Review paper/ pregledni rad
https://doi.org/10.32903/zs.67.2.6
UDK 81'232

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION IN L2 MOTIVATION RESEARCH

Abdul Rahman Omar

Oxford International Education Group, Greenwich, UK

Mirna Harwood

Abstract

This article offers a historical analysis of the main phases that the L2 motivation research has undergone. It presents a brief chronological account of the main theoretical developments in L2 motivation research to date. The discussion starts with a brief review of the social-psychological period, which was concerned with L2 motivational factors in intergroup relations. After that, it discusses the situated-cognitive period, which was interested in learners in classroom settings, and the process-oriented period concerned with language learners and their circumstances. The last part of this article discusses the recent emerging theories in the L2 motivation field and the revolutionary contribution they made to understand the relationship between students' motivation and the achieved proficiency level. These theoretical studies include the recent themes that contributed massively to understanding the role of motivation in the process of learning a target language and the extent to which it determines the level of success achieved by its learners. Understanding language learners' psychology enables practitioners to understand the role of L2 motivation and its implications in teaching a target language.

Keywords: *motivation, target language, language learning, second language acquisition, theories, methods*

INTRODUCTION

It is highly agreed upon and accepted by scholars that L2 motivation influences the process of learning a target language and determines the level of success or failure in that process. Most researchers agree that there is a solid correlation between L2 motivation and the level of success in learning a target language (Lightbown&Spada, 1999). This relationship between motivation and the achieved proficiency level is assumed to be a positive correlation. In other words, the more motivated the L2 learners, the more successful they are in learning that language (Gardner 1985). Common sense might suggest the same; however, some theoretical and empirical studies in this field suggest that motivation level is not necessarily the key factor in determining students' proficiency level, such as the Saturation Hypothesis (Omar 2019). Omar stated in 2019 that there is a certain threshold at which language learners' motivation is sufficiently high, and any further increase in their motivation will not necessarily result in an increase in their proficiency level. This is because other factors might limit the further increase in the achievement level rather than students' motivation towards the target language. Examples of such factors could include exposure to the target language and the quality of teaching.

Robert Gardner is considered to be the founder of the L2 motivation field. In 1956, he conducted one of the first studies examining the relationship between L2 motivation and success rate in learning a second language (Gardner, 2001). His research was considered the primary instigator and source of research in this field. He defined L2 motivation as the "combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language. That is, motivation to learn a second language is seen as referring to 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" (Gardner, 1985, p 10). Drawing from Gardner's definition, L2 Motivation is a key variable in learning a foreign language, as it provides the essential impetus that initiates the process of learning and later the driving force to sustain the difficulties that L2 learners may face during their learning process. Therefore, without holding sufficient motivation level to learn a specific language, even students with high learning abilities cannot accomplish the long-term goal of learning a second language. Even the most appropriate curriculum and suitable teaching approach will not be enough to ensure students' success in learning a foreign language when they are demotivated to learn it. A high level of motivation can compensate for unsuitable learning conditions or considerable deficiencies and low learning abilities that students might have.

THE SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL PERIOD (1959-1990)

The social-psychological period started in 1959 with the work of Canadian social psychologists Robert Gardner, Wallace Lambert, and their associates. The research in this field was, there-

fore, characterised by their work. They provided the initial impetus in L2 motivation research. Gardner and his associates conducted a series of empirical studies in Canada to examine the role of L2 motivation in learning English and French languages. These studies aimed to investigate the Canadian language learners' motivation and attitudes towards learning a second language. In addition, they aimed to identify and measure different variables that influence and shape attitudes and motivation of those learners within a bilingual community characterised by the coexistence of the Francophone and Anglophone communities (Gardner &Lambert, 1959). The fundamental basis of this approach is that unlike learning any other subject at school, learning a foreign language is affected by different sociocultural factors, such as cultural stereotypes and attitudes to the L2 group. Additionally, learning a language requires an adaptation to the linguistic structures of that language, as well as an adaptation of behaviour and cognitive features that are part of the L2 group. There is no question that the social nature of learning a target language makes it different from other school subjects.

Therefore, the main tenet of researchers who adopted a social psychological approach was that students' attitude to the L2 group and language increases or decreases their motivation to learn the target language. In addition, it enhances or hinders intercultural communication; therefore, it affects their achievement level "students' attitudes toward the specific language group are bound to influence how successful they will be in incorporating aspects of that language" (Gardner, 1985, p 6). This recognition of the importance of students' attitudes toward the L2 community in learning the target language had major implications that shaped the theoretical research and classroom practice. This period underwent three main phases, namely: Gardner's Socio-Educational Model, his AMTB (Attitude and Motivation Test Battery), and Clément's Social Context Model. All approaches that adopted a social psychical approach shared a common interest in the relationship between social groups and contextual variables until the cognitive revolution in psychology took place in 1980.

GARDNER'S SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL MODEL

The notion of integrative motivation in L2 studies was first introduced by Gardner and Lambert in an attempt to characterise and define the diversity in L2 multicultural environments (1959, 1972). It implies openness and respect for the L2 group, their culture, and ways of life. It comprises a display of resolution to learn the target language and exertion of effort to do so. After that, it became a pivotal part of Gardner's conceptualisation of L2 motivation. Yet despite the importance attached to his theory, the notion of integrative motivation remained an enigma without a clear definition of its nature "the term is used frequently in literature, though a close inspection will reveal that it has a slightly different meaning to many different individuals" (Gardner 2001, p 1). In his model, Gardner conceptualises that integrative motivation in learning a foreign language is a blend of four components, namely:

1. Integrativeness comprises integrative orientation, learners' attitude toward the L2 group, and their interest in learning foreign languages. In other words, the L2 student learns a target language because of positive feelings they hold toward the community that speaks the language.

2. Attitude towards the learning situation. It comprises learners' attitudes towards the L2 course and the language teacher. For example, a teacher's bad temper might hinder a student's success in language learning. On the other hand, a teacher's positive temper can contribute positively to the process of learning a target language.

3. Integrative motive, according to Gardner, is a goal-directed behaviour that consists of three main constituents: a) Effort, that is, the extent to which L2 learners want to learn the target language. b) Desire, how much effort they are willing to exert to do so. c) Enjoyment, the extent to which L2 learners enjoy the process of learning the target language.

4. Instrumentality is also referred to as the utilitarian dimension. It contrasts with the ends and features of integrativeness and generally associated pragmatic- concrete benefits which learning a language might bring about. This concept was referred to in Gardner's theory without a clear theoretical clarification (Dörnyei 2010).

According to most L2 researchers who adopted a social psychological approach, L2 interactively motivated learners are believed to be more successful in learning the language compared to learners with instrumental motivation (Norris-Holt 2001). Despite Gardner's poor representation of integrative motivation and its relationship with the attainment level, it attracted massive attention and has been highly acclaimed among L2 practitioners and researchers. It is among the most often researched topics in the L2 field and has continually emerged in a great number of theoretical and empirical studies connecting it to various aspects of learning a target language (Dörnyei 2003).

GARDNER'S AMTB (ATTITUDE AND MOTIVATION TEST BATTERY)

In 1985, Gardner created a multicomponent motivation questionnaire that showed to have good psychometric features. Therefore, the questionnaire has been accepted by researchers as a scientific assessment tool based on both its content and presentation. It was made up of over 131 items that aimed to quantitatively measure the four main constituents of his integrative motivation theory. The questionnaire also included additional components of instrumental orientation, parental encouragement, and language anxiety. The data Gardner collected employing his AMTB stated that learners with higher attitudinal and motivational scores achieved higher scores in language proficiency tests (1985). However, the test's results

raised questions about the content validity of AMTB. For example, Dörnyeistates that "three of the subscales defining the Motivation subcomponent (Desire to learn the L2, Motivational intensity, and Attitudes toward learning L2) overlap at the item level, which may explain the high intercorrelations between these scales" (2015, p71).

CLÉMENT'S SOCIAL CONTEXT MODEL

Richard Clément, a Canadian social-psychologist, investigated the significant role of social contextual factors on language learning. He and his associates conducted a series of empirical and theoretical studies that subsumed a second significant research tradition during this period. They examined the interrelationship between different social contextual variables, such as motivational/attitudinal factors, language identity, and self-confidence (Clément &Gardner, 2001). The concept of self-confidence was first introduced in the L2 literature by Clément, which was the most important factor in his theory. Self-confidence refers to learners' perceptions of their competence and ability to produce results, accomplish goals, and perform tasks successfully. According to this theory, the most effective motivational factor in learning a second language is linguistic self-confidence. It is established through the quality and quantity of the interaction between the language learner and members of the language community.

THE COGNITIVE-SITUATED PERIOD

In 1990, a debate emerged about whether social psychological models cover all motivational patterns in learning a target language. Graham Crookes and Richard Schmidt were the first to criticise Gardner's work. Their article "Reopening the Research Agenda" called for a change in L2 motivation research by including cognitive perspectives (Dörnyei&Ushioda, 2011). The article then paved the way for a new phase to emerge in this field. Unlike the social psychological period that focused on learners' beliefs about the L2 language and community, the cognitive models focus on how their mental processes affect their motivation to learn the language. The change in the L2 motivation research was needed following the "cognitive revolution" that took place in psychology at the beginning of the 1990s. This shift towards cognitive models was a consequence of a growing conceptual gap between motivational thinking in educational psychology and the L2 field. Situated analysis of learners' motivation is the core principle of this period.

The cognitive-situated period aimed to address motivation in actual learning situations, such as classrooms. In addition, it aimed to examine the other components of the classroom learning situation, such as the curriculum and teachers (Dörnyei 1994). This shift did not mean to marginalise or reject the findings of the social-psychological period. In contrast, it aimed to

supplement it with contextual factors to broaden the L2 motivation research scope by bringing on cognitive perspectives to it. It was widely accepted by L2 researchers that Gardner's macro-perspective paved the way to characterise and compare various motivational patterns of whole L2 communities. However, it lacked a representation of motives associated with the L2 learner's immediate situation, actual language classroom contexts.

SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY

It is considered to be one of the main influential theories in motivational psychology. The theory was first introduced by Deci and Ryan and included the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of motivation (1985). Since the theory first emerged in the L2 motivation field, several attempts have been made by researchers to incorporate specific elements of it to explain the relationship between L2 motivation and the attainment level. Kim Noels and her associates, in the 1990s, explored this theory in learning a target language context and developed the 'Language Learning Orientations Scale'. The scale was designed to categorise learners' motivational orientation as either extrinsic, intrinsic, or amotivation based on a continuum of self-determination. In addition, it aimed to measure the influence of different classroom practices on students' level of self-determination in the process of learning a target language (Noels, 2001b). She proposed, based on her finding, a larger motivation contract comprises three interrelated substrates, namely:

1. The intrinsic substrate is represented in the internalised pleasure perceived from the process of language learning.

2. The extrinsic substrate includes external pressures, such as passing exams.

3. The integrative substrate includes a positive attitude towards the L2 group and, in extreme cases, full identification with that group.

In addition, Noels and her colleagues found that contextual factors, such as teachers, can play a vital role in enhancing learners' motivation towards language learning. According to her findings, Teachers' role in the classroom should be facilitating the process of learning rather than controlling it. For example, language teachers should use interactive teaching materials that allow students to participate and practice the target language. Therefore teachers' informative and constructive feedback enhances learners' intrinsic motivation.

ATTRIBUTION THEORY

The theory has achieved a unique status among contemporary motivation theories. It is identified by many L2 motivation researchers as a unique theory since it was the first theory to successfully challenge Atkinson's classic achievement motivation theory (Dörnyei, 2001a). Subsequently, it has quickly become a reference for researchers examining the relationship between students' motivation and their attainment level in a target language. In addition, the special status the theory has achieved is accounted for its success in linking learners' past experiences with their potential/future achievement efforts by utilising causal attributions as a mediation link. In 1992, Bernard Weiner, considered one of the leading proponents of Attribution theory, stated that the subjective reasons to which learners attribute their past experiences of successes or failures considerably characterise their motivational dispositions.

For example, if people ascribe their past failure in a particular task, such as learning a target language, to low ability on their part, the probability is that they are not going to try learning the same language ever again. On the other hand, if they believe that the problem lies in either unsuitable learning strategies which they used or insufficient effort they made to perform the task, they are more expected to re-try the same task. On account of the high rate of failures in language learning, Marion Williams and Bob Burden, in their recent qualitative research, claimed that attributional processes play a significant motivational role (1997). This theory dominated L2 motivation research in the psychology field in the 1980s. Attributional processes are believed to be one of the most significant influences on the formation of students' expectancies. Supporters of this theory conceptualise that the way students' explain their past failures or successes will significantly influence their future achievement behaviour (Weiner, 1985).

Expanding the methodological repertoire led to an increasing number of qualitative and quantitative studies as well as practical applications of L2 motivation research in a classroom learning situation (Boo et al., 2015). Consequently, the cognitive situated period was rich in theoretical frameworks investigating the role of motivation within the educational psychological domain. Theories, such as Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005), shed more light on understanding the motivational features of the actual language classroom. He reinterpreted Gardner's concept of integrativeness in the light of investigating motivation in the dynamic classroom context. He stated that learning a target language is more than improving communication skills. Therefore, he adopted paradigms that linked learning a second language to the learner's personal core. This period's main principle was to investigate motivation in classroom settings to provide effective teaching practices; therefore, it might be suitable to describe this phase as the educational period.

THE PROCESS-ORIENTED PERIOD

The previous periods shed more light on L2 motivation research and drew attention to the importance of contextual factors in understanding learners' motivation. With the shift towards cognitive approaches in understanding L2 motivation, the research in this field has been more concerned with investigating the dynamic nature of motivation in the process of learning a target language. Furthermore, the fluctuation commitment level represented by language learners during the various stages of learning has demanded more interest and further study of L2 motivation since the late 1990s (Ushioda, 2001). Dörnyei concluded, in a comprehensive overview of the evolution process of motivation, that "Learners tend to demonstrate a fluctuating level of commitment even within a single lesson, and the variation in their motivation over a longer period (e.g., a whole academic term) can be dramatic" (2003, p 17). Consequently, the L2 motivation research entered its third phase, the process-oriented period. This period focused on exploring the changes in students' motivation during the process of learning a target language. The main theories that represent this period are Dörnyei and Ottó's process model and Dörnyei's motivational self-system.

PROCESS MODEL

This model was developed by Dörnyei and Ottó in an attempt to:

1. Replace the old theoretical approaches that dominated the L2 motivation research at the time with a new theory.

2. Within a framework, unify various lines of research on L2 motivation in educational psychology.

Furthermore, Dörnyei and Ottó's process-oriented model can be considered integration of multi-trend research studies. In addition, the model seems to be essential in studies that attempt to account for the evolution of learners' motivation over time or in studies that investigate motivation and its relationship to particular learners' behaviours and different classroom processes (Dörnyei, 2005). Dörnyei and Ottó divided their model into three stages, namely:

1. Pre-Actional Stage: during this stage, an individual is engaged in forming and developing an intention to take their first step towards pursuing their goals. Furthermore, this stage consists of three temporally discrete sub-phases that are sequentially ordered as:

    a) Goal Setting is the process of deciding on a goal to be achieved.

    b) Intention Formation, the stage in which individuals transform their commitment into concrete steps to be followed during the process of pursuing the goal per se.

c) Initiation of Intention Enactment is the stage when a person applies their action plan to achieve a goal.

2. Actional Stage: it is the stage within which an individual puts their intended plans into action, translating their deliberation to act into the actual implementation of the action.

3. The Post-actional Stage is the final stage. In this stage, a person evaluates their action process in retrospect. They evaluate the outcome of their terminated action by applying possible conclusions and inferences to be employed once they encounter either the same or similar actions in the future.

L2 MOTIVATIONAL SELF-SYSTEM

In order to preserve the original tripartite of Gardner's integrative motive, Dörnyei proposed a new systematic concept that explicitly focused on aspects of one's self which is convenient for the past theorising perspective of the "whole-person" (2006). He proposed his L2 motivational self-system that consisted of three components, namely:

1. The ideal L2 self refers to the desired attributes that a person would ideally like to possess.

2. The ought to L2 self indicates the attributes that an individual believes that they ought to possess.

3. The L2 learning experience is linked to the learning contexts, such as teacher efficacy and classroom context.

Dörnyei's model shed new light on understanding the language learners' psychology and the role of different motivational factors in the process of learning a target language. Furthermore, it offered a versatile and comprehensive framework for L2 motivation research under the socio-dynamic approach and drew attention to the dynamic nature of this phenomenon (Dörnyei 2009).

THE SOCIO-DYNAMIC PERIOD

Taking a close look at the L2 motivation research, you can deduce that the research in the last several decades was mainly centred around Gardner's theory of integrative motive. His highly influential motivational theory of socio-educational framework became a reference for researchers investigating the relationship between students' motivation and their language achievement level (Gardner &Lambert 1959). However, some limitations in previous research were pointed out; for example, Boo criticises that the previous periods investigated motiva-

tion as a conscious process in which learning a target language is examined within a relatively short duration by employing rather “simplistic” research designs(2015, p. 156).

Consequently, research in this field entered a new phase in order to address these gaps in understanding the different motivational factors that affect the process of learning a target language. As stated by Dörnyei and Ryan, language motivation research is currently in a new phase (2015). This latest movement in L2 motivation research was characterised by a need to theorise L2 motivation “in ways that take account of broader complexities of language learning and language use in the modern globalised world – that is, by reframing L2 motivation in the context of contemporary theories of self and identity” (Dörnyei&Ushioda, 2012, p 398).

As a result of this movement in research, the focus of the research was shifted to a more dynamic contextual perspective in investigating motivation. The period suggested that motivation in language learning should be examined as an integral part of organic, dynamic systems that develop and evolve in a non-linear manner and the interaction of different personal, contextual and social factors. In addition, it conceptualised motivation as a dynamic factor that fluctuates during the process of learning a target language.

Furthermore, recent research confirmed that L2 learners’ motivation level fluctuates from time to time and context to context. Consequently, its influence on the process of learning the target language per se correspondingly fluctuates (Dörnyei, 2009b). The recent emerging themes in L2 motivation research aimed to understand the dynamic nature of L2 motivation in a language learning context and its temporal variation. As mentioned above, the current period was a result of many gaps in the previous periods. For example, most theories in the earlier periods overlooked the role of globalisation and technologisation and their influence on learners’ motivation towards learning a specific language, such as the English language. One of the most important theories that aim to address the gaps in L2 motivation is Dörnyei’s L2 motivational self-system (LMSS). This model under the socio-dynamic approach opened “the horizon to research on individual differences, where cognitive, conative and affective dimensions can be blended and studied interrelated” (Ortega 2009, p. 188). Researchers, however, pointed out some shortcomings of this model, among whom is Dörnyeihimself. Ushioda and Dörnyei (2012) stated that the challenging question that is yet to be addressed is how to operationalise the dynamic and complex relationships between a language learner, language, and immediate learning context in measurable terms.

CONCLUSION

This article has offered a historical review of the four major phases that the language motivation field has undergone. The current phase in motivation research is characterised by many diverse themes and directions. Therefore, researchers such as Dörnyei and Ryan speculated

that the expanding scope of research in the L2 motivation field might cause fragmentation in which researchers "will no longer speak the same language" (p 102). Therefore, researchers in this field should bridge the gap between different jargon used to describe very similar phenomena but with more overlapping in their reference lists.

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POVIJESNI RAZVOJ I ŠIRENJE U ISTRAŽIVANJU MOTIVACIJE ZA UČENJE STRANOG JEZIKA (J2)

Sažetak

Ovaj članak nudi povijesnu analizu glavnih faza kroz koje je prošlo istraživanje motivacije za učenje J2. Predstavlja kratak kronološki prikaz glavnih teorijskih dostignuća u dosadašnjim istraživanjima motivacije za učenje J2. Rasprava započinje kratkim pregledom sociopsihološkog razdoblja koje se bavilo motivacijskim čimbenicima J2 u međugrupnim odnosima. Nakon toga raspravlja se o kognitivno-situacijskom razdoblju u kojem se javilo zanimanje za učenike u učionicama i o procesno orijentiranom razdoblju koje se bavi učenicima jezika i okolnostima u kojima se nalaze. Posljednji dio ovog članka govori o najnovijim teorijama u nastajanju u području motivacije za učenje J2 i revolucionarnom doprinosu koje su dale kako bi se razumio odnos između motivacije učenika i postignute razine znanja. Ove teorijske studije uključuju najnovije teme koje su uvelike pridonijele razumijevanju uloge motivacije u procesu učenja ciljnog jezika te mjeru u kojoj ona određuje razinu uspjeha koju postižu učenici. Razumijevanje psihologije učenja jezika omogućuje praktičarima razumijevanje uloge motivacije J2 i njezinih implikacija u podučavanju ciljnog jezika.

Ključne riječi: *motivacija, ciljni jezik, učenje jezika, usvajanje drugog jezika, teorije, metode*