

Goal-Setting Theory: Motivating Students Through the Use of Dharma Dolls

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Introduction

Goal Setting Theory

The question of what motivates students has been explored by many researchers and teachers over the years (Marandos and Randall, 2012; Irie, 2003; Lee, 2012).

Goal-setting theory is one concept that many English language educators have applied to their classroom practices and have found effective (Rivers, 2012; Chang, 2012; Zhao et al., 2012; Koda-Dallow and Hobbs, 2005). Goal-setting theory originated from the field of psychology.

Industrial-organizational psychologists Edwin A. Locke and Gary P. Latham (2002) developed the theory over several decades to clarify the relationship between goals and task performance related to the working environment or organizations, such as educational institutions. Focusing mainly on the working world, they posit that a successful goal has several important factors that work together in a cycle to improve performance and motivation (Locke and Latham, 2002).

Studies have shown that highly difficult tasks tend to motivate people more than moderately difficult or easy tasks, and that specific tasks, such as attaining a certain GPA, were more effective than abstract goals such as doing ones best. It was also found that public commitment to goals and feedback on progress also resulted in better performance among workers and

university students (Locke and Latham, 2002).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of goal-setting theory on the academic performance and motivation of the first, second, and third years that I taught during spring semester 2012. The results of the study showed that respondents had positive attitudes towards goal-setting, and the overall performance of the students appeared to improve although it is difficult to assess whether goal-setting had a direct affect on students' performance.

Methods

Respondents

Students from ten classes I taught in the English and Career Studies and the Tourism and Hospitality Departments participated in a goal-setting activity from the beginning of May 2012 to August 2012. The aim of the activity was to investigate the effect goal-setting theory would have on students' motivation to perform well in the class. The number of respondents, their respective years, and classes are as follows:

Pronunciation I b	
(First years)	13 students
Oral Communication I a	
(First years)	10 students
Reading/Writing I b	
(First years)	9 students

この状況を次のようにうまく解説している。「荒野の中で、どこからともなく、雄叫びの声をあげ、斧をふりかざし白人を殺戮する Indian の姿に読者は戦慄を覚え、同時にその恐怖を満喫するのだ。」Indian が悪魔や幽霊にとって代わるものとして描かれたことを考えれば、彼らは当然、生身の人間としては扱われておらず、個々の作品の目的を達するための便利な道具として用いられたに過ぎないと言っても過言ではない。しかし Teresa Goddu は彼らの重要性について次のように指摘している。

The gothicized Indian provided the nation with a distinctive literary asset as well as a politically useful cultural image. Though America did not have crumbling castles and antiquated traditions, it did have in the Indian a symbol of a ruined and conquered past. ... By providing the materials for a past that assured the nation an exceptional literature as well as a progressive future, the Indian simultaneously enabled America's literary flowering and its consolidation of a national identity.²

このように、国家に対して多大なる貢献を果たした Indian ではあるが、アメリカン・ゴシックにおいて彼らが担った'demon'や'ghost'としての役割が意味するのは皮肉なことに、彼らがアメリカの風景から消滅することが避けられない運命であり、ひいては、「白人の侵略行為を結果として正当化するゴシック的シンボルを通して Indian は悪魔化された」と言えるのである。

また、当時の白人にとって Indian は、すぐに感傷的で崇高なものの根元となった。国家は郷愁にふけるように彼らの消失に涙する一方で、彼らの消滅の証となる墓を見ては心を躍らせている、と指摘されるが、これは言い換えれば白人たちには Indian の消滅という避けられない運命が保証され、manifest destiny という大義名分を盾に

Indian の運命を安全地帯から傍観できるからこそ、滅びゆく Indian に偽りの同情を示すことが出来たことに他ならない。実際、国家拡大の戦略のもと、Indian は分散され、縮小され、衰退の一途を辿ることになったのである。しかしそのような運命の中で今日、作家としての立場から活躍する彼らはアメリカ文学において以前とは異なる関係を築きつつある。

Love Medicine: 「題材」から「主体」へ

ここで、Louise Erdrich の *Love Medicine* を取り上げ、作品と従来のゴシック的 Indian 像との関係を考察してみたい。Chippewa 族の父とドイツ系の母を両親にもつ Erdrich は自身も North Dakota Turtle Mountain Chippewa の部族の一員として執筆活動を行っている。この作品は 1984 年に発表され、93 年に改訂版が発表されているが、本論では改訂版を採用することとする。North Dakota 州の架空の保留地を舞台に、June が雪の中で命を落とすシーンから物語は始まる。

Even when it started to snow she did not lose her sense of direction. Her feet grew numb, but she did not worry about the distance. The heavy winds couldn't blow her off course. She continued. Even when her heart clenched and her skin turned crackling cold it didn't matter, because the pure and naked part of her went on.

The snow fell deeper that Easter than it had in forty years, but June walked over it like water and came home.³

そしてこの後、保留地に住む彼女の一族が、June の死にいわば憑りつかれる形で物語が展開してゆく。June の夫である Gordie は June の生前、彼女を愛しているながらも虐待し、ついに彼女に去られてしまうのだが、彼女の死を知り、精神的なダメージを受ける。彼女の死後、酒を飲み始め

about the class and individual Dharma, goal-setting, and its perceived effect on their motivation to do well in the class. Each questionnaire was bilingual (English/Japanese) to insure optimal understanding of the statements. Students ranked their responses on a one to five scale; 1 being “Strongly Agree” and 5 being “Strongly Disagree.”

Results

Overall, each class achieved its class goal. The results of the surveys starting with the freshmen classes are below. The statements are numbered 1-10 (for a complete list of the statements see Appendix)

First Years

Reading/Writing I b

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	3/9	5/9	1/9	0	0
2	0	5/9	4/9	0	0
3	0	3/9	6/9	0	0
4	3/9	1/9	5/9	0	0
5	3/9	2/9	4/9	0	0
6	4/9	2/9	3/9	0	0
7	2/9	6/9	1/9	0	0
8	2/9	3/9	3/9	0	1/9
9	3/9	4/9	2/9	0	0
10	2/9	4/9	3/9	0	0

Oral Communication I a

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2/10	2/10	6/10	0	0
2	2/10	3/10	3/10	2/10	0
3	1/10	3/10	4/10	1/10	1/10
4	1/9*	1/9	6/9	1/9	0
5	2/10	6/10	1/10	1/10	0
6	2/10	4/10	4/10	0	0
7	3/10	4/10	3/10	0	0
8	3/10	2/10	5/10	0	0
9	2/10	3/10	5/10	0	0
10	1/10	2/10	5/10	2/10	0

* One of the respondents left this item blank.

Pronunciation I b

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	4/13	7/13	2/13	0	0
2	1/13	6/13	6/13	0	0
3	2/13	3/13	7/13	1/13	0
4	3/12*	3/12	6/12	0	0
5	3/11**	4/11	4/11	0	0
6	3/13	7/13	3/13	0	0
7	5/13	5/13	3/13	0	0
8	4/13	4/13	5/13	0	0
9	5/13	6/13	2/13	0	0
10	3/13	6/13	4/13	0	0

*One respondent left this item blank.

**Two respondents left this item blank.

Second Years

Pronunciation III B

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	1/10	6/10	2/10	0	1/10
2	1/10	1/10	7/10	1/10	0
3	1/10	1/10	6/10	2/10	0
4	1/10	2/10	7/10	0	0
5	1/10	4/10	5/10	0	0
6	1/10	4/10	5/10	0	0
7	1/10	4/10	4/10	1/10	0
8	1/10	6/10	3/10	0	0
9	3/10	4/10	1/10	1/10	1/10
10	1/10	2/10	5/10	1/10	1/10

Oral Communication III and 英語 5 b

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	1/11	7/11	2/11	1/11	0
2	0	5/11	4/11	2/11	0
3	0	4/11	6/11	1/11	0
4	3/11	2/11	5/11	1/11	0
5	1/11	7/11	2/11	1/11	0

6	2/11	3/11	5/11	1/11	0
7	3/11	4/11	3/11	1/11	0
8	1/11	4/11	5/11	1/11	0
9	3/11	4/11	4/11	0	0
10	2/11	4/11	4/11	1/11	0

Writing III a

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	0	3/8	3/8	2/8	0
2	1/8	3/8	3/8	1/8	0
3	0	1/8	4/8	3/8	0
4	1/8	2/8	2/8	3/8	0
5	0	3/8	3/8	2/8	0
6	1/8	2/8	3/8	2/8	0
7	0	4/8	4/8	0	0
8	0	5/8	2/8	1/8	0
9	0	1/8	5/8	2/8	0
10	0	3/8	1/8	4/8	0

Small Group Communication

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	0	4/7	2/7	1/7	0
2	1/7	2/7	2/7	1/7	0
3	0	0	4/7	3/7	0
4	1/7	3/7	2/7	0	1/7
5	1/7	3/7	3/7	0	0
6	2/7	1/7	3/7	1/7	0
7	3/7	3/7	1/7	0	0
8	1/7	5/7	0	1/7	0
9	1/7	2/7	4/7	0	0
10	0	1/7	4/7	2/7	0

Third years

Academic Writing I a

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

1	3/8	4/8	1/8	0	0
2	1/8	7/8	0	0	0
3	3/8	4/8	1/8	0	0
4	3/8	4/8	1/8	0	0
5	2/8	6/8	0	0	0
6	3/8	4/8	1/8	0	0
7	3/8	3/8	2/8	0	0
8	2/8	6/8	0	0	0
9	4/8	3/8	1/8	0	0
10	4/8	2/8	2/8	0	0

Advanced Oral Communication I a

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	5/9	2/9	2/9	0	0
2	2/9	3/9	3/9	1/9	0
3	2/9	2/9	4/9	1/9	0
4	1/9	4/9	3/9	0	1/9
5	5/9	3/9	0	1/9	0
6	3/9	4/9	2/9	0	0
7	4/9	5/9	0	0	0
8	4/9	3/9	1/9	0	0
9	3/9	4/9	2/9	0	0
10	5/9	3/9	1/9	0	0

Academic Reading I a

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	4/8	2/8	2/8	0	0
2	2/8	6/8	0	0	0
3	1/8	5/8	2/8	0	0
4	2/8	6/8	0	0	0
5	3/8	4/8	1/8	0	0
6	1/8	6/8	1/8	0	0
7	4/8	4/8	0	0	0
8	3/8	5/8	0	0	0
9	3/8	4/8	1/8	0	0
10	2/8	5/8	1/8	0	0

Discussion

From the results of the survey, it appears that the second year students tended to have the least positive attitude toward setting goals and seemed to be the least affected by goal-setting. However, setting goals seemed to be more effective among the first and third years. Students in “a” groups tended to agree with the statements more often and consistently than students from the “b” groups. The fact that all of the third years were from the “a” group might have some bearing on their positive attitudes toward goal-setting. 78% of the first years responded favorably; they circled either Strongly Agree or Agree, to statement number 7 concerning the effect the class goal had on their motivation. 61% of the second years also responded positively to statement number 7; however, 25% responded negatively; circling either “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree”, to statement number 3 concerning thinking about the class goal outside of class. At the same time, 76% of the third years responded favorably to item number 7, and 55% responded positively to statement number 2

regarding the class Dharma doll reminding them of the class goal.

Conclusion

Although the results of this study are encouraging, it should be noted that certain aspects of this study make it difficult to gauge whether or not goal-setting influenced the opinions of the respondents. The questionnaire was given after the study was implemented and there was no control group. Future studies should be conducted in which a questionnaire is given before and after the study to better show a correlation between goal-setting and performance and motivation. Nevertheless, the results of the survey show that the students could be receptive to goal-setting and may even be positively influenced by it. Therefore, it would be prudent to conduct a follow-up study in which the relationship between the students’ motivation and goal-setting is more closely and carefully examined through the use of a control group to which to compare the results and two questionnaires given before and after the study to determine a change in attitude.

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Appendix 1

Statements on the Questionnaire

1. I enjoyed drawing my daruma at the beginning of the semester.
私は春学期で達磨さんの絵を塗ることを楽しんでいました。
2. I thought about the class goal when I saw the class daruma every week.
私は毎週達磨さんの絵を見た時クラスの目標について考えました。
3. I thought about the class goal outside of class.
私は授業が終わった後クラスの目標について考えました。
4. When I was absent from class, I worried about the class goal.
私は欠席した時クラスの目標が出来るかどうか心配しました。
5. When I missed assignments, I worried about the class goal.
私は宿題を提出忘れた時、クラスの目標が出来るかどうか心配しました。
6. The class daruma reminded me of the class goal.
達磨さんの絵を見るたびにクラスの目標を思い出させました。
7. The class goal motivated me to do well in this class.
クラスの目標はクラスの中で私にとって良い刺激でした。
8. I did my best and I am happy with my performance in this class.
私は最善を尽くしたそして、このクラスの中で出来栄えが良かったので嬉しいです。
9. I look forward to receiving my daruma and coloring in the eye.
私は自分の達磨さんが描かれている紙をもらって目を黒く塗ることを楽しみにしています。
10. I will keep my daruma after this class ends.
私はこの授業が終わっても達磨さんが描かれている紙を持ち続けているだろう。