Grit: Its role in Student Success in English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

Patrice Palmer
TESL PHE Conference, May 2015
Today

- What is Grit?
- Mindsets - Fixed vs. Growth Mindsets
- How it applies to Language Learning and Student Motivation
- The Role of Instructors
- Some hands-on activities
- Questions?
Disclaimer
Activity #1 - THINK-PAIR-SHARE

1. What is your favourite activity?
2. When did you do this activity for the first time?
3. What was your skill level like when you started?
4. How often do you do this activity?
5. What are two things you did to get better at this activity?
6. How good are you now?
The Problem

- experience teaching in a post-graduate program - 4 cohorts
- lack of interest/unmotivated
- little improvement in skills, no effort
- realization that it wasn’t the *smartest* students who learned but the ones who *persevered* despite failure and challenges...
“Good evening Teacher, Today in the cultural refection I got 50% . Respected , Teacher please tell me my mistakes so that i will not repeat the same in next assignment . You are very motivational teacher as you told me my weak points in writing . Now, I am doing good efforts for overcome this. Thank you for this from my core of my heart.”
Researching the Problem

- motivation
- positive psychology (grit)
- neuroscience (growth mindset)
- SLA (role of T in Ss motivation)
- tried growth mindset in 3rd cohort...
End of Semester Reflection

“It's been always your words, which motivates me to work hard. I will try to work hard and continue to put more effort to improve my writing skills”.

“I am grateful. I will put my best efforts in future writings and will not disappoint you. I hope to get support, help and encouragement from you”.
End of Semester Reflection

“Efforts equals to Results”. I have a positive attitude to learning. I love to gain new experiences and knowledge (growth mindset)”. 
End of Semester Reflection

“I learnt through this that, although do many attempts, but never give up as tiredness at the final end stage”.

“The biggest thing I realized on each step is efforts = result. I am thankful to you for motivating and encouraging me”.
Lack of Success in SLA

- Lack of motivation
- No commitment of time and energy
- Lack of support from the environment
GRIT

- leading grit researcher Angela Duckworth defines grit as “perseverance and passion for long-term goals.” (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews & Kelly, 2007)

- students with high levels of grit are more successful in both academic and non-academic pursuits (Duckworth, et al.)
More about Grit (Duckworth, et al.)

- research in the area of grit suggests that IQ is not necessarily a predictor of academic success however grit is

- the gritty individual approaches achievement as a marathon...his or her advantage is stamina... and stays the course

Do you think that language learning is like a sprint or a marathon?
Grit Survey – Sample Questions

I finish whatever I begin.

I have difficulty maintaining my focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete.

I am a hard worker.

I have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge.

I often set a goal but later choose to pursue a different one.
HOW IS GRIT DEVELOPED?

Research suggests that grit can be developed through a growth mindset.
Malleable Intelligence Theory
(neuroscience)

*Malleable:* means that you can shape or change something

*Intelligence:* means your ability to learn, reason, and problem solve

This means that if you WORK HARD... you will GET SMART!!!
YOU CAN GROW YOUR OWN BRAIN!

Every time you work hard, stretch yourself and learn something new your brain forms new connections and over time you actually become smarter.
EXERCISE your brain and you WILL get smarter

Dweck (2007) “a growth mindset creates motivation and resilience” and that “the growth mindset message appeared to unleash students’ motivation”
What are mindsets?

Mindsets are beliefs that individuals hold about their most basic qualities and abilities.
## Mindsets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growth Mindset</th>
<th>Fixed Mindset</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People believe they can develop their brain and abilities. This view creates a love for learning, a drive for growth and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishments.</td>
<td>People believe their intelligence and abilities are fixed, and can't be developed. Talent alone creates success and effort is a sign of weakness rather than as a positive element of life needed to reach one's full potential.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do you think mindsets relate to SLA and student motivation?
Responding to setbacks

**Growth Mindset**
- Setbacks highlight issues/problems that need to be dealt with and learnt from
- Actively seek out learning opportunities

**Fixed Mindset**
- Avoids trying something new
- Finds it extremely hard to cope with setbacks
- Seeks to blame others for their setbacks
Famous Failures

**Michael Jordan**
After being cut from his high school basketball team, he went home locked himself in his room and cried.

**The Beatles**
Rejected by Decca Recording studios, who said "we don’t like their sound". They have no future in show business.

**Steve Jobs**
At 30 years old he was left devastated and depressed after being unceremoniously removed from the company he started.

**Eminem**
A High School dropout, whose personal struggles with drugs and poverty culminated in an unsuccessful suicide attempt.

**Walt Disney**
Fired from a newspaper for "lacking imagination" and "having no original ideas"...

**Oprah Winfrey**
Was demoted from her job as a news anchor because she... "Wasn't fit for television."

**Albert Einstein**
He wasn’t able to speak until he was almost 4 years old and his teachers said he would "never amount to much".

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If you've NEVER FAILED. You've NEVER TRIED anything new.
# How you want to appear to others

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<th><strong>Fixed Mindset</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Learn from criticism and suggestions</td>
<td>• Respond poorly to feedback from others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Seek strategies to improve</td>
<td>• Jealous of the success of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Act on teacher feedback</td>
<td>• Seek to put people down</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your Students?

Do you think most of your students have a fixed mindset or a growth mindset? Why?
Growth Mindset and SLA

- Attaining the level of English required to study at a post-secondary level requires language learners to invest a significant amount of time and effort over a long time.

- Research in the area of SLA suggests that it takes between ? to ? years to reach a level of language competency in order to study at a post-secondary level (Collier, 1987, Hakuta, Butler, and Witt, 2000).
Growth Mindset, SLA & Motivation

- Second language motivation is the driving force that enables learners to expend continuous sustained effort (Moskovsky, Alrabai, Paolini, & Ratcheva, 2012).

- Second language motivation is also relates to achievement and without motivation even the most capable and competent learners may be unable to accomplish their long term language learning goals (Moskovsky et al., 2012).

- Unless motivation is maintained during the lengthy process of second language learning, the tendency is often for learners to lose sight of their goal which could result in a decrease in their initial motivation (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Snow, 2014).
Teachers & Learner Motivation

- Language learners can be successful if they are highly motivated and learn in a supportive environment (Marinova-Todd, Marshall, & Snow, 2000)

- Language instructors can play a significant role in providing an environment that sustains students’ motivation (Moskovsky et al.)

- Research conducted by Guilloteaux and Dörnyei, (2008) defines two categories of motivational strategies in SLA: instructional interventions applied by the teacher; and self-regulating strategies used by learners to manage their own motivation
• a strong positive correlation between teachers’ motivational teaching practices and their learners’ learning motivation (Guilloteaux et al., 2008)

• participants in this study ranked motivational strategies such as the teacher recognizing students’ effort and achievement and consistently encouraging students by believing in their effort to learn and succeed
Activity 2

Use your chopsticks to pick up the chocolate kisses. You have two minutes.
Post Activity

- How did you feel before you started this activity? (excited, stressed, interested, inept...)

- What did you feel and say to yourself during the activity? (this is fun, I’m not very good at this...)

- How did you feel and speak to yourself after the activity?

- What would have helped you be more successful?
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<td>I am not very smart.</td>
<td>This will be a new challenge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I look silly if I am not good.</td>
<td>If I keep practicing, I will get better at this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is too hard.</td>
<td>I can learn from my mistakes.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
What would a teacher say to the student?

Growth Mindset
What can teachers do?

- Establish high expectations – let Ss know that you are challenging them because you know that they have the ability
- Let Ss know you value learning and effort above perfect performance
- Mistakes are to be expected. We learn from mistakes
- Provide feedback and strategies.
- Recognize effort over achievement. “You worked hard” instead of “You are so smart”.
Endless Possibilities

- College
- University
- 13-18 Essays $\frac{4x^2}{3+8}$
- 10-12 Paragraphs $4x=12$
- 8-9 Sentences $4 \times 4$
- 5-7 Small Words $1 + 1$
- Age 1-4 ABC 1 2 3
SUCCESS IS AN ICEBERG

People see this.

What really happens.

SUCCESS

RISKS
FOCUS
GOALS
PERSISTENCE
FAILURE
MASSIVE ACTION
SACRIFICE
HABITS
HARD WORK
“no matter what your ability is, effort is what ignites that ability and turns it into accomplishment.”

— Carol S. Dweck, Mindset: The New Psychology Of Success
GROWTH MINDSET ATTRIBUTES

**EFFORT**
Understand that no matter what your natural aptitude; **effort** is essential to improve and achieve
Persistently committed and motivated
I can get better with **effort** and hard work

**STRATEGIES**
Seek **strategies** to improve
Setbacks highlight issues/problems that need to be dealt with and learnt from

**FEEDBACK**
Learn from criticism and suggestions
Act on teacher **feedback**
Activity #3

1. One thing that I learned today is…
2. One new thing that I will try in my teaching is…
3. I would like more information about…
Thank you for attending.

I appreciate your participation and interest.
References


