

○ ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF TESOL STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

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Affective variables can help understand differences in student performance. This paper presents student expectations as an affective variable that has so far received little research attention. Students have expectations from educational providers, the fulfilment of which can create a positive learning environment leading to better performance. This study investigates students' expectations from programs, the sources of these expectations and the outcomes of unmet expectations. A questionnaire was administered to learners of English as an additional language (n=65) in Brisbane, Australia. Factor analyses were conducted, and the results indicated that expectations are affected by levels of competitiveness, the educational and cultural gap between the home country and Australia, future orientation, and social value in the homeland. Unmet expectations affect performance, emotions, learning behaviour and cause rebelliousness. Follow-up interviews of teachers (n=10) at the same institutions were conducted to validate the results of the study. Students are likely to exhibit poorer performance and experience negative affective outcomes, thus hindering learning, if expectations are unmet. They may consider changing institutions and providing negative recommendations to prospective students. This research extends the understanding of affective variables in second language acquisition and has practical implications for educational providers.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDENT EXPECTATIONS AS AN AFFECTIVE VARIABLE IN TESOL

Over the years, a lot of attention has been devoted to research on affective variables in second language acquisition (SLA). Theories such as psychological distance (Schumann, 1978) and affective filter (Krashen, 1981, p. 50) have undoubtedly benefited SLA research by directing much needed attention on affective variables. These theories, owing to their global nature, have helped create the umbrella concept of affective factors under which researchers have investigated specific variables (e.g., attitude and motivation (Gardner and Lambert, 1959; Gardner et al., 2004, p. 1), self-esteem (Freeman and Freeman, 2000, p. 3), anxiety (Elkhafaifi, 2005, p. 209), self-confidence (Clément, Dörnyei and Noels, 1994, p. 420) and risk-taking (Batstone, 2002, p. 1; Fitzpatrick and Wray, 2006). Knowledge of affective variables has contributed to the creation of pedagogic environments that optimise language learning. Affective variables can help solve the puzzle of differences in learner performance with similar cognitive make-up and within the same learning environment (Samimy, 1994, p. 29). Current pedagogic trends in language learning focus more on overall communicative competence than on specific linguistic skills (Samimy, 1994, p. 30). Specific knowledge and pedagogic expectations in learners are created from individualised language learning goals. Fulfilment of these expectations can help create a learning environment where communicative competence can be achieved. Yet, consideration of students' expectations and the effect of their fulfilment on the learning process have been under-researched as an affective variable.

Student expectations in TESOL are defined as a construct that includes content (skills and knowledge) and pedagogic (teaching and learning) preferences (Bordia, Wales and Pittam, 2006, p. 11). Met (or unmet) expectations create a psychological state in learners that assists (or hinders) the process of language learning (Bordia et al., 2006, p. 04.11). The current paper proposes that fulfilment of student expectations will help adjust learner's affective filters appropriately for optimal learning to take place. In current times English is being learnt by migrants, international students, professionals in the multi-national workforce, and short term sojourners, to name a few (e.g., Nunan, 2001, p. 605; Pennycook, 1994). Given the diversity of learner profiles, multiplicity of student expectations is inevitable. Researchers have highlighted the need to consider individual and socio-political needs of learners in second language curriculum design (e.g., Bolitho et al., 2003, p. 256; Hughes, 2005). Learners may feel secure within the language learning environment when they think that the educational provider is aware of their expectations and is trying to fulfil them. This sense of psychological well-being can create an educa-

tional context where learners can take risks in order to improve their performance in the language (Samimy, 1994, p. 31).

The current research considers student expectations as an affective variable and investigates the sources of expectation formation. This study argues that unfulfilled expectations lead to detrimental psychological and educational outcomes for the learner. This research extends the small but vital body of interdisciplinary research on student expectations by placing the construct of student expectations as an affective factor in TESOL. Following Bordia, Wales and Pittam's (2006, p. 16) directions of future empirical research on student expectations, a student questionnaire study was conducted, followed by teacher interviews validating the results investigating antecedents that shape student expectations and the consequences of unmet expectations. The following section reviews existing research on expectations. The current research project is then presented. Finally, theoretical and practical implications of this research are discussed.

RESEARCH ON EXPECTATIONS

The primary theory guiding expectation research in consumer psychology is the Expectation Disconfirmation Paradigm. This theory proposes that expectations are disconfirmed (or unfulfilled) if products or services perform below expectation. This leads to perceptions of dissatisfaction with the product or service (Suh, Kim and Lee, 1994, pp. 31–32). This paper follows on the literature review done by Bordia et al., (2006, p. 04.3), which draws attention to extensive research on expectations in consumer psychology — product marketing (e.g., McKinney, Yoon and Zahedi, 2002, p. 296; Santos and Boote, 2003, p. 142), service quality (e.g., Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman, 1993, p. 1) and health care (e.g., Martin, 2003, p.15; Ozge, 2001, p. 33). Similarities between expectations in educational and commercial services have been drawn by researchers in higher education. In order to maintain a sustainable higher education sector, the consideration of student expectations in improving services is important (Tan and Kek, 2004, p. 17). Research in higher education links fulfilment of student expectations to satisfaction with the educational provider (e.g., Gilly, Cron and Barry 1983, p. 16; Halstead, Hartman and Schmidt, 1994, p. 125; Hampton, 1993, p. 119; Tan and Kek, 2004, 17).

A number of studies concerning academic libraries stress the value of incorporating student expectations in upgrading services (e.g., Ho and Crowley, 2003, p. 82; Nitecki and Herson, 2000, p. 259). Indeed, the service quality measure widely used in research on expectations in the commercial service sector (SERVQUAL: Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1988, p.12) has been adapted to suit research in the academic library context

(LibQUAL: Cook and Heath, 2001, p. 548). Research in this area found that identification of expectations in relation to academic library and information science services assisted in improving services and meeting user expectations (e.g., Calvert, 2001, p. 733; Nitecki, 1996, p. 181; Nitecki and HERNON, 2000, p. 259). The general consensus between researchers on expectations, regardless of the area of research, is that fulfilment of expectations increases satisfaction, and unfulfilled expectations result in detrimental effects leading to disengagement with the service. In TESOL, similar results have been found in an exploratory study where lack of fulfilment of expectations led to students' disengagement in terms of absenteeism and lack of attention in classroom activities as well as their intention not to enrol in the current institution in the future (Bordia et al., 2006, p. 04.11). The next section presents the student questionnaire study followed by the interviews with TESOL instructors validating the results of this study and providing further insights on the issue.

THE CURRENT STUDY

Bordia et al. (2006, p. 04.8–13) interviewed EAL (English as an Additional Language) students and teachers in order to investigate content (e.g., speaking, academic writing, pronunciation, vocabulary, note taking, presentation skills, business conversation, Australian culture) and pedagogic expectations (e.g., communicative group activities, group writing activities based on shared ideas, and integrated practice in the language). Participants also shed light on some common variable-shaping expectations (e.g., career and education prospects, family and peer pressure) and outcomes of unmet expectations (e.g., anxiety, changing institutions). The questionnaire for the current study was constructed based on the responses from Bordia et al. (2006, p. 04.8–13). The questionnaire was further refined after a pilot test ($n=23$), and content and pedagogic items that were less expected by participants were removed from the final questionnaire. Students from two intensive English teaching institutions in Brisbane, Australia, participated in the study. This was followed up by interviews with teachers from the same institutions. The teachers were presented with a short summary of the results (and allowed as much time as they needed to reflect), and asked if they had noticed similar variables in their classes. On average, teachers took 20 minutes to reflect on the summary. They were also asked to comment on any additional issues that were not apparent in the results. The interviews are discussed in the latter part of this paper.

This study was based on the following set of research questions:

Research question A: What are the student's primary content-based expectations?

Research question B: What are the student's primary pedagogic expectations?

Research question C: What factors contribute to expectation formation?

Research question D: What are the consequences of unmet expectations?

QUESTIONNAIRE STUDY

METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

Sixty-five language learners (27 males, 38 females, average age = 24.23 years) participated in this study. They were from the upper levels of two English language teaching institutions (levels 5 and 6, the institutions had levels from 1 to 6) and had advanced speaking, reading and writing skills in English. Participants aimed to engage in higher education in English-speaking countries after completion of the English course. The majority of the participants (56) came from Asian countries such as Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia, China and Hong Kong. The rest were from European and South American countries. They had an average of 6.62 years of English language training ($SD = 3.35$) and an average of 4.10 months in the current institution ($SD = 3.19$). The institutions typically attract large numbers of learners from Asian countries, along with smaller numbers from European and South American countries.

INSTRUMENT

CONTENT AND PEDAGOGIC ITEMS

Participants were asked to indicate their preference for seven content (grammar, listening, speaking, reading, writing, pronunciation and vocabulary) and six pedagogic items (form-focussed drills, communicative activities, group work, pair work, individual work and role-play) by ranking the items. Participants were asked to rank the items in an ascending order by allotting the lowest rank (1) to what they expected most, and the highest (7 for content and 6 for pedagogic items) to what they expected least.

ANTECEDENTS OF EXPECTATIONS

A set of twelve statements were provided in the questionnaire to ascertain the antecedents of student expectations. They are as follows: “It is interesting”, “It is difficult to do”, “It will help me in my future use of the language”, “I need more practice in it”, “I will be tested on it”, “It was not taught in courses in my country”, “My other EAL learning friends are good at it”, “I want to learn more about Australian culture”, “My Australian friends use it”, “It is considered more useful in my country”, “It is considered more

prestigious in my country”, and “Parent/sponsors have told me to learn this skill”. Each statement was followed by a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”.

CONSEQUENCES OF UNMET EXPECTATIONS

A set of twelve statements regarding consequences of unmet expectations were provided. They are: “I become anxious”, “I become upset or angry”, “I become disappointed”, “I become disinterested and pay less attention in what is being taught”, “I start talking to my classmates about other things”, “I start talking in another language”, “My attendance drops”, “My performance in this skill drops”, “My overall performance drops”, “I am willing to learn what the teacher is teaching”, “I am willing to work extra hard on my own to learn what I want to”, and “I may not enrol in this institution for the next term”. Each statement was followed by a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”.

ANALYSIS

CONTENT AND PEDAGOGIC ITEMS

The ranks for each content or pedagogic item were added to determine an overall score for that item. The item with the lowest overall score was what the subjects expected most. The overall score of the items, as well as the number of participants ranking them as their first preference, are listed in Tables 1 and 2.

Content Items	Overall Score	Number of Participants Ranking as 1
Speaking	157	27
Listening	183	13
Writing	278	7
Vocabulary	277	6
Pronunciation	298	5
Reading	299	3
Grammar	306	2

Table 1 Expected content items

Pedagogic Items	Overall Score	Number of Participants Ranking as 1
Communicative Activities	111	47
Group Work	211	4
Pair Work	216	0
Individual Work	271	5
Form Focussed Drills	271	7
Role Play	287	2

Table 2 Expected pedagogic items

FACTORS AFFECTING EXPECTATIONS

A Factor Analysis was conducted using principal components as the method of extraction. Four factors were identified using the eigenvalue >1 criterion to reflect substantial amount of variation between factors (Field, 2005 p. 633). These factors explained 62% of the variance. Finally, to aid interpretation, an oblique rotation was conducted. The factors were moderately correlated, the largest correlation being between factors 1 and 4 (-.23). An item was considered part of a factor on which it had the highest loading. In case of dual loadings (i.e., a difference of less than .20 between the two highest loadings), the item was excluded. The factors are described in more detail in the results section. Table 3 shows the factor loadings of the statements. Two of the statements were split across more than one factor: “it is interesting” and “my Australian friends use it”.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE DISCONFIRMATION OF EXPECTATIONS

Once again a factor analysis was conducted using principal components as the method of extraction. Four factors were identified using the eigenvalue >1 criterion to reflect substantial amount of variation between factors (Field, 2005, p. 633). These factors explained 69.9% of the variance. Finally, to aid interpretation, an oblique rotation was conducted. The factors were moderately correlated, the largest being between factors 1 and 4 (.28). An item was considered part of a factor on which it had the highest loading. In case of dual loadings (i.e., a difference of less than .20 between the two highest loadings), the item was excluded. Table 4 shows the factor loadings of the statements. One statement was split across two factors: “I become disinterested and pay less attention in what is being taught”. Table 5 presents the means and standard deviations of the responses regarding negative outcomes.

Statements	Competitive orientation	Educational and cultural gap	Future orientation	Social value in homeland
I will be tested on it	.76			
My other EAL learning friends are good at it	.80			
It is difficult to do		-.67		
It was not taught in courses in my country		.52		
I want to learn more about Australian culture		-.75		
It will help me in my future use of the language			.58	
I need more practice in it			.93	
It is considered more useful in my country				-.71
It is considered more prestigious in my country				-.89
Parent/sponsors have told me to learn this skill				-.63

Table 3 Loadings of antecedents of expectations (oblique rotation)

Statements	Effects on Performance	Affective outcomes	Learning Behaviour	Rebelliousness
My attendance drops	.81			
My performance in this skill drops	.87			
My overall performance drops	.83			
I become anxious		.93		
I become upset or angry		.89		
I become disappointed		.77		
I am willing to learn what the teacher is teaching			.77	
I may not enrol in this institution for the next term			.72	
I start talking to my classmates about other things				.74
I start talking in another language				.75
I am willing to work extra hard on my own to learn what I want to				.70

Table 4 Factor loadings of outcomes of negative disconfirmation (oblique rotation)

Statements related to outcome	Mean	S.D.
I become disappointed	4.5	1.3
I become anxious	4.2	1.4
I may not enrol in this institution for the next term	4.1	1.6
I become upset or angry	4.0	1.5
I become disinterested and pay less attention in what is being taught	3.9	1.5
I start talking to my classmates about other things	3.7	1.7
My overall performance drops	3.7	1.3
My performance in this skill drops	3.6	1.2
My attendance drops	3.2	1.5
I start talking in another language	2.7	1.6
I am willing to learn what the teacher is teaching	2.7	1.2
I am willing to work extra hard on my own to learn what I want to	2.2	.96

Table 5 Means and standard deviation of negative outcomes

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

CONTENT AND PEDAGOGIC ITEMS

As can be seen from Table 1, speaking was the most popular skill that the subjects wanted to learn, with 27 out of 65 subjects ranking it as 1 (41.54 %). This was followed by listening (20%), writing (10.77 %) and vocabulary (9.23 %). Grammar received the last ranking with only 2 subjects ranking it as 1 (3.07 %).

Table 2 shows that Communicative activities were the most preferred activity: 72.31% of the subjects ranked this as 1. Group work ranked second (6.15 %) and Pair work ranked third, even though no subject ranked it as 1. Interestingly, Form focussed drills, although ranked second last (10.77 %), had 7 subjects ranking it as 1. The reason this activity received a large overall score is because 19 subjects (29.23 %) ranked it as 6 (i.e., lowest in preference).

Participants clearly exercised their preference in wanting to learn some skills more than others. For the students participating in this study, speaking, followed by listening, were by far the most desired skills, with 61.54 % of the participants ranking one of these two as the skill they expect to learn most. The low ranking of grammar is contrary to anecdotal experiences. Perhaps participants (who were mostly from Asia) felt they had been taught English grammar extensively in their home countries, and expected other skills from the current institutions. They also expected to be taught by certain pedagogic

methodologies. Communicative activities topped the list, with 72.31 % ranking it as what they wanted most. Thus the results of this study clearly answered research questions A and B – “What are the student’s primary content based expectations?” and “What are the student’s primary pedagogic expectations?”.

ANTECEDENTS OF STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

As mentioned in the analysis section, four factors affecting student expectations were isolated by factor analysis. The factors are described below:

Factor 1: This factor consists of the two statements “I will be tested on it” and “my other EAL learning friends are good at it”. These statements show that the participants are eager to learn the particular skill because they wish to do well in tests, and also want to be as good as their friends and classmates learning EAL. There seems to be an underlying need to compete with others and do well. Hence this factor has been named *Competitive Orientation*.

Factor 2: The second factor is made up of the statements “it is difficult to do”, “it was not taught in courses in my country”, and “I want to learn more about Australian culture”. All three statements show a need to bridge gaps between the home country and Australia. An educational gap can be responsible for the subject finding a certain skill more difficult than others, perhaps because it was not taught or not used often in EAL or school curricula in the home country. Furthermore, wanting to know more about Australian culture could be a result of cultural differences between the home country and Australia, and the participants’ need to overcome these differences in order to survive and adapt to Australian ways. Therefore, this factor has been named *Educational and Cultural Gap*.

Factor 3: This factor consists of two statements: “it will help me in my future use of the language” and “I need more practice in it”. This factor has an underlying theme of being better at using English in the future. Thus, this factor has been named *Future Orientation*.

Factor 4: The fourth and final factor consists of three statements: “it is considered useful in my country”, “it is considered more prestigious in my country”, and “parents/sponsors have told me to learn this skill”. This factor has targeted statements that relate to the usefulness and value of English in the home country and culture. Hence this factor has been named *Social Values in Homeland*. The results, therefore, answer research question C “What factors contribute to expectation formation?”

CONSEQUENCES OF UNMET EXPECTATIONS

As mentioned in the section on analysis, four factors were isolated from the statements on outcomes of negative disconfirmation:

Factor 1: The factor consisted of three statements – “my attendance drops”, “my performance in this skill drops” and “my overall performance drops”. It can be safely said that unless students attend classes regularly in an intensive English program, learning and hence performance cannot be maximised. This factor therefore reflects on the performance of the subjects, and hence has been called *Effects on Performance*.

Factor 2: This factor included the three statements “I become anxious”, “I become upset or angry” and “I become disappointed”. These statements relate to psychological outcomes resulting from lack of fulfilment of expectations. Hence this factor was labelled *Affective Outcomes*.

Factor 3: Two statements made up the third factor: “I am willing to learn what the teacher is teaching”, and “I may not enrol in this institution for the next term”. This factor shed light on the subjects’ changes in learning behaviour due to unmet expectations, and therefore was called *Learning Behaviour*.

Factor 4: Finally, this factor consisted of three statements: “I start talking to my classmates about other things”, “I start talking in another language” and “I am willing to work extra hard on my own to learn what I want to”. This factor shows that subjects can react in contrary ways if their expectations are not met. Therefore, it was named *Rebelliousness*. The results, therefore, provide an answer to research question D: “What are the consequences of unmet expectations?”

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS

METHOD

PARTICIPANTS AND INSTRUMENT

Following the analysis of the questionnaire study, 10 teachers (F = 6, M = 4, average teaching experience = 14.15 yrs.), from the same institutions were presented with the results summary of the questionnaire study and asked to reflect on it. The teachers had taught in Australia and several Asian, Middle-Eastern, and South American countries. They had experience in teaching English in TESOL programs, English for specific purposes, public and private schools, army, divinity and teacher training institutions.

PROCEDURE AND ANALYSIS

The teachers were presented with a short summary of the results from the questionnaire study and provided time to reflect on it. They were asked to comment on the issues, based on their experience in teaching English over their careers, not just in the current institution. On average, teachers spent 20 minutes reading and reflecting on the document. The official interviews and audio taping commenced after this reflection. The interviews were transcribed and formatted according to the specifications of NUD*IST (Non numerical Unstructured Data by processing of Indexing Searching and Theory-building, power version, revision 4.0; Richards and Richards, 1981), and were content-analysed with the help of this software. The two major themes discussed below were derived with the help of NUD*IST, which assists qualitative research by allowing researchers to extract codings from transcripts and add them to various nodes or themes that can be prepared by researchers in advance, or as the analysis progresses. The transcripts were coded for two broad themes (or hierarchical nodes): factors affecting student expectations, and outcomes of negative disconfirmation. The sections below discuss the various responses received under these themes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

All participants agreed with the four factors. Some new variables also emerged from these interviews. Teaching and learning styles which learners have encountered in English classes in their home countries often shape their expectations: as one teacher said, "...I would have thought they get their expectations because their teachers did certain things in their country, they ... expect us to teach according to that...". This may create expectations in students that the learning process should be similar to what they are used to. Alternatively, some learners may expect the process to be different from that in their previous institutions, given the teaching and learning differences in the two educational environments. For example, students may have expectations of smaller classes, critical reading and writing activities, etc.

Advertising material and marketing endeavours of institutions create expectations in students. One teacher said "... there could be expectations generated based on what they have been told in the advertising or word of mouth ...". Often the first set of information students gather about institutions is through such materials, which lead to the formation of initial expectations. Needless to say, in the current economic environment, TESOL institutions must have a competitive edge to survive, and this is best projected

through advertising. However, administrators need to be aware that students form expectations based on these materials, that need to be met or effectively managed in order for students to have an enriching learning experience. Informal information gathered from other language learners assists students in building expectations from particular countries and institutions. Prospective students often shape their expectations based on information they gather from current students or alumni of the institutions they aim to apply for. The experiences of current and past students get passed on in such communication and shape expectations.

The cost of enrolling in intensive language learning programs can be a substantial investment on any student's part. This is especially true for mature age students, who may put a temporary hold on their career prospects in order to learn the language: as one teacher stated, "... I hate to think what that (income) would be worth because Asian countries pay very well". Also, international students give up possibilities of substantial employment due to visa requirements. This further accentuates their monetary investment in the learning process. Such investments affect the nature of expectations learners have from the course or institution. Learners also take on the expectations of other people they respect, such as successful students and teachers they have built a rapport with; as one teacher suggests, "... students will take up the expectations of those whom they respect ...".

Finally, the status of English as the most popularly spoken international language affects expectations. One teacher stated "... the idea that everyone accepts generally that English is a language that is worth learning and that they feel that their lives will be enhanced by the knowledge of it". The prolific use of English in a variety of mass media such as the Internet, television, print and movies has increased ways in which individuals can engage with the language. This leads to a variety of usage of the language, thus creating individualised expectations.

Intuitively, some of these variables may fit with the existing factors. For example, learning and teaching styles may be part of *Educational and Cultural Gap* and expectations of people learners respect may be part of *Social Values in Homeland*. Future quantitative research may provide support to the intuitive addition of some of these variables in the existing factorial makeup. The other variables may be attributable to new factors.

OUTCOMES OF NEGATIVE DISCONFIRMATION OF EXPECTATIONS

Once again, all participants agreed with the four factors of the outcomes of unmet expectations. Some new variables also emerged. Learners who encounter unmet expectations

may display disruptive behaviour such as contradicting or interrupting other students. This can lead to an intimidating classroom environment for other students, who may stop voicing their opinions or concerns, thus under-achieving their potentials: as one teacher shared her experience, "... I've got a situation where there is this one student in class that was so intimidating to the other students that other students stopped coming to class ...".

Learners may be physically present in class but may not pay much attention to activities done in class: as one teacher asked if "switching off" could be another variable for the performance factor. Psychologically detrimental feelings such as hopelessness regarding the learning process and an inability to comprehend why they are not able to learn what they want, can happen as a consequence of unmet expectations. Some students may see the lack of expectation fulfilment as a personal failure leading to low morale: as one teacher suggested, "... its often on the point of listening that people show frustration, they cannot understand instruction that the teachers give, I've noticed they tend to feel stupid".

Finally, students may convey negative recommendations regarding the institution or program to prospective students. Just as institutions often get students resulting from positive word of mouth from their alumni, they may lose students due to negative communication regarding unmet expectations.

Again, some of these variables intuitively seem to fit into the existing factorial makeup. For example, lack of attention can be included in *Effect on Performance*, disruptive behaviour in *Rebelliousness*, and feeling of hopelessness in *Affective Outcomes*. However these variables need to be tested quantitatively to see if they indeed fit in, or alternatively form new factors.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

One of the limitations of the current research is that it is based on a self-report format. Although teachers were interviewed, they did not specifically comment on individual students or classes, but on their overall experiences in teaching English. Future research should adopt a multi-foci approach in which students' self-report data and teacher viewpoints are analysed in conjunction with classroom observations. Also, the impact of ethnicity and gender on expectation formation, perceptions of fulfilment, and readiness to communicate these issues, have not been explored in this study. Future research should investigate these issues. Further research needs to be conducted in order to generate a comprehensive knowledge base. Longitudinal research, in particular, will help us to un-

derstand the possible dynamic nature of expectations. The current research is valuable in giving informed direction to such future scholastic endeavours.

CONCLUSION

This research project investigated the antecedents of student expectations and the consequences of unmet expectations. The results outline the precursors of expectation development as educational and career advancement as well as social and cultural value. Unmet expectations lead to negative psychological, behavioural and learning related effects. As mentioned in the introduction, English is increasingly becoming the most popular additional language (e.g., Pennycook, 1994). As more and more learners learn English for a multitude of goals, and within time and monetary constraints (given the volatility of economies around the world at present), they come with an increasing variety of expectations. This research shows that unmet expectations can have negative learning, behavioural and psychological outcomes. This study, therefore, contributes towards creating a knowledge base for student expectations as an affective variable in language learning. As expectations may differ from one learner to another, students at the same level of language proficiency may perform differently in the future due to fulfilment (or lack of fulfilment) of expectations within the program. Student expectations as an affective variable need to be managed appropriately by teachers and institutions in order to foster a positive learning environment.

It would be unrealistic to think that each student's list of expectations can be met by TESOL instructors or administrators. However, sympathising with students and suggesting alternative means of meeting these expectations can help minimise any negative effect. Sometimes students may come with unrealistic expectations that cannot be met within the time frame of the course or at the level of competence of the student. Teachers then need to explain to students why such an expectation cannot be met, or indeed, need not be essential for effective communication in the language. Such explanations may put students' minds at rest about these expectations, and help motivate them towards the learning of more essential skills (Bordia et al., 2006, p. 04.17). Awareness of the process of expectation formation, the process of disconfirmation and possible negative outcomes of unmet expectations can help manage this affective variable effectively, and create a positive learning environment in TESOL institutions.

In terms of tangible benefits to EAL teachers and institutions, the results provide an idea of the most popular expectations within the student population. The two institutes targeted were typical of intensive English language teaching institutions in many English-

speaking countries, with similarities in courses and programs as well as student intake. Hence teachers, administrators and curriculum designers working for such language teaching programs will find these results useful in terms of determining relevant curricula, and also in conducting in-house research on what their students expect to learn. The responses from the interviews validate and add new insights to the questionnaire study. While future research will show if the additional variables pointed out by teachers are statistically significant or not, the fact that these effects have been seen to occur in classrooms by TESOL practitioners is undeniable, and therefore adds to the body of knowledge on student expectations. The methodology used in the current project also serves as a basis for institutional attempts at taking student expectations into account in curriculum and administrative design.

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