

# Possible Selves as Individual's Ideas over Culture Learning : Reconceptualizing Motivation in Second Language Acquisition

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

A number of second language (L2) researchers have investigated the role of motivation in L2 learning and identified motivation is one of the key influences on language learning success, since Gardner and Lambert (1959) recognized the role of attitudes and motivation in L2 learning. Gardner (1985) defines motivation to learn L2 as “the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity” (p.10). Gardner (1985) proposed that there are three major components in this definition: devoted effort, a desire to learn, and satisfaction with the task, which are necessary to evaluate the degree and intensity of motivation in L2 learning. He also postulated that motivation is the primary factor in successful L2 learning and determines the extent to which learners actively engage in L2 learning.

Motivational constructs have received a lot of interest in second language acquisition (SLA) research in the past several decades. Ushioda (2009) summarizes reasons for interest in motivation in SLA: “Primarily, SLA researchers have been interested in motivation because it seems to play such an important role in whether learners learn or not, how much effort they put into learning, how long they persist at learning, and how successfully they learn a language” (p.

218). Motivation is a complex construct to define but one cannot deny its importance in language learning because it not only helps determine the level of involvement in learning (Okada, Oxford & Abo, 1996) but it helps maintain the students' language ability beyond the classroom (Gardner, Lalonde, Moorcroft, & Evers, 1985 in Okada et al.s, 1996). Gardner (2001) stated that this construct encourages greater effort on the part of the learner and thus, greater success in language performance.

In continuing the attempt to depict the complexity of motivation, Crookes and Schmidt (1991) suggest an expanded definition of L2 motivation "in terms of choice, engagement, and persistence" (p. 502). They state that motivation to learn a language has both internal and external features. Their motivational structure includes four internal attitudinal factors such as interest in the L2 learning based on experiences, relevance, expectancy of success or failure and outcomes or rewards. It also includes external or behavioral characteristics such as the student's decision to engage in L2 learning, the student's perseverance, and the student's maintenance of high activity level.

Dörnyei (1994) stresses that many aspects of L2 motivation do not nearly fit into earlier paradigms. He suggests additional components such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, goal setting, and cognitive components such as self-efficacy, self-confidence, need for achievement, and course specific, teacher specific and group specific components (Oxford, 1996). Ryan (2006) points out that motivation and individuals are not fixed, and that motivation changes over time in response to interactions with others and the target language. Dörnyei (2001) offers a model that explains the temporal variation of motivation and adds to its dynamic character. He states that learners could experience a dramatic variation in their motivation over a longer period of time and in order to capture this variation, he proposes to adopt a new approach that can consider the changes of motivation over time. Even though this model helps to think about motivation as a construct that can change over-time, it provides a very linear representation that perceives every motivated individual as a self-directed learner.

Much of the research on the socio-educational model has explored the role of motivation in learning L2 and its importance in producing individual differences in the various forms of SLA (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1992, 1993). Whereas the socio-educational model has incorporated new research findings, the basic model has consistently been replicated (Gardner & Macintyre, 1992, 1993).

In Gardner's (2001) revised socio-educational model of SLA, the author proposes "integrativeness" and "attitudes toward learning situation" influence motivation. Here "integrativeness" entails "a genuine interest in learning the second language in order to come close psychologically to the other language community" (p. 7) while "attitude toward learning situation" refers to attitudes toward any aspect of the learning contexts such as attitudes toward the teacher or classmates. These two factors influence "motivation," which is "the driving force in any situation" (p. 8). To learn L2, Gardner said, a learner should have three elements, effort, desire, and positive affect, and the intensity of these elements are what distinguishes motivated person from less motivated person. A motivated learner has a strong desire to attain L2 proficiency, so she/he shows extensive effort to learn the language.

Moreover, she/he enjoys the process of learning the language. If a learner lacks any of these elements, she/he has a lower level of motivation than the one who exhibits all three elements.

As Gardner suggests "attitudes and motivation are important because they reflect an active involvement on the part of the student in the entire process of learning a second language" (1985, p. 45). Because motivation is a difficult affective factor to define and measure, it has long been the subject of much controversy. In regard to SLA theory, various definitions of motivation exist. The context of motivation may be a distinguishing factor in defining differences between attitudes and motivation. Motivational psychologists tend to focus more on the "motors of human behavior in the individual rather than in the social being" and deal with concepts such as instinct, drive, need, anxiety, and cognitive appraisals of success, failure, etc. (Dörnyei, 1994, p. 274).

Yet another definition of motivation may conceptualize motivation as a general or situation-specific state. Referring to motivation as a general state refers to an "enduring disposition to value learning for its own sake," while situation-specific motivation suggests that "a state of motivation to learn exists when students engage themselves purposefully in classroom tasks by trying to master the concepts or skills involved" (Brophy, 1983, p. 200). Both general trait and situation-specific motivation can be applicable to L2 learning depending on the context and personal goals of the individual.

While implications of motivational studies by researchers point to the need for more specific studies on various aspects of motivation, "Like attitude, motivation has been defined many ways. Too often, it has been referred to by educators" as a simple explanation of achievement. The problem with this is that it says nothing about the language learning process, the conceptual meaning of motivation or the reason for any occasion" (Dodick, 1996, p. 580).

Many studies have been conducted on motivation. The wealth of studies by researchers supports the importance of motivational research in the language learning field, and it is needed to reconsider various interpretations on motivation.

## **2. OLDER THEORIES**

### **2.1. The Socio-educational model**

Motivation has been considered an individually different variable in L2 learning, in that learners' attitudes toward the target language and community influence their success in L2 learning. The two basic orientations for L2 learning are integrative and instrumental motivation, according to the socio-educational model proposed by Gardner and Lambert (1972). They defined integrative motivation as a desire to learn L2 in order to meet and communicate with members of the target group, whereas an instrumental motivation indicates the desire to obtain something practical or concrete from learning L2, such as meeting the requirements for school or university graduation, applying for a job, or qualifying for higher pay (Vandergrift, 2005).

The model described by Gardner was seen as a good start to understanding motivation within the second language acquisition (Dörnyei, 2005; Hashimoto, 2002; MacIntyre, MacMas-

ter & Baker, 2001). Although Gardner's proposition have been used, cited and extensively supported, it has practically gone unchallenged until the 1990s (Dörnyei, 2005). In addition, the many facets of motivation within SLA classroom was suggested to be very robust to be limited to just intergrativeness and instrumentation (Dörnyei, 2005; Rueda & Chen, 2005). Researchers find that Gardner's model excludes some variables, and that limited concepts of cognition, and self-efficacy are mentioned (Dörnyei, 2005; MacIntyre, MacMaster & Baker, 2001; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990).

In his socio-educational model (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & Lambert, 1972), Gardner later proposed that integratively oriented learners would be more successful in SLA than instrumentally oriented learners. However, the results of Gardner and Lambert (1972) and others challenged the superiority of the integrative orientation to SLA. One reason proposed for this inconsistency in findings was that the relationship between motivation and success in SLA was not in fact uni-directional, and that perhaps success in SLA could lead to greater motivation as well (Gardner, 1985; Skehan, 1989; Strong, 1984).

More recent research did not support the superiority of integrative motivation. The arguments are that there are ambiguities in definitions between integrative and instrumental motivation (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 1990, 1994). According to Crookes and Schmidt (1991), traditional research on integrative versus instrumental motivation in learning L2 that maintained Gardner's socio-educational framework, failed to differentiate motivation from social attitude. However, in Gardner's (1988) more recent socio-educational model, motivation is no longer equivalent to attitudes toward the L2 community.

It has more recently been argued that these two orientations are not mutually exclusive, and learners are not motivated solely by one goal or another but rather may have several reasons for learning a language, although some may be more important than others (Noels, 2001). Gardner does not currently claim that integrative motivation is more influential than instrumental or any other type of motivation, but simply that those who are motivated will probably be more successful in L2 learning than those who are not so motivated (Crooks & Schmidt, 1991, p. 474).

After the 1990s, several studies on L2 motivation extended Gardner's socio-educational model, adding new elements from general psychology, educational psychology, and cognitive psychology, which have subsequently developed a number of cognitive constructs. Ellis (1994) argued that Gardner's distinction between integrative and instrumental motivation is somewhat limited, because it does not consider the effects of the learning experiences and the learning conditions of the learners. In other words, learners cannot be defined simply as integratively or instrumentally motivated without considering the relationship between the language learner and the language learning context. The proposed extended model is influenced by (1) the need for achievement (Dörnyei, 1990); (2) learners' self-confidence (Clement, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994); (3) learners' goal setting (Tremblay & Gardner, 1995); (4) expectancy-value (Shaaban & Ghaith, 2000); (5) attribution about past failures (Dörnyei, 1990); and (6) intrinsic and extrinsic motivation based on self-determination about the goal to pursue (Noels, et al., 2000).

Gardner (2006) stated later that a learner's motivation is influenced by cultural context

where she/he lives and educational context where she/he learns L2, but he illustrated “cultural context” apart from “educational context” as if they are two separate entities. Gardner (2006), after explaining how cultural and educational milieu influence the development of two sets of attitudinal variables, the one toward the other language community and the other toward the learning situation, he concluded:

In my opinion, the distinction between integrative and instrumental motivation, or between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation does not help to explain the role played by motivation in second language learning. Our research has demonstrated that it is the intensity of the motivation in its broadest sense, incorporating the behavioral, cognitive, and affective components, that is important, (p. 12).

This concluding remark seems to imply that language achievement is ultimately depended upon the individual and this belief has been accepted long in second language development. For example, Krashen's (1982) affective filter hypothesis suggests that motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety which are involved in SLA processes are individual rather than social variables. In short, L2 learning is up to each individual's willingness to learn the target language. However, if cultural and educational contexts are influencing a learner's integrativeness and attitudes toward the situation, how can the intensity of individual effort isolated from the social context where she/he is situated? Norton's (2000) study for one found that language learner's affective filter is in complex relationship to the larger Canadian society. Although all the participants in Norton's (2000) study were highly motivated to learn English, they chose to learn and use English in certain situations but not in others. Mostly, they chose not to speak English when they felt that their desired identities were compromised.

Motivation eventually came to be situated within the context of individual learner differences, a term used to group together the various factors thought to influence SLA. These included cognitive factors, such as intelligence, language aptitude, and language learning strategies; affective factors, such as motivation, language attitudes, personality, and language anxiety (Ellis, 1994; Mitchell & Myles, 1998).

Breaking away from the socio-educational tradition, other scholars have suggested that the nature of motivation may be dependent on context and/or interaction and that the individual may play a certain role. For example, Kruidenier and Clement (1986) and Julkunen (1989, 2001) have examined the role played by context in motivation, and Sajavaara (1994), Williams and Burden (1997), and Williams, Burden, and Al-Bahama (2001) have stressed the importance of studying motivation from the perspective of the learner. Finally, Williams and Burden (1997) have also concentrated on the social origins of motivation, on learner internal and external factors influencing motivation, and on the link between motivation and particular actions.

## **2.2. Cognition and task**

The Motivation construct by Gardner (1985) has been criticized as lacking the cognitive

aspects of motivation, which have been shown to positively contribute to the motivation of second language learners (Dörnyei, 1990; Pintricht, 2003).

It is now clear that motivation has an effect on learning; however, the relation is complex and requires more investigation of the precise nature of this relationship. Currently there are a significant number of theories of motivation in learning, a large number of relevant variables, each addressing a separate aspect of this complex construct. Unlike cognitive factors, the conative field remains fragmented and unorganized (Snow, Corno & Jackson, 1996). When considered together, these variables do not combine into a larger theoretical construct: the relationships between many of them are unclear and there still remain untouched areas for further research (Weiner, 1990). This is partially because motivation study is an attempt to answer one of the fundamental questions: why do human beings behave the way they do? (Dörnyei, 2003).

To describe relatively recent theories of motivation, it is possible to refer to the affective-conative-cognitive framework of Snow, Corno, and Jackson (1996). The advantage of this framework has its comprehensiveness: it allows for discussion of all current major and minor conative constructs and variables, and has a potential of incorporating yet undiscovered variables. Due to its organization along an affect-conation-cognition continuum, it also provides a conceptual base for a comprehensive discussion of motivation theories in relation to the constructs of cognition.

In addition, The scientific study of motivation has witnessed a parallel process to that undergone by general psychology. This is not only true of general motivation but also of academic motivation research (Graham & Weiner, 1996), which is the focus of the present study. These facts have given rise to different cognitive theories of academic motivation which, in turn, emphasize different aspects of the motivational spectrum. Researchers with a cognitive approach to motivation (Boekaert, 1991; Dweck, 1986, 1989; Weiner, 1985) place greater emphasis on the learners' internal processes, often disregarding any contextual factors (Bong, 1996). However, as the importance of contextual factors has been agreed upon by most researchers (Manolopoulou-Sergi, 2004), several social-cognitive approaches to educational motivation (Ames, 1992; Pintrich & Schrauben, 1992) have emerged since the early 1990s.

These cognitive-situated approach therefore investigated task motivation. Julkunen (1989) defined task motivation: "when task characteristics are the focus of attention in situation specific motivation, the term task motivation can be used" (Julkunen, 1989, p. 43). Ushioda set out to investigate motivation from a contemporary cognitive perspective which sees motivation as "more than the demonstration of effortful activity or time spent on a task" (Ushioda, 1998, p. 78). In other words, learners' cognitive processes in relation to the task and the environment are important factors to consider in the study of motivation. This characterization of motivation contrasts clearly with what was investigated in the previous socio-psychological period where a more stable and general type of motivation was emphasized. If general motivation to enroll in a course or to improve the language was related to SLA, task motivation is thought to be related to the effort displayed in performing the task. The connection is now much more direct with no missing links, how the learners feel about the task

is thought to have an effect on engagement and persistence when doing the task (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991), which might translate in better performance.

Whenever possible, a task can be presented as interesting and exciting activity, as well as a valuable activity for the students' ultimate goals of becoming proficient in a language. At the same time such a motivational intervention should be coupled with a task planning activity with a focus on form or a focus on content conducted in the target language in order to encourage the students to improve on their ability. It is also possible that such a motivational intervention alone would produce a differentiating effect on the students' speech if it immediately precedes a less interesting task than the one used in the study, but nonetheless indispensable for the students' progress.

Turner (1995) pointed out that motivated learners demonstrate interest and commitment when learning through initiating, sustaining, and prolonging engagement. Students who are intrinsically motivated use a combination of behaviors including strategic reading, persistence and volitional control. Volitional control pertains to students maintaining engagement to complete the task and to learn from it. Therefore, academic tasks should be developed to encourage students to use self-management and self-regulatory learning strategies (Turner & Paris, 1995). Turner (1995) found that when students were given the opportunity to engage in these types of learning activities and materials, they showed a greater use of self-regulated learning and higher self-efficacy.

### **2.3. Self-efficacy and self-regulation**

Motivation, or the willingness to initiate and sustain goal directed activity, is influenced by self-efficacy (Henk & Melnick, 1998; Jinks & Morgan, 1999; Pajares & Schunk, 2001; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Schunk & Rice, 1993). Beliefs of personal efficacy, therefore, are not dependent on one's abilities but instead on what one believes may be accomplished with one's personal skill set. Thus, self-efficacy beliefs are often better predictors of success than prior accomplishments, skills, or knowledge (Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991; Schunk, 1991). Such beliefs influence individuals' pursued courses of action, effort expended in given endeavors, persistence in the confrontation of obstacles, and resilience to adversity. Self-efficacious individuals will therefore approach challenges with the intention and anticipation of mastery, intensifying their efforts and persistence accordingly.

In a meta-analysis of self-efficacy research published between 1977 and 1988, Multon, Brown, and Lent (1991) found a positive relationship between efficacy beliefs and academic achievement over a decade of published research. The analyses revealed that self-efficacy accounted for approximately 14% of the variance in academic performance, effect sizes or strength indexes being stronger for the academic attainments of high school and college students. Graham and Weiner's (1996) review of motivational research revealed similar results with their finding that self-efficacy more consistently predicted academic performance than other motivational constructs. Such research findings indicate the strong influence of students' perceptions of academic potential on academic behaviors and performance.

This self-system enables individuals to exercise a measure of control over five distinctly

human capabilities: symbolizing, forethought, vicarious learning, self-regulation, and self-reflection. Individuals, therefore, make choices and choose their course of action, self-examine the adequacy of their behavior and interpret the outcomes, develop beliefs about their capabilities, and finally mentally store this information to be used as a guide for future behavior. Bandura (1997) considered the practice of self-reflection to be the most influential arbiter of human agency. Through this process of reflective self-examination, individuals evaluate the adequacy of their thoughts, behavior, and motivation and alter their thinking and subsequent behavior accordingly.

By setting personally challenging goals (Schunk, 1990) and implementing effective strategies to achieve those goals (Zimmerman, 1989), self-regulated learners exercise control over their own behavior. The more efficacious self-regulators often implement more learning strategies and perform better academically. Those with less self-regulatory skills, conversely, often employ fewer learning strategies and set fewer proximal goals resulting in lower academic achievement (Bandura, 1997). Furthermore, researchers have found that the higher the individual's perceived self-efficacy, the higher the engagement in more effective self-regulatory strategies (Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990; Schunk & Ertmer, 2000). An individual's self-efficacy for self-regulated learning has been proven to influence motivation, engagement in self-regulatory strategies, and academic achievement (Zimmerman, 1990; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). A major goal in encouraging student motivation is to encourage students to be self-regulated learners. Self-regulation is an important aspect of student learning and academic performance in the classroom (Paris & Paris, 2001; Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990; Zimmerman, 1998). Self-regulation can be defined as self-generated thought, feelings, and actions for attaining academic goals (Zimmerman, 1998). Furthermore, students who are self-regulated have motivating characteristics such as goal setting, self-belief, and intrinsic interest.

#### **2.4. Dynamic and qualitative**

Ushioda (1996) focused on the dynamic nature of L2 motivations. She referred to the work carried out by Gardner and associates (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993) in which their conceptualization of motivation is claimed to be dynamic. These authors claimed that motivation is subject to change, since there is a reciprocal causation between attitudinal/motivational variables and language learning and achievement. Learners' affective attributes are bound to change, depending on the actual learning experiences they go through. Ushioda agreed with this dynamic view of motivation but finds that the traditional quantitative research methods are not properly suited to capture motivational fluctuation: "... the traditional methodology in SLA research on motivation, based on obtaining composite indices of amount of motivation, is limited in scope to the investigation of causal and resultative changes in global levels of motivation and achievement" (p. 241). Ushioda's study, therefore, set out to investigate to explore qualitative developments in motivational experience over time as well as the contextual factors that come into play in the shaping of this dynamic concept of motivation (Ushioda, 1996).

Some researchers emphasize the importance of using qualitative approaches to comple-



ment the largely quantitative tradition of individually different research (Hashimoto, 2002, p. 35). For example, Kasper (1998) pointed out that the multimethod approach could first reduce any possible task-bias, and consequently could increase in the level of objectivity in the findings. Second, similar findings from a number of instruments lead to a higher degree of reliability than reliance on a single source (p. 205).

Ushioda argued that less successful learners in her sample cannot be defined as being less motivated or even demotivated by their negative learning experiences. In her view, they "seemed to define their motivation in qualitatively different way" (Ushioda, 1998, p. 84). From a qualitative perspective, however, activity involves specific cognitive-mediational processes, such as information processing, meta-cognitive processes, and attributions, "This binary conceptualization of motivation is consistent with the one held in the study in which both perspectives are investigated on their own and combined. In addition, it goes along the lines set by several researchers in the field of SLA who have emphasized the increased power of analysis derived from the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods" (Dörnyei 2001, 2003). These two intrinsically different methodological perspectives make use of differing elicitation techniques "to bring out the best of both approaches while neutralizing the shortcomings and biases inherent in each paradigm" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 242).

### 3. CULTURE LEARNING

Culture and language are inseparable. Language learning is the starting point but culture learning is the goal in L2 learning (Swiderski, 1993). In current perspectives of L2 learning, language researchers and educators consistently point out that L2 can rarely be learned or taught without understanding the culture of the community where the target language is used (Hinkel, 1999). Accordingly, considerable attention has been given to conceptualizing the role of culture in L2 learning and to providing guidance on effective culture teaching methods over the decades. With respect to the role of culture, some studies have focused on its influence on the learning process, while others have stressed its impacts on achievement.

The theoretical literature supported the fact that culture, "as an ingrained set of behaviors and modes of perception" (Brown, 1994, p. 165), plays a highly important role in L2 learning (Cheung, 2001; Ho, 1998; Kramsch, 1991; Stagh, 1998; Stapleton, 2000). For example, Kramsch (1991) pointed out that cultural awareness and learning of L2 culture can only help in attaining L2 proficiency. Later, Dörnyei (1994) also suggested the use of culture-related strategies, such as developing learners' cross-cultural awareness and promoting student contact with L2 speakers, can increase motivation in L2 learning. Stapleton (2000), in his qualitative survey research, found that L2 teachers also sense the importance of culture in the language classroom in providing students meaningful input to improve their performances.

Stagh (1998) claimed the importance of cultural context in the understanding of meaning in the L2 communication. Based on his argument, in order to achieve L2 competency, learners should understand the speaker/writer, social context, topic, and the purpose of his/her speaking/writing. However, through exposure to cultural situations, such as customs, traditions,

and cultural activities, learners begin to open their minds to learning about L2 and culture, reduce the social and psychological barriers, and achieve a higher level of L2 competence. In this context, cultural knowledge of the target language provides a deeper understanding of the meaning of L2 words, idioms, and expressions. The cultural knowledge further removes cultural and psycho-social barriers to achieving a true competence in L2 reading, writing, and speaking.

Thus, L2 researchers on culture learning have concluded that the mere acquisition of linguistic competence is insufficient for a true L2 competence. Rather, the analysis of sociological, structural, and cultural aspects of the target language enhances the language awareness component of learning, and contributes directly to the learners' awareness of language and proficiency as a whole (Byram & Morgan, 1994).

Wlodkowski (1999) offers a model of teaching and learning that values motivation and culture to promote extensive learning. The motivational framework for culturally responsive teaching is a systemic representation of intersecting motivational conditions that teachers and learners can construct and enhance. These conditions are: establishing an inclusive learning atmosphere, free of anxiety; developing a favorable attitude toward the learning experience through personal relevance and choice; enhancing meaning by creating challenging learning experiences that include learners' point of views and values; and engendering competence by creating an understanding that learners are effective in learning something they value (Wlodkowski, 1999). The important point that needs to be addressed is that motivations are influenced by the culture of the larger English speaking community. Therefore, both motivation to learn English and motivation to learn English in English as a second language (ESL) class are affected by the norm of the larger society where English is the dominant language and even an individual's effort, desire, and positive affect are influenced by this norm.

#### 4. ACTIVE THEORY AND INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Activity theory aims to break down the barrier between the individual and the social environment by proposing a framework that highlights the fundamental importance of social structures in human development. The theory was inspired by the principles of socio-cultural theory and the work of Vygotsky (1987) and Leontiev (1981) and centers around the concept of mediation, which refers to individuals' ability to change their own activity and the world around them through the use of culturally constructed artifacts.

Activity theorists believe that human behavior originates in history, not biology, and that in order to understand any activity, we must study its history. Within socio-cultural theory, history is investigated in four domains — phylogenesis, socio-cultural history, ontogenesis, and microgenesis — but it is the last two that are most relevant to the investigation of the experiences of L2 learners. Ontogenesis refers to “the life history of individuals in society,” while microgenesis refers to “the history of particular psychological functions over relatively brief time spans” (Lantolf & Genung, 2002, p. 177).

In an activity theoretic perspective, all human activity derives from a need and is directed

at some goal, which is then projected to a desired outcome. Drawing on Engeström (1999), Lantolf and Genung (2002) explain that this “projection from object to outcome, even if vague, is the motivation for an activity and it is this link between object and outcome that imbues our behaviors, mental or physical, with some meaning” (p. 177).

The appeal of activity theory as the theoretical framework lies first and foremost in its insistence upon viewing L2 learners not as objects but as people, or individuals who bring a complex history to the learning process and whose agency is shaped by histories of access to the mediational means afforded within socio-cultural settings (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001). Furthermore, the activity theoretic view of motivation as dynamic and emergent supports an in-depth and longitudinal investigation of the multiple, varied, and sometimes conflicting motivation. Finally, activity theory is broad enough to account for shifting motivation in a variety of contexts, both at home and abroad.

Recent research on intercultural sensitivity, defined in terms of stages of personal sensitivity growth to the importance of cultural differences and to the viewpoints about culturally different people, has focused on its relationship to intercultural communication competence (Chen & Starosta, 1997). In order to promote a person's ability to acknowledge, tolerate, and integrate cultural differences in an intercultural context, Chen and Starosta (1996) proposed a model of intercultural communication competence. The model includes three conceptual dimensions that are interdependent with one another for effective communication: intercultural sensitivity (affective), intercultural awareness (cognitive), and intercultural adroitness (behavioral). Based on previous research in this area, Bennett (1993) developed a model that describes the ways in which people understand cultural differences. Bennett considered intercultural sensitivity as a developmental process, in which a person moves from ethnocentric stages to ethnorelative stages. Bennett stressed that cultural sensitivity is not static, but consists of an ongoing process.

According to Chen and Starosta (1997), the components of Bennett's developmental intercultural sensitivity model, however, are not differentiated from the concepts of intercultural communication competence. This conceptual ambiguity comes from the fact that Bennett's model requires not only the gradual change of attitude and cognition, but also the behavioral ability to acquire intercultural sensitivity. Earlier, Wiseman, Hammer, and Nishida (1989) also used the cross-cultural attitude approach to discriminate among cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of cross-cultural communication. From this approach, intercultural sensitivity may be defined as the ability to develop a positive attitude toward foreign culture.

It should be noted that intercultural sensitivity focuses on the affective dimension, as a part of intercultural communication competence. Furthermore, it is clear that interculturally sensitive individuals have a positive attitude to motivate themselves to understand, appreciate, and accept cultural differences, and to produce a positive outcome from a cross-cultural context.

## 5. POSTSTRUCTURALISM AND NORTON'S INVESTMENT

Recent studies addressing the relationship between motivation and individual have found links between the variable "attitude toward the learning situation" and sustaining attention to properties of the target language (Schmidt, 2001). This finding suggests that those who have more positive attitudes toward the learning situation are more likely to pay close attention to the target language structures and forms, which in turn improves their L2 proficiency. Poststructuralism focuses on the existence of multiple discourses and on the contrast or opposition among them, including a decentering of the human subject or self. Norton (1995) explains that "whereas humanist conceptions of the individual and most definitions of the individual in SLA research — presuppose that every person has an essential, unique, fixed, and coherent core (introvert/extrovert; motivated/unmotivated; field dependent/field independent), poststructuralism depicts the individual as diverse, contradictory, and dynamic; multiple rather than unitary, decentered rather than centered" (p. 15).

In her application of poststructuralist ideas to the study of SLA, and of identity and motivation in particular, Norton (1995) views language as central. She credits Heller (1987) when she argues that "it is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time, and it is through language that a person gains access to — or is denied access to — powerful social networks that give learners the opportunity to speak" (p. 13). Similarly, according to Weedon (1987), "for poststructuralist theory the common factor in the analysis of social organization, social meanings, power and individual consciousness is language. Language is the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. Yet it is also the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is constructed" (p. 21).

Norton (1995) expresses the need for a reconceptualization of the construct of motivation. She proposes the alternative construct of investment based on Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977). In her use of the metaphor, L2 learning is an investment, and L2 learners expect greater symbolic and material resources — and thus cultural capital — in return for their investment. Furthermore, the resources acquired are expected to match the effort the learner has invested in L2 learning.

Gardner's instrumental motivation is different from Norton's notion of investment in that instrumental motivation simply reflects the learner's desire to learn L2 in order to gain something, whereas Norton's view of investment explains how the learner relates to the changing social world by including conditions such as social identity and relations of power, which influence the extent to which the learner converges to the target language.

One of the strengths of Norton's construct of investment is that in addition to foregrounding issues of power and identity, it allows for a conception of the learner, but as having a complex social history and multiple desires. Within this view, "motivation is not a fixed personality trait but must be understood with reference to social relations of power that create the possibilities for language learners to speak" (p. 26). Thus, the decision of highly motivated learners to remain silent could be the result of unequal relations of power, while situations in

which learners speak despite a high affective filter could be explained by their investment in the target language. In both cases, investment “must be understood in relation to the multiple, changing, and contradictory identities of language learners” (p. 26). To explore the notion of investment in L2 learning, Norton has used multiple sources of data, including diaries, questionnaires, individual and group interviews, and home visits.

Norton (1995) argues that the definition of motivation in SLA research embodies a “property of the language learner—a fixed personality trait” which has primarily been drawn from the field of social psychology, but SLA research has not captured the “complex relationship between relations of power, identity, and language learning” (p. 17). Norton claims that a learner’s motivation to learn L2 and participate in social interactions is more complex than what social psychologists believe it to be. Norton (2000) introduced the concept of investment, arguing that the instrumental and integrative distinction does not capture the socially and historically constructed relationships between learners and the target language. Norton (2000) noted that when L2 learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target-language speakers, but they are constantly organizing and reorganizing their sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. Thus, an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner’s own identity, an identity that is constantly changing across time and space.

Norton (2000) puts forward the new notion of investment rather than motivation, identifying L2 learner not as a one-dimensional entity but as someone with a complex social identity and desires. Norton’s view of investment explains how the learner relates to the changing social world by including conditions such as social identity and relations of power, which influence the extent to which L2 learner converges to the target language. Indeed, Norton views investment as a construct that is not static and generalizable but the relationship between the language learner and their changing social identity within the language learning context.

## 6. POSSIBLE SELVES AND DÖRNYEY’S L2 MOTIVATIONAL SELF SYSTEM

To move beyond motivational structure and attitudinal questionnaires and to personalize motivation, researchers look at the individual’s psychosocial and socio-cultural development as important factors in one’s motivation (Syed, 2002). The social cognitive research has focused on one’s idea of oneself in the future and suggests that people expect likely outcomes of prospective actions; they set goals for themselves and plan courses of actions to achieve hoped futures. Having a sense of purpose for the future is an important factor in moving individuals to engage in activities perceived instrumental in achieving valued future outcomes. Some theorists conceptualize this orientation to the future as the Future Time Perspective construct (FTP) which is understood as the mental representation of the future that individuals create at certain points in their lives (Hoyle & Sherrill, 2006; Lens, 2001; Leondari, 2007). Leondari (2007) asserts that the FTP provides the basis for setting personal goals and life plans that may affect the individual’s life course and it could influence how far into the future possible selves can be projected. For Markus and Ruvolo (1989), needs and goals are fundamental

elements of the self-system and in order to understand their functioning, one must look into the self-system.

According to Crookes and Schmidt (1991), students' expectations of self and self-evaluations of likelihood of success appear to have important motivational effects and it is this concept of the self that has been the focus of recent research in learning motivation. One self-construct that is spearheading this trend is Markus and Nurius (1986)'s possible selves. They define "possible selves" as individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming. They explain that an individual is free to create a variety of possible selves but only those linked to the individual's particular socio-cultural and historical contexts and social experiences are the most significant and the most likely to occur. For Ryan (2006), the self perspective offers the possibility of a more rounded, more complete description of learning motivation. This model is based on the learner as a social being, as a real member of an imagined community attempting to square hopes and aspirations with perceived responsibilities and obligations as members of a community.

Dörnyei (2005) stated that Gardner's integrative concept only applied to contexts of L2 learning where the target community surrounds the students. He added that this concept falls short in contexts where the target language is learned far from the community that speaks it. Therefore, he included the possible selves construct as important to understanding and to deepening the concept of Gardner's integrative motivation and as a way to rethink this integrative concept. Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) claimed that the integrative concept would be "better explained as an internal process of identification within the person's self-concept, rather than identification with an external reference group" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 3). The participants' possible L2 selves' development and their effect on their language learning motivation could be explicated by using Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System. In an attempt to expand Gardner's integrative motivation concept, Dörnyei developed a model that would expand the integrativeness notion by including cognitive concepts in order to explain language-learning motivation. Gardner (2001) defines integrativeness as the desire to learn L2 of a valued community so that one can communicate with members of the community and sometimes even become like them. However, many researchers have pointed out that the term is very ambiguous because it does not clarify what the target of integration is and in many language-learning environments such as learning a language far from the target community, the use of that term does not make much sense.

Dörnyei (2009) offers a new model that defines the main source of language learning motivation as the successful engagement with the actual language learning process rather than with internally or externally generated self-images. He proposed that the L2 Motivational Self System consisted of three components:

- (1) Ideal L2 Self: which is the L2-specific facet of one's ideal self. He said "if the person we would like to become speaks an L2, the ideal L2 self is a powerful motivator to learn the L2 because of the desire to reduce the discrepancy between our actual and ideal selves (p. 29)."

- (2) Ought-to L2 Self: which concerns the attributes that one believes one ought to possess to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes.
- (3) L2 Learning Experience: which concerns situated, 'executive' motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience (e.g., the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, the experience of success).

He also offers a set of motivational techniques associated to this self-based approach model that language educators can use in order to promote motivation. He said that the Ideal L2 Self is an effective motivator if the learner has a desired future self-image that is elaborate and vivid, and is perceived as plausible and in harmony with the expectations of the learner's family, peers and other elements of the social environment. Furthermore, the Ideal L2 Self must be regularly activated in the learner's working concept and accompanied by relevant and effective procedural strategies that act as roadmaps towards the goal. Finally, this Ideal L2 Self must contain elaborate information about the negative consequences of not achieving the desired end-state. Therefore, a language educator could encourage motivation by following these steps:

- (1) Creating the vision: The first step in a motivational intervention is to help learners construct their Ideal L2 Self through ideal-self generating activities and through role models of successful L2 learning achievers.
- (2) Strengthening the vision: to promote ideal L2 self images using creative or guided imagery in order to help students elaborate in a vivid fashion those ideal L2 selves.
- (3) Substantiating the vision: to make the Ideal L2 Self plausible. Dörnyei suggests that in order for an Ideal L2 self to sustain behavior; it must hold a sense of realistic expectations.
- (4) Keeping the vision alive: to activate the Ideal L2 Self through classroom activities such as communicative tasks, films, guests that could serve as potent ideal self-reminders.
- (5) Operationalising the vision: to develop action plans for the ideal self to be effective in motivating the language learner. A successful action plan will contain a goal-setting component and individualized study plans and instructional avenues.
- (6) Counterbalancing the vision: to consider failure. Future self-guides are most effective if they are offset by the feared self and utilize the cumulative impact of both approach and avoid tendencies (Dörnyei, 2009).

Taguchi, Magid and Papi (2009) designed a comparative motivational study in order to validate Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System in three Asian contexts: Japan, China and Iran. They looked at the two types of instrumentality in Dörnyei's (2005) L2 Motivational Self System in order to draw their conclusions. The first is called instrumentality-promotional and it relates to the ideal L2 self as it regulates goals and hopes of becoming professionally and personally successful in L2. The second type is instrumentality-preventional and it relates to the ought-to L2 self as it controls negative outcomes associated with the duties and obligations

individuals perceive they have toward others. Five thousand participants answered a questionnaire that measured the learner's attitudes and motivation concerning English learning. They hypothesized that if learners have a strong ideal L2 self, this will be reflected in their positive attitudes toward L2 learning and they will exhibit greater efforts to learn that target language. Their results indicate that the ideal L2 self achieved a better explanatory power toward learners' intended efforts than integrativeness did.

## 7. CONCLUSION

In summary, although there is no clear agreement of what exactly constitutes motivation or orientations in L2 learning, it is clear that motivation plays an essential role in SLA just as it does in the study of other disciplines given the breadth of research on motivation in the last 20 years. More learner-centered, holistic perspectives on what characterizes motivation should be explored in future research. What Marckwardt stated in 1940 still holds true today: "Before we can deal adequately with questions of aims or objectives, there is something much more fundamental which must be understood — the motives impelling the individual, the class, or the nation to the study of modern language, for it is only in terms of a comprehension of these motives that any set of objectives can be competently formulated and stated" (Marckwardt, 1988).

Motivation should not be seen as a static feature but rather a dynamic factor that undergoes fluctuation. Even during a single language class, one can be aware of the ever-changing nature of motivation, and in the context of learning a language for various durations of time. With SLA being a lengthy learning process, it is reasonable to look at the different phases of one's motivation for fluctuations that may occur. Within this view, motivation is conceived as a developmental process, and the focus is on the dynamic nature of motives, their historical dimension, their variable and situated nature, and their possible ephemeral character (Lantolf & Genung, 2000, pp. 102-103). According to Lantolf and Genung (2002), motivation is not a fixed phenomenon or trait that can be measured prior to activity in an effort to predict learning outcomes, but rather motives are multiple and malleable, developing in the process of activity and changing, along with their associated goals and behaviors, as the material circumstances of learning change (pp. 177-178, 191-192). The view of motivation as multiple, malleable, and emergent necessitates a more dynamic and plural term, as these authors suggest with their preference for "motives" over "motivation."

This study exhibited how the motivational theory could profit from the concept in order to add a more individual and personal variable to understand why people behave the way they do. Furthermore, it helps widen the scope of the motivational language theory by considering a future perspective, which is not well explored and that could provide interesting results in the way to enhance language learning. Gardner's (1988) integrative orientation has influenced most of the research in language motivation theory done to date. However, many researchers have pointed out that integrativeness' main premise "that the learner must be willing to identify with members of another ethno linguistic group and take on very subtle aspects of their



behavior" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 2) falls short and does not consider contexts in which learners do not have the target community available. By considering a perspective on an internal process of identification within the person's self concept, rather than identification with an external reference group (Ushioda, 2009), the concept of language motivation could be enhanced by including a closer personal account.

Moreover, the theory of motivation faces some challenges at their home institution that made their possible L2 selves vulnerable to remaining salient in the students' working self-concept. For the majority of the subjects, language classes were very instrumental in their goals to attain fluency and accuracy and for some others, the only chance to access their possible L2 selves. However, for a group of students, these classes did not facilitate the much-needed opportunity to keep moving forward to the attainment of these selves. On the one hand, the students, who had clear goals and well-defined possible L2 selves, were able to overcome these challenges by designing strategies that compensated the lack of opportunities offered in the classroom such as enrolling in several language classes or getting involved in the target community programs. On the other hand, the students with less salient possible L2 selves had other more relevant and vivid selves in their working self-concept and became less actively involved in their language learning.

The theories support the premise that individuals create mental representations of themselves in future states (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and that these representations combined with detailed strategies promote significant motivational behaviors to goal attainment. According to Markus and Nurius (1987), the possible self is the one "that put the self into action and that outlines the likely course of action" (p. 159).

This study showed that the presence of L2 Motivational Self System could be powerful motivators for further engagement. Furthermore, it contributes to the growing body of L2 Motivational Self System's research by considering different contexts in the development of these selves. However, there is still much to learn about the language learning experience that cuts across nationality and culture. There is also a need for research in order to provide a practical perspective on the potential of L2 Motivational Self System in the motivational theory of language learning.

Motivation is complex and has a multifaceted set of variables including pragmatic and social-emotional reasons for SLA. Therefore, this study concludes that different L2 motivational components may have different characteristics and each may have an effect on SLA. Furthermore, this study supports the concept that motivation is active, flexible, dynamic and contextual.

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