

THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER CHARISMA AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING[‡]

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Abstract

The present paper is devoted to the study of teacher charisma. This trait is necessary for every teacher who seeks to achieve the desired result in the classroom. This article aims to define what traits are needed for a teacher to attract and motivate learners, determine how teacher charisma can affect student engagement, and show how it can change demotivated learners' attitudes.

Moreover, the study focuses on the importance of certain teacher traits for imparting good knowledge, motivating learners, and molding strong and assertive individuals. Learners regain more confidence when a teacher supports and promotes them and is always ready to show, advise, and listen. Meanwhile, learners who are constantly criticized for mistakes in front of their peers or classmates often need more confidence.

Considering these fundamental aspects of teaching, charismatic teachers always succeed in attracting interested, engaged, motivated, and self-confident students.

Keywords: teacher charisma, inspiring learners, overcoming barriers, attracting students, vested interest in learning, bridging the gap, safe atmosphere.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, where technologies are developing faster than ever, teachers need to shift their attitude, methods, and strategies to attract learners who are often addicted to their gadgets or do not show interest in learning for this or that reason. To attract and motivate learners, teachers should create an environment where students can freely express ideas, inquire, learn, and explore. Teachers should possess certain traits that impart them charisma. Different articles discuss teacher charisma; however, there has been no clear definition or classification of what it is, how it affects learners' motivation, and its level of effectiveness in engaging learners.

In our research, an attempt is made to define the following aspects of teacher charisma:

- What are the necessary features of being a charismatic teacher?

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- How does teacher charisma affect student motivation?
- Can teacher charisma have a positive impact on the psychological state of a learner?

The research's results are novel because they specify how teachers could use their charisma to attract, encourage, and inspire demotivated learners.

Moreover, the novelty of our research is that it provides teachers with tips, guiding them on integrating and motivating learners by applying appropriate educational methods and considering certain socio-psychological aspects. This has proved to contribute to the betterment of instruction.

Effective teaching has always been the primary goal of every teacher. When a teacher enters a classroom, they have different tasks to fulfil. Language teachers should achieve specific destinations, for instance, to develop skills in a foreign language: reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Teaching these skills is a complicated, multi-layered process in which more than applying the proper methods is required for the desired outcome. Students are often found in different psychological states of mind. In the teaching process, this can become an obstacle hindering the achievement of the destination. All teachers encounter this situation. Charismatic teachers synchronize practical tools, methods, and approaches to create a more comfortable learning atmosphere. To engage every learner in the learning process and not leave out any learner, the teacher should create an atmosphere where all learners feel free to study. Teachers try to assist learners in different ways to make this complex process smoother. To promote students and boost their interest in the given subject, teachers should possess several qualities which could make them more attractive. The principal goal of a teacher should not only be imparting knowledge. A good teacher develops learners' skills, attracts, encourages, supports, changes attitudes, and creates strong personalities. When a teacher manages to attract learners, the effectiveness of instruction reaches a maximum level. This kind of attractiveness is called teacher charisma. Teacher charisma can bring even the laziest learners to the classroom and make them work by attracting their interest. Thus, with good knowledge and accurately chosen methods and techniques brought into the school, a teacher should be inspirational, charismatic, and gifted in several aspects.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher charisma has gained particular interest during the last decade. It has been discussed and studied from different perspectives, and much research has been done to specify its nature and importance.

In our study, we focus on teacher charisma, and our investigation shows that charisma is the most essential trait of a teacher. Charisma has always been considered an essential trait of every personality. Although it is preferable to be charismatic in life, in certain professions, it is necessary.

Before we discuss teacher charisma and its importance, let us begin by studying “charisma” itself. The word “charisma” is defined differently in different dictionaries. Let us represent some of them and discuss the main essence of its signification:

1. charisma – (n.) an extraordinary power that some people have naturally that makes them able to influence other people and attract their attention and admiration (Cambridge et al./<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/charisma/>).

2. charisma – (n.) a unique personal quality or power of an individual, making them capable of influencing or inspiring large numbers of people (Collins et al./<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/charisma/>).

3. charisma – (n.) the robust personal quality that some people have to attract and impress other people (Oxford Learner’s Dictionary Online <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/charisma?q=charisma/>).

From the abovementioned definitions, it can be inferred that charisma is a unique power that attracts and impresses people. From our perspective, teacher charisma is a unique gift that can inspire devotion, motivation, and love for what you do. This particular grace makes a teacher more attractive and inspiring. Although it is sometimes difficult to specify what mainly entails being charismatic, teacher charisma is the attractiveness and energy a teacher can inspire learners to show a vested interest in learning.

Some researchers argue that a charismatic teacher does not need to prepare for the lesson; their charisma is enough to conduct it. On one hand, this argument may be valid. On the other hand, teachers consistently achieve great success when they are well prepared, with knowledge and specific materials for every lesson. A charismatic teacher should pay attention to teaching methods (Huang & Lin, 2014), possess teaching skills, and be able to choose the most appropriate teaching tools. Charisma is the ability to attract the attention of others, and when someone attracts this attention, they must have something to tell the audience; otherwise, they will not be listened to. Thus, good knowledge and appropriate lesson planning are essential qualities that hold the audience's attention.

At the same time, a teacher who wants to achieve high performance in the classroom must be

strict and demanding and create an atmosphere of discipline. If a teacher is strict but enjoys the love and respect of students, it can be evidence of good traits, and it is also a sign pointing to the fact that the teaching techniques are chosen correctly. Apart from paying particular attention to teaching methods, a charismatic teacher should be knowledgeable, friendly, approachable, patient, and enthusiastic (Huang & Lin, 2014). Besides, a charismatic teacher should have a good sense of humour (Huang & Lin, 2014). Students prefer listening to teachers who incorporate humour into the lecture (Minchew, 2001; Neumann et al., 2009). Thus, to attract students and appealing them to learn, a teacher should possess certain positive traits that make a teacher charismatic. A teacher having the mentioned behaviours has to teach *charisma*.

It should be mentioned that a teacher's charisma and student engagement are closely interrelated, as charisma dramatically enhances students' involvement in the learning process. Different studies have proved the significance of emphasizing student engagement (Chapman, 2003; Klem & Connell, 2004; Finn & Rock, 1997; Zepke & Leach, 2010; Huang & Lin, 2014, etc.). The most crucial factor is the interaction between students and teachers. In our opinion, this aspect is essential in the teaching process because, without interaction, the atmosphere in the classroom will not be friendly.

Some researchers claim that the teacher-student relationship should be firmly established on a certain level. This will help to create a classroom based on mutual trust and confidence (Hagenauer, 2014; UNESCO, 2015). Moreover, this can give learners a sense of belonging in the school (Willms, 2009; Alrabai, 2022). Thus, engagement can best be achieved through emotional, social, and psychological elements.

Other researchers think positive assessment could help engage students (Brown et al., 2004; Krstikj, 2022). We also agree that assessment plays a focal role in motivating learners, as this often becomes a source of inspiration for them. Alongside these aspects, the most critical skill nowadays is the teacher's knowledge of technology integration, called ***technological pedagogical content knowledge*** (Kohler, Mishra, 2009). Knowledge of modern-day technology is needed for effective teaching in a new world. It is difficult to imagine what teachers would do during the pandemic without knowledge of technology. Moreover, language teachers cannot do without this knowledge, as it is needed at every step for developing language skills.

Teachers' charisma directly affects students, as students who perceive that their teachers have a high level of charisma show more interest in learning (Raelin, 2006; Whitehead, 2019).

Furthermore, to raise student interest in the classroom, teachers are advised to choose instructional materials according to the needs of learners because providing meaningful choices can increase the students' interest (Rotgans, 2011; Ross, 2019). This approach to teaching has proved to be effective, as our observations have shown that some learners usually stay back from being engaged in the learning process due to certain factors (social, emotional, and psychological). However, when a teacher tackles these questions correctly, it helps to overcome fears, shame, and complexes, and the learner usually gets inspired to join and feels free to become part of the group.

Recent studies have focused on student motivation under remote learning conditions due to the pandemic. Some researchers think that numerous technical, psychological, and pedagogical challenges have prompted educators to seek ways to improve their performance (Aristovnik, 2020; Dahleez, 2021; Kuziukova, 2024).

Other researchers have proven that online learning has different effects on learners. Some groups have benefited, whereas others have mentioned experiencing discomfort and specific difficulties in joining online classes (Aristovnik, 2020; Filali, 2022; Hong et al., 2022; Lui Zhao, 2022; Pelikan, 2021; Mushtaque, 2021).

Many teachers have started using more technology and paying attention to attracting learners during the pandemic; from our perspective, teacher charisma should not only be applied during remote teaching.

Face-to-face teaching requires more charisma than online teaching, or at least all forms of teaching (online or offline) should be organized with charisma.

Within the scope of the present research, we have surveyed to determine what experience learners had during online classes. Our case study aimed to determine what feedback learners could give concerning their emotional and psychological state of mind. Moreover, we aimed to determine whether it had been possible to establish emotional harmony between teachers and peers when studying online. Students asked to reflect upon their experience of distance learning during the pandemic mentioned discomfort connected with the psychological aspects of not having face-to-face contact with their teachers. About 60% said they needed specific emotional space to be closer to the teacher and comfortable. Others mentioned they felt more relaxed about online learning because they could save time and did not feel the lack of emotional 'ties' in the classroom (20%). Everything was good for them. Another group of learners (20%) claimed that their teachers could impart certain emotions from the other side of the display, which kept them involved. This made the

process easier.

Our studies and observations have shown that charisma is indispensable to teaching.

METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out using the observation method. An observational study was carried out over a long period, during which focus groups were considered closely. Furthermore, the observation was realized by focusing on the practical approach. All the factors and details were studied on the practical level. Student behaviour, performance, engagement, and participation were observed. Solutions were found that could bridge the gap between the theoretical and practical approaches. Psychological and pedagogical aspects were mainly considered while analyzing different facts constituting the research material. This method helped us delve into the matter, as theory is always different from practice. Because each learner has different needs and backgrounds, it is often more effective to be based on practice.

Teaching is an ever-changing process, so a charismatic teacher is always flexible enough to adapt to the needs of learners and the time. Different groups of students and their educational needs have been observed in the learning process. Due to the individual approach in teaching practice, specific methods (see the Results section) have been elaborated to solve the difficulties and problems that learners usually encounter.

Highlighting the importance of teacher charisma and its positive role in the teaching process, we have conducted a multilateral study, considering the experience that students have mentioned. Several special case studies conducted with first-year students have clarified and proved the importance and effectiveness of teacher charisma. They were questioned about their study stimulus. After having generalized and summed up the results of our study, we can state that 4 out of 10 students answered that they had faced the problem of being demotivated by their teachers. Teachers told them they did not have the mental abilities to learn a language.

Moreover, mistakes made in oral speech or written works have often become a topic of severe criticism, sometimes even mockery. This resulted in a lack of self-confidence and a certain aloofness towards the subject, which was preserved for a long time. Consequently, they started to lose interest in the subject and believed they could not learn a language. Thus, students often recalled having sad experiences with their studies.

Considering students' experience, we have constantly tried to “persuade” them that they were

endowed with the skills needed for learning a language. To do this, time and effort were needed to reach our goal. Efforts required to help students regain confidence in themselves consisted of regularly engaging them in group work, specific tasks given in the classroom, and getting them involved in the lesson. An individual approach was mainly applied by asking only particular parts from the text (guessing the learner was sure to answer), giving individual tasks that the learner could fulfil, correcting mistakes through repetition (without interruption), and, most importantly, praising. Remarkably, this kind of approach was a pivotal point for their attitude shift.

What learners need for motivation is a space where they feel comfortable: self-confidence, support (from the teacher), and a non-stressful environment.

After a short period, students said they felt motivated and regained interest in the subject. Moreover, they mentioned that their teacher's specific methods and attitudes fostered their self-confidence. They felt they started to get more interested in the subject, particularly watching movies in the target language (English), listening to songs, and even freely communicating with their acquaintances on social networks.

Thus, the methods and approaches used to engage students were related to the trait of a teacher responsible for attracting learners in all aspects: teacher charisma.

Feedback was the most important and motivating factor for a teacher. After a poor experience, learners could see the advantages of being a student with an inspirational teacher—a teacher who can create an atmosphere in which they claim to feel motivated and self-confident.

RESULTS

The results and findings discussed in this article could be applied in teaching to make the instruction process more learner-oriented. As mentioned above, not all students feel confident expressing their language skills in front of their peers or teachers. For this reason, irrespective of the teacher's strictness, the atmosphere in the classroom should be relaxed. When there is no strain, even shy students, who usually lack confidence or feel awkward participating in discussions, reading in front of peers, or expressing ideas, will get involved in the learning process.

It should be mentioned that student engagement in the teaching process is an essential key to student achievement, as it directly affects student behaviour, attendance, performance, test scores, etc. To increase student engagement in the learning process, teachers should put a particular emphasis on motivation. Student motivation is undoubtedly a constituent part of the teaching

techniques that a teacher should focus on. This is because a student who is not motivated or has a shallow level of motivation is not sure to study correctly. As we know, the same group of students can be encouraged in one lesson, interested in some subject, and completely oblivious and uninterested in another. Students with no interest in a subject may have low attendance, which usually causes terrible performance. When a student wants to attend classes only of some teachers, it is due to the particular technique teachers use in the classroom. Not only the teacher's knowledge but also their teaching methods are essential.

Different scientists have carried out studies to classify appropriate teaching methods. In this broad variety of suggestions, let us introduce some practical means of creating a learner-oriented classroom that, from our perspective, has had successful results.

Our observations have mainly focused on teacher charisma, which has proved irreplaceable in attracting, inspiring, and supporting learners in their studies. Thus, the results of our study show that a charismatic teacher is a teacher who can manage the classroom by creating an atmosphere where every student/learner is encouraged to develop and learn. Moreover, every learner should be equally engaged in the learning process. To engage all students, a charismatic teacher needs to motivate them. **Different techniques can stimulate student engagement. However, charismatic teachers usually adopt the following approaches:**

- A charismatic teacher tries to incorporate *fun* into the lesson. Language can be easily taught through funny stories, sayings, phrases, etc. Moreover, an inspirational teacher should be able to joke and know what kind of jests and humour could be accepted among the given age group and what trendy jokes are actually in the given period. All this should stay within the limits of teacher-learner relations, and the humour should be comprehensible for learners. Our observations have shown that a slight joke familiar to students/learners can bridge the seemingly insurmountable gap between the teacher and the student. Moreover, jokes and humour could break barriers and create an atmosphere of trust and self-confidence for learners. Thus, fun and humour integrated into the teaching process could engage more interested learners and make it more inspiring.

- Another vital technique for encouraging students and assessing your lesson effectiveness is asking for *feedback*. This approach will help you adjust the methods and materials to the needs of your learners. Besides, it is always essential to inquire about learners' experiences during the course or when fulfilling this task. Moreover, this kind of attitude will help teachers to improve and rethink methods and to constantly develop better ideas and initiatives for planning the lesson and creating a

student/learner-oriented classroom. Thus, a charismatic teacher always asks for feedback from the part of the learners.

▪ ***Choosing appropriate topics*** for discussion is another helpful approach to building a safe atmosphere for learners, particularly for less encouraged learners. A topic chosen within the scope of interests of learners can stimulate and engage them in a discussion that can develop speaking skills. Being involved in such talks, learners often forget about different boundaries and obstacles that previously kept them reserved. A charismatic teacher chooses appropriate topics, and this method stimulates learners' free speech, especially those who do not feel confident enough to express ideas freely.

▪ ***Support*** is another tool that helps a charismatic teacher create a classroom where every student can learn, explore, and discover new horizons. As we know, learners might have different problems in life, with which they struggle daily trying to find solutions. This causes psychological troubles and complications that can often hinder learning. A charismatic teacher should always consider this and try to make the learning process more inviting. This could be done by distracting learners from daily problems by supporting and encouraging them through different classroom activities, teamwork, group tasks, etc. When students feel the teacher's support, they become more motivated to participate in class projects and perform educational tasks. Teacher support highly motivates learners and boosts their creativity.

▪ ***Praise*** is an indispensable constituent of a teaching process, seeking to produce effective results. Earlier teaching methods were more focused on criticism, based on the strict and critical treatment of students/learners. Meanwhile, a learner being criticized in front of his peers usually avoids answering and remains unnoticed, ensuring that another answer can give rise to new criticism. This will bring a drop in ratings among peers. Teachers should replace criticism with praise to prevent this and keep learners motivated.

▪ Another skill needed for being a charismatic teacher is properly ***correcting mistakes***. Correcting mistakes is a technique that needs an extraordinary approach, especially when the mistake is made in oral speech. Teachers often interrupt the learner and correct mistakes in rude manners. This could cause inconvenience from a psycholinguistic point of view. Many learners feel awkward about continuing after the correction of a mistake; they get confused and forget what they meant to say.

Consequently, the speech is interrupted, and the learner becomes discouraged to go on further.

Whereas when the teacher smiles and repeats the sentence uttered by the learner in the correct form, the mistake is remembered and corrected in later attempts. Thus, proper correction of mistakes is a skill that should be applied with specific proficiency. A charismatic teacher masters the art of correcting mistakes.

The abovementioned tips can help a teacher become more inspirational, which will significantly impact students' motivation and engagement. The enumerated tools have been applied to support learners, and the results have proved effective.

Our study shows that the implementation of these tools:

- Enhances teaching effectiveness,
- boosts learner confidence,
- makes the learning process more comfortable.

DISCUSSIONS

Teacher charisma has recently gained importance and has become a matter of active research. With the increasing development of different technologies, it is increasingly becoming incumbent upon teachers to attract students' attention because the speedy pace of life has radically changed learners' needs and studying formats. During the process of their studies, not all students feel motivated; this is because they either lack interest in learning the given subject or they often feel embarrassed for this or that reason.

Teachers often try to help their students overcome specific psychological barriers. The process of developing the mentioned skills is not always easy because different students have different levels of knowledge and performance, and, most importantly, students usually have different degrees of motivation. Student motivation is one of the most critical challenges teachers overcome at every lesson, giving them the drive and energy to engage in the learning process.

The implications brought out in our study cover the research question, which helps us depict and define the main features needed for being a charismatic teacher. Thus, a charismatic teacher should be *strict, knowledgeable, have good lesson planning*, and possess the following traits:

- sense of humour,
- flexibility,
- friendly character.
- A charismatic teacher should:

- praise,
- support,
- boost the self-confidence of learners and establish good relations with them,
- be able to understand the psychological state of a learner.

Teacher charisma significantly affects student motivation by actively engaging them in learning. Moreover, teacher charisma can positively impact from a social-psychological point of view, particularly by creating a non-stressful environment for learners, integrating them into the group, and creating self-confident and assertive individuals.

After conducting our study and defining the criteria needed for a charismatic teacher and the effects of teacher charisma on student motivation, we can state that each of the enumerated aspects could be studied separately, which would imply opening new horizons for further research.

CONCLUSIONS

Specific characteristics of a teacher can motivate and engage learners and become a reason for students to attend classes actively. Teachers become popular and deeply attracted by students due to their positive traits, behaviour, and ability to charm students. Due to their talent of leadership, charm, and magnetic appeal, charismatic teachers usually attract students by creating a safe atmosphere for them. In such an environment, a learner or a student can feel at ease learning, exploring, discovering, creating, expressing themselves, acquiring new acquaintances and friends, attaining knowledge, and finally, shaping character.

We should mention that all the enumerated factors are of utmost importance. Whatever refers to the last one, shaping character is also one of the most focal tasks or, maybe, the final destination of a teacher. What we mean here is that teachers “create” personalities. However, charismatic teachers create self-confident, responsible, open-minded, humorous, responsive, and knowledgeable students who turn into psychologically intense personalities. This could play an indispensable role in terms of pedagogy. If every teacher considers this essential pedagogical and psychological aspect of teaching, the number of engaged learners will exceed the number of uninterested learners. Teachers could also benefit from having motivated learners, as when there is positive feedback, the teacher gets more motivated to update the instruction methods and approaches.

Charismatic teachers usually attract and inspire even the laziest, not interested learners. When someone is at the start of becoming a teacher, he or she recalls and combines the best methods

applied by the best teachers. All of us have been lucky enough to be the students of a charismatic teacher or teacher. We, as teachers, try to combine the newest methods with those we can recall, the best methods that have made us learn with pleasure, with particular eagerness, raising sympathy towards the teacher and the subject itself. Charisma is a trait that cannot be taught at school or the university: it is something a person possesses. This trait belongs to those features inherent in a person. However, when not inherent in a person, charisma can be developed due to extraordinary efforts.

Thus, the teacher has a significant impact on students due to the charisma he or she possesses, which can motivate students to progress in learning. Teachers have a colossal role in effective learning by engaging and motivating students to participate fully in the class. Student engagement can be considered class attendance, active participation, task fulfilment, and feedback. In this case, students get higher grades on achievement tests. On the other hand, students who are not engaged in the learning process usually have low attendance and even drop out of their studies. Student engagement is, thus, closely related to student performance.

Moreover, student engagement can help many students adjust to the new atmosphere they are not well acquainted with. So, teacher charisma can significantly contribute to effectively creating a learner-oriented classroom. Teacher charisma can boost involved learning, drive students to active learning, and produce a successful outcome.

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