-ended question about additional reasons that motivated them to read in English. All students but one answered the question both at the beginning and at the end of the course, which generated a list of 39 reasons for reading in total. The responses that seemed to address the same

or similar motives were then combined. Table 3 summarizes the reasons that the participants provided, as well as the types of motivation to which they seemed to correspond. (Table 3 does not include the reasons already addressed in the survey even when the students mentioned them in their open-ended question responses.)

Table 3
Self-Reported Additional Reasons Why Students Read in English

<i>Reasons provided by students in response to the question: What are other reasons that motivate you to read in English?</i>	<i>Types of motivation</i>
<p>Because I like reading in English. To me, it's not mandatory or an obligation.</p> <p>I like to learn about different things by reading in English.</p> <p>If a book is in the genre that I like (horror, science, etc.).</p> <p>If a book recently has become famous and popular.</p>	<p>Intrinsic motivation</p>
<p>When I can apply the content to my own 'real' life.</p> <p>When I know the reading will increase my knowledge.</p> <p>Because there are more resources written in English than in my L1.</p> <p>Reading in English makes me understand the content clearer than reading in my L1.</p> <p>To understand nuanced meanings that can't be obtained if I read it in translation.</p> <p>If the book was written in English originally, you must read it in English to maintain its originality and beauty of the language.</p> <p>To become more familiar with the English language (e.g., use of slang).</p> <p>To understand more about the sentences that my L1 could not translate well.</p> <p>When the reading has useful vocabulary.</p> <p>Because I want to understand what my American friends are talking about.</p> <p>Because I enjoy sharing my opinions with my classmates.</p>	<p>Identified regulation</p>
<p>I have to read English materials for my work.</p> <p>I want to be more special than any other people in my country.</p>	<p>Controlled motivation</p>
<p>To fill my free time.</p>	<p>Other</p>

What Kinds of Classroom Experience May Impact the Students' Motivation to Read in English?

To answer the second research question, we again used both the students' responses to the 16 Likert-scale items and those to one open-ended question. We first examined possible changes in the participants' motivation through time, comparing their average motivation scores (see Table 2) between the two surveys. However, the results of our statistical analysis (related-samples Wilcoxon signed-rank tests) indicated that the scores did not significantly change between the beginning and the end of the course, regardless of the type of motivation. Thus, to answer the second research question, we focused on seeking recurring themes in the participants' responses to the open-ended question.

All but one student provided an explanation about the aspects of classroom experience that affected their motivation to read in English, from which two major themes emerged. The first was the content of readings chosen for class. Nine students' responses were related to this theme, referring to personal interest, relevance, and genre, as illustrated in the excerpts below:²

- When the book has an interesting chapter, I really wanted to understand it fully ...
- As a teacher, I want to know more about how to deal with students and help them to enjoy studying & make them put more effort in order to success ... I already read a book about it, but I want to know more.
- Since my major is international trade, I am interested in the book which we read in class.
- This is my first time to read nonfiction book in English ... I thought non-fiction book will be difficult. It turned out to be false. I enjoyed reading the book because I can understand more than novel since non-fiction book is written the meaning directly.
- For me could be better if the reading class, we had different subjects. For me, it should be more excited if we have different academic texts instead of a book.

The second theme was opportunities to discuss the reading with classmates. Six students mentioned this classroom activity, as seen in the following example excerpts:

- Discussion influenced my motivation because, in English, I could know thought, opinion, and culture of classmates who are from the other countries.

- Discussion in class was good for me. I was interested in others thoughts.
- Yes, I want to share what I think about with my classmates rather than just sitting there ...

Though not many, the students also mentioned other aspects of their classroom experience. The weekly vocabulary activity was mentioned in a positive light ($n = 3$), while quizzes were regarded “not a motivation” but “mandatory” ($n = 1$). One student mentioned supplementary materials related to the main reading (i.e., online articles and TED Talks) as motivating. Another brought up the absence of a translated version of the reading, as follows:

- To be honest ... I used to read the translated book to get high grade like A, B+. However, the “Mindset” doesn’t have translation, so reading the book was big challenge at first. I wondered that “Can I read the book in English without translation?” In fact, I did well! I just too much worried.

This response implies that the lack of L1 translation turned into a positive motivator for the student, at least once she or he started to experience success in completing the reading.

Discussion and Pedagogical Implications

Research Question 1

The results of the study showed that the IEP students in this study demonstrated higher levels of motivation for identified regulation and intrinsic motivation—two types of motivation that were relatively autonomous—than for controlled motivation. These results suggest that for the adult ESL students in this study, desire to read because of the importance associated with the activity (identified regulation) and for the enjoyment inherent to the activity (intrinsic motivation) are essential to characterize their L2 reading motivation. Though the results do not downplay the presence of controlled motivation and amotivation, the discussion below focuses on the two autonomous types of motivation (i.e., intrinsic motivation and identified regulation).

Identified regulation requires students to find personal relevance or values in the act of reading (De Naeghel et al., 2012). It resembles one of the L2 reading motivation dimensions suggested in Ro (2016), namely, extrinsic utility value. Extrinsic utility value refers to the task value linked to a range of short- and long-term goals (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995), such as future success in one’s career. Adult international

students in Ro (2016) tended to demonstrate a higher degree of motivation along this dimension than an intrinsically oriented dimension (i.e., intrinsic value), which is consistent with the result of the current study. Komiyama (2013), however, was not able to highlight this aspect of her IEP students' L2 motivation, most likely because of the lack of a corresponding construct in the L1 reading model she adopted for her study. One difference between young children learning to read for the first time in life and IEP students reading in English is that the latter approach L2 reading with an already established L1 literacy. If they wish, these ESL students can always fall back on their L1 to read for pleasure and for necessity. In both Lin et al. (2012) and Kim (2011), EFL students—who, like IEP students, could already read in their L1—demonstrated higher levels of intrinsic motivation toward reading in L1 than in L2, implying that the readily available L1 is what they tended to rely on when reading for enjoyment. After all, as Takase's (2007) EFL students reported, it is difficult to switch from fluent and efficient L1 reading to effortful and laborious L2 reading. Thus, when ESL/EFL students can also read in their L1, it may be vital to find personal relevance and values in L2 reading to develop and sustain motivation to read in English.

The reasons the students considered L2 reading valuable, though, varied. The Likert-scale survey items addressed the value of reading in English in connection with L2 development (e.g., expanding vocabulary and improving English reading and writing skills) and with academic and vocational success in the future. Its usefulness in light of L2 development was reiterated in the students' responses to the open-ended question, in which they mentioned that reading in English would help them learn useful vocabulary, understand unconventional language use (i.e., slang), and develop their knowledge of L2 sentence structures. Additionally, the students pointed out that relying on the L1 could limit one's reading experience. Their responses to the open-ended question indicated that being able to read in English could provide them with access to a wider range of resources, clearer understanding of the content, and opportunities to learn about the features of the reading that may get "lost in translation." These perspectives are unique to adult learners of English who can read in both their L1 and L2. Two other reasons brought up by the students were related to their desire to increase their knowledge generally (which may be applicable to their own lives) and to use reading for successful social interaction (with classmates as well as members in the L2 community).

Intrinsic motivation, which also seems to characterize the study participants' motivation to read in English, originates in one's desire to engage in reading for its own sake. One study participant's response,

“I like reading in English. To me, it’s not mandatory or obligation,” illustrates the nature of this type of motivation well. Although the average scores for intrinsic motivation were slightly lower than those for identified regulation, the participants’ open-ended question responses indicated that the curiosity toward and interest in the content of the reading appeared to greatly shape motivation. In research with school-age L1 readers, it is intrinsic motivation that has been found to often relate to larger amounts of reading, better text comprehension, and more effective strategy use (see Schiefele et al., 2012, for a review of research with L1 readers). With L2 readers, research suggests that intrinsic motivation may not play the same role as it does with young L1 readers. (For example, see Lin et al., 2012, and Takase, 2007, who did not find significant associations between intrinsically oriented L2 reading motivation and L2 reading ability.) However, a number of L2 studies, including Ro (2016), whose study involved international adult ESL students, identified intrinsically oriented motivation as a key component of L2 reading motivation. The current study result supports that intrinsic motivation is vital to understanding L2 reading motivation.

Research Question 2

In the current study, the IEP students’ survey responses yielded a few themes that pointed to the aspects of classroom experience that affected their motivation to read in English. The first was the content of reading. The students often reported that the topic and the genre of the reading influenced their motivation to read. This theme seems to go hand in hand with these students’ relatively high levels of autonomous motivation. For example, their desire to read because the chapter’s topic was interesting reminded us of intrinsic motivation, while their finding the reading relevant to their field of study appeared to relate to identified regulation. (The two, though, can overlap, since finding reading interesting may be because of its relevance to one’s field of study.) Day and Bamford (1998) propose that *materials* form one of the key motivation components for reading (extensively), which this study’s result seems to support. The second theme that emerged from the study was opportunities to discuss readings with others. Multiple student responses referred to this classroom experience as motivating. A similar student comment was found in Greenberg, Rodrigo, Berry, Brinck, and Joseph (2006), who implemented extensive reading in adult literacy classrooms for ESL students in the US. Appreciating opportunities to discuss reading with peers relates to SDT’s notion of *relatedness*, one of the three basic human needs that must be fulfilled for optimal motivation (Türkdoğan & Sivell, 2016). Exchanging

thoughts and opinions with peers is likely to build the sense of being connected to other members in the classroom, which, based on SDT, helps students develop intrinsic motivation and internalize extrinsic motivation.

Among other aspects of the students' classroom experience, the absence of translated versions of the reading may be worth noting. One participant, who usually relied on translated versions of the assigned readings and read primarily for an external reward (i.e., a good grade), found the absence of L1 translation becoming a new source of motivation. This classroom experience is, again, unique to IEP students, who, if the opportunity allows, have L1 literacy to count on. It is also notable that for this student, the experience of success seemed to help him/her go beyond a controlled form of motivation to read in English (as implied in the comment, "I used to read the translated book to get high grade like A, B+"). This experience appears to support the role of *competence*, another one of the three basic human needs proposed by SDT, in reshaping student motivation tendencies into more autonomous forms of motivation.

Pedagogical Implications

With IEP students in the US at intermediate-advanced levels, what best characterizes their L2 reading motivation may be autonomous, rather than controlled, forms of motivation. Students with this motivation orientation are likely to need fewer external incentives—winning a competition over the number of books read, for example—to engage in reading in the L2. What they need, instead, is to find the reading materials and activities valuable to them or genuinely interesting. This is obviously more easily said than done. As the current study showed, these students bring into the classroom a range of reasons for reading in English. Some focus on its immediate connection to L2 development such as learning new vocabulary, while others focus on their future academic and vocational success, for example. Also, even in this small-scale study, the students clearly indicated different preferences for reading topics (e.g., other people's life experiences, American culture, the English language, education, and international business) and genres (fiction vs. nonfiction). Addressing such individualized values and preferences, while working with them as a group, is understandably challenging for instructors.

Keeping in mind that it is impossible to please everyone, a teacher can still explore a few practical instructional strategies. If the teaching context (e.g., length of the term and curriculum mandates) permits, teachers can include more than one main reading (such as a book) of different topics and genres as one strategy. A more feasible option may

be including shorter readings of various kinds that are connected to readings of primary importance. In both cases, the intention is to increase the chances for students to identify themselves with the importance of reading, and to experience enjoyment in reading for its own sake, by giving them different reading tasks and topics. For example, a nonfiction book on how to succeed in life can be combined with a story on a successful individual from the local community (a biography), a study report on the relationship between personality and societal success (an academic article), and a short fictional story—or even a poem—on the struggles of beating the odds of life (a literary work). An academic piece of writing can naturally lead to tasks such as summarizing key points and analyzing the evidence provided by the author, while a literary piece would better match tasks such as seeking personal connections to the reading or appreciating the use of figurative language. In connection with the strategy to vary reading materials and activities, if feasible, teachers may want to survey the students' perceived values placed on reading in English (*how important* and *why*), as well as preferences in reading topics and genres, at the beginning of the term. Doing so helps them adjust their instructional choices as they teach. Also, it may be necessary for teachers to constantly explain and remind the students why they are asked to engage in the various types of reading activities in class. Teachers should remember that IEP students are probably not always fully aware of how their classroom activities contribute to their growth as ESL readers. Teachers' efforts to discuss why it is worth students' time and effort to engage in reading activities in class could help students recognize and accept the value of these activities.

One notable observation made in this study is IEP students' ability to compare their experience in reading in L1 and L2, which teachers could tap into to motivate them to read in English. As implied in the students' survey responses, ESL students can “abuse” their L1 literacy at times by completing assigned L2 readings through L1 translations. For many ESL teachers, this student strategy may not be a surprise. The current study participants, however, also showed their awareness about the values of doing reading in its original language (in this case, English)—to gain a clearer understanding of the content, to learn more about the L2, and to appreciate the beauty of the language, for example. Thus, it may be a worthwhile instructional activity to have IEP students read a material in both the L1 and L2, and let them identify the limitations of reading through translation. If the teacher can successfully highlight the benefit of reading in its original language through such an activity, the students may be able to find more value

in reading in English, leading to less temptation to rely on L1 translation in class.

SDT suggests that supporting individuals' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness is essential for optimal motivation. In-class peer discussions of the readings, as shown in the present study, can support IEP students' need for relatedness. It may be necessary, however, for teachers to provide guidance so that the students can engage in fruitful discussions, at least initially. Also, this teaching implication should not be interpreted that time in class be used for *talking* about reading at the expense of *doing* actual reading. The need for competence, in this study, was connected to a student's successful experience in reading in English without relying on L1 translation. This study's outcome points out that it is important for the teacher to set the level of the target reading task to be challenging but achievable. We all need to remember that motivation alone does not allow L2 students to read successfully; after all, as Jeon and Yamashita (2014) have shown, solid knowledge in grammar and vocabulary is indispensable for reading comprehension. Thus, teachers must carefully examine and judge the appropriateness of a reading, paying close attention to both its language and content. See Türkdoğan and Sivell (2016) for further insights into how SDT's three psychological needs can be mapped over instructional principles related to L2 reading.

Conclusion

The current study demonstrated that the concepts of intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, and controlled motivation—as well as three basic human needs—proposed by SDT can be useful to characterize the L2 reading motivation of IEP students in the US. The study surely presents limitations, including the small number of participants and the difficulty in measuring motivation through a self-report survey. Classifying open-ended question responses across the three types of motivation also posed a challenge. These limitations should be addressed in future studies on reading motivation with adult ESL students in the IEP context. It is also necessary to examine how ESL classroom experience affects motivation to read in English, and how these changes lead to actual L2 reading development. In the current study, we attempted to seek connections between the students' motivation changes and their classroom experiences; however, because of the lack of motivation changes through time, this aspect of the study yielded limited insights.

As the pace of life quickens, adult ESL students seem to have less and less time to spend on reading (e.g., Greenberg et al., 2006; Ro,

2016). Teachers' role in motivating students to read in the L2, therefore, can grow significantly. Understanding the nature of ESL students' motivation to read is the first step in exploring how teachers can use classroom strategies to facilitate the types of motivation that predict better instructional outcomes.

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Notes

¹Guay et al. (2010) point out that integrated regulation requires an individual to have established a well-developed sense of self, which takes place only at the end of adolescence or during early adulthood. We decided not to include integrated regulation in our study because our anticipated participants included individuals in their early 20s.

²All student-response excerpts included in this article are original, without the authors' having corrected L2 errors.

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