

Motivation, Investment and Social-Interdependence of Second Language Learners

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Abstract

This qualitative case study aimed to explore the experiences and perceptions of Saudi adult learners of English as a second language (ESL) about what motivates them to learn English at a language school in the United Kingdom (UK). Motivation is widely considered to be an influential factor in second language acquisition (SLA), and it still draws increasing attention from theorists and practitioners. Despite significant contributions from psychological, sociopsychological and recent trends of process-oriented research there is still a marked lack of knowledge about the complexity of the context of learning and its impact on motivating students to learn English. Building on a tripartite theoretical lens grounded in Gardner's (1981) socio-educational model, Nortons' (2001) concept of investment and social interdependence theory, this research study aimed to bridge this gap and contribute more broadly to deepening our understanding about the socially constructed nature of motivation to learn a second language (L2). The findings revealed four interrelated factors that shape learners' motivation to learn English in an L2 context. These are the second language learner, the school community, the social milieu, and other macro-context factors. Implications for language learners and language schools in the UK and elsewhere and future motivation research were explored.

Keywords: Motivation, integrativeness, investment, social-interdependence

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1.0 Introduction

Motivation is widely considered to be an essential factor that influences second language acquisition and achievement (e.g. Al-Hoorie, 2017; Dörnyei, 2009; Gardner & Lambert, 1959; 1972; Gardner, 2007; Goodridge, 2017; MacIntyre, 2002; McGroarty, 2001; Noels et al., 1999). A broad definition of motivation underscores common factors such as drive, instinct and goal setting which merely explain reasons for human action (Dörnyei, Csizér, & Németh, 2006). However, the concept defies simple definition which reflects the complex trajectory of its evolution. Ostensibly such complexity reflects notable advances in theoretical traditions in the field represented by, as Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) indicate, four phases: the social psychological period (1959-1990), the cognitive-situated period (1990's), the process-oriented period (2000), and the sociodynamic period. However, due to space limits, this paper does not aim to provide a comprehensive literature review but instead a complexity view of motivation is presented to bring into consideration the concept of motivation not as prescribed term but as one born out of the context in which it is implemented. This context specific investigation is crucial in understanding as Kim (2010) indicates the: "uniqueness found in each L2 learner" (p. 88). As he also highlights, previous research on motivation reflects simplistic and reductionist views of the term rooted in quantitative measures of what motivation looks like such as Gardner's (1985) Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). As Norton (2010, p.10) also states, past conceptualizations of motivation "do not capture the complex relationship between power, identity and language learning" and hence suggests that investment provides a useful lens to the understanding of such complex picture.

A remarkable shift in motivation research at the turn of the new millennium reflects the emergence of the process-oriented approach to motivation in response to L2 psychological and social psychological motivational research. For Dörnyei (2003), the process-oriented approach examines learners' motivation to learn an L2 deployed within a temporal variation spanning preactional, actional, and postactional stages. This approach examines motivation as an ongoing change process and as Goodridge (2017) notes it can be seen as: "dynamic and fluctuating within a semester and a lifetime" (p. 81). Unlike Gardner's (1985) integrative motivation, which highlights affective orientation to L2 and its community as determinant of learning, an important contribution of the process-oriented reconceptualization of motivation is that it focuses on classroom contexts and as suggested by Dörnyei (2007) it: "created a fertile ground for educational implications directly relevant to classroom practice" (p. 111). As he also indicates that motivation as a dynamic process is in part reflected by the L2 Motivational self-system theory. As Dörnyei et al., (2002) proposed that the ideal-self drives the learner to possess the attributes of a specific person or society, and the ought-to-self motivates the learner to be more proficient in the target language. In the same vein and drawing on discussions of identity in globalized and postmodern world, Lamb (2004) has stressed that motivation to learn English can partly be shaped by the pursuit of a dual national and global identity 'without any sense of contradiction'.

However, the increasing focus of motivation research on formal classroom practices may undermine a broader view of contexts and its impact on L2 learners' motivation. An important underrepresented dimension of such a versatile and complex context is the learners' identity and the meso-micro- and macro-contextual influential factors and actors in its development. At the

heart of this is teachers' influential roles in de/motivating L2 learners (Crookes, 1997), learners' language learning history (Harrison, 2008), and homestays (Juveland, 2011) to mention a few. Ushioda, (2011) views motivation as a process of identity development and construction within complex and various contexts. As she explains this conceptualization of identity:

brings into sharp relief the socially mediated nature of motivation as emergent through the complex interactions of social, individual and contextual processes, and reflects a more widespread shift from individual-cognitive to social-interactive perspectives on motivation in the literature at large (p. 229).

To conclude, while the process-oriented view of motivation provides useful insights into how L2 motivation can be approached, it tends to undermine the complexity of the context of learning and the implicit power relations among language learners and significant others in their lives specifically when learners live within the second language community. Motivation understood this way places the burden of motivation to learn an L2 on the learner and blames his/her personality traits, identity and affective factors for underachievement at the expense of a more complex set factors at play (Norton, 2010).

2- Theoretical framework

The tripartite theoretical framework underpinning this research study highlights that language learning in the micro-context of the classroom cannot be fully understood without taking into account macro-intergroup settings and that these are to be understood as intertwined components in second language acquisition. Building on Gardner's conceptualization of integrative motivation (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993), the attitudinal orientations of students towards second language community can be explored to uncover the extent to which attitudinal and affective variables help L2 learners progress through language learning journey in a second language context.

At a more practical level, the impetus for adopting Gardner's 'integrativeness' concept as a theoretical lens pertains to, as MacIntyre (2004) explains, "its uniqueness and emphasis that integrative motives for second language learning were predictive of success" (cited in MacIntyre et. al., 2009, p. 40). It is also adopted to fit the bilingual context of this research study where the participants joined a language program at a language school in the UK and lived in homestays, and hence the chances of formal and informal language learning within the second language community are prevalent.

In discussing the roles of learners' attitudes towards L2 community, this study considers research findings that highlight that there is strong evidence in support of reliability of Gardner's integrative motivation theory (e.g., Masgoret & Gardner, 2003).

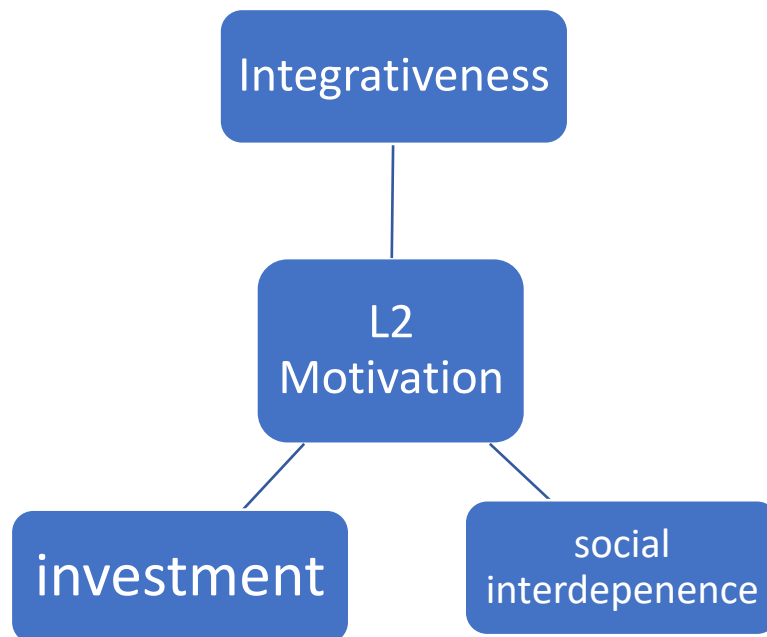


Figure 1 L2 Motivational complexity model

While the researcher partially agrees with Dornyei (1990) that results driven from second language motivation research in bilingual contexts do not necessarily apply to foreign language context, it is important that for other reasons to be discussed further below, the author retains Gardens' (1985) integrative orientation in exploring the factors that influence L2 learners language development. However, despite its influential role, motivation research in the social psychological period has focused on macro-contexts but somewhat failed to take into account the meso- and micro-context factors including language learners' themselves. That is, the extent to which language learners' opinions and views about what influences their motivation to learn an L2 inside classroom context is understated. As Dornyei (2005, pp. 74-75) points out a situated analysis of motivation as it operates in actual learning situations is required. In addition, Norton (2010) maintains that theories of motivation did not pay sufficient attention to unequal relations of power between language learners and target language community members.

Therefore, it is important that motivation, as indicated above, should be explained in light of the concept of investment discussed by Norton (2000; 2010). As Norton (2010, p.352) mentions, this can be achieved by way of appreciating the complexity of motivation through understanding the "actions and investments of human agents" and uncovering the power differentials among learners and second language community and how these works to operate to enable or constrain human actions. Unlike conceptions of motivation introduced by theorists in the social psychological period, the cognitive-situated period and process-oriented period which as Norton (2010) indicates that: "often conceives of language learners as having unitary and ahistorical personality, the concept of investment conceives of the language learner as having a complex identity, changing across time and space and reproduced in social interactions" (p. 353). Norton (2010) further explains that motivation to learn a second language does not necessarily translate into investment. Investment means a commitment on the part of the learner and the

community of practice both within and beyond the classroom. This community can comprise “public professionals and local homemakers’ but learners have greater chances of investment with the very people who represent or provide access to the imagined community” (p.355). As she also highlights, the important outcome of this relationship is the extent to which such investment is productive for learners' engagement in both the classroom and the wider target community” (p.356). In this sense, despite the motivational intensity of the learner, learning a language within members of the community who for some reason do not facilitate communication and interaction with language learners can be challenging to learners’ investment. As Duff (2002 cited in Norton, 2010) points out learners’ disengagement in classroom activities can be perceived as lack of investment by the target community rather than learners’: “lack of initiative, agency, or desire to improve one’s English” (p. 356). Such negative perceptions about language learners can be counter-conducive to language learning and as Norton (2013) also explains that “despite being highly motivated, a learner could be excluded from the language practices of a classroom, and in time positioned as a “poor” or unmotivated language learner” (p.6). For this reason, the author tends to emphasize the importance of the concept of investment to account for imbalances in power relations between language learners and target language community. Moreover, it may enable researchers and learners to acknowledge the complexity of motivation and the context in which it is enacted. However, investment on its own does not seem to fully capture the complexity of relationships among language learners and involved parties in an L2 learning context (Kim, 2010). Therefore, Social Interdependence Theory (Johnson & Johnson. 2003) can provide a third lens to complement the theoretical framework for understanding the social dimension of motivation and how socialization with the target language community reflects an important dimension of motivated individuals. It also reflects the key roles significant others in the lives of L2 learners play in motivating them to learn a second language. Thus, social interdependence exists when learners share common goals and that each individual’s goals attainment is affected by the actions of others such as those with whom they mingle and communicate. Johnson et al. (2014) conclude that positive interdependence results in greater motivation and achievement than negative or no interdependence. As they explain positive interdependence occurs when “individuals tend to seek outcomes that are beneficial to all those with whom their goals are positively linked” (p.622). While this principle sounds similar to Gardner's' (1985) integrative motivation, the positive interdependence differs in highlight the dual roles L2 community members in formal and informal contexts paly in the lives of L2 learners. That is, while learners' orientations to L2 community are assigned as a key determinant of motivating L2 learners, social interdependence theory emphasizes equal significance to L2 community members orientations to L2 learners. It thus emphasizes how learning is socially co-constructed by the parties involved in a specific context rather than taking a simplistic view of unidirectional orientations towards the L2 community by L2 learners. As Norton and Toohey (2011) highlight that:

language learning theory and research needs to address how power in the social world affects learners’ access to the target language community, and thus to opportunities to practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing, widely acknowledged as central to the SLA process (p. 414).

No goal interdependence occurs when learners believe that they can learn the language without reference to significant others in the community. As Johnson and Johnson (2003) put it, negative

goal interdependence: “exists when individuals perceive that they can reach their goal regardless of whether other individuals attain or do not attain their goals” (p. 263). This view, however, seems to be similar to Gardner's instrumental motivation whereby instrumental goals are considered to be driving students' motivation to learn a language. This model provides key insights into how to understand the complex nature of motivation and how to motivate learners of English as a second language. It covers the attitudinal dimensions, intergroup relationships and actions and investment of human agents which all make up the aggregate meaning of motivation. This model is not however immune to criticism. Echoing earlier criticism of Gardner's (1985) integrative orientation the complexity view does not necessarily apply to contexts where English is learned as a foreign language context since this study was conducted in a second language context. Nonetheless, this model can be beneficial to language schools both in foreign and second language contexts. As Dorneyi (2005) explains that the sociocultural dimensions can be included in the school's syllabus by enhancing learners' integrative and instrumental values.

3.0 Methodology

This study is informed by the interpretive paradigm, and case study design was implemented. A purposive sampling approach (Creswell, 2013) was used, and the respondents were four Saudi students enrolled in a language school in the UK. The impetus for choosing the participants was that the respondents were considered as motivated language learners by their language school. In addition, since all of the respondents lived in homestays, it was considered quite pertinent to investigating motivation in formal and informal settings. The second reason is more practical and relates to how can motivation research help the high influx of Saudi scholarship holders pursuing their undergraduate and postgraduate studies abroad (the UK, The US, Australia, Ireland, and New Zealand) to find better ways to enhance their language learning. Their informed consent was obtained, and Pseudonyms were used in order to protect their identities. This study utilized semi-structured interviews as well as progress reports as data collection methods which helped depict the motivational aspects of Saudi students (Wallen & Fraenkle, 2001). The interviews were conducted in English, but the participants were also informed about their freedom to use their mother tongue (Arabic) if needed. An interview schedule was prepared based on the three-model framework explained above as an interview guide, and a 30-minute interview with each participant was conducted, tape-recorded, transcribed and thematically analyzed.

4.0 Findings

The findings of this study revealed three major themes which reflect the complexity view of motivation discussed above. It highlights that motivation is complexly situated in the meso, micro- and macro-contexts of learning. The community of second language speakers, and the school community respectively represent the macro- and micro-contexts of second language motivation. The third dimension of the context is the meso-context which reflects practices related to classroom settings. These different contexts explain how learners' motivation to learn an L2 in a second language context socially constructed phenomenon subject to specific contexts. Thus, motivation can be considered as a wicked and complex phenomenon in the sense that each influencing factor resonates with a complex interrelated web of factors which uniquely reflect certain actors within certain contexts.

4.1 Communication with Second Language Community

A highly recurring theme expressed by all interviewees was about their orientations to communicate with the second language community as a motivating factor to learn English in the UK. Students were more inclined to utilize what they learn in the classroom to be practiced in their daily encounters with the British and to a lesser extent other non-Arab speaking community be it in the city center, cafes, restaurants, buses, supermarkets, airports, streets or with their host families. Advances in language learning can be attributed to L2 learners' willingness to speak the language with its community members. The participants expressed the significance of such daily encounters in enriching the linguistic input they receive in language schools and in promoting their fluency and proficiency. Fadi confirms this when he said that:

I have the curiosity to speak and practice what I learned. I like to understand the British people, I want to communicate with them (#Fadi).

The participants squarely described learning a second language as a process where informal language learning in informal contexts complements formal language learning in language schools. Fadi adds that "formal learning is not enough to be native-like". For second language learners to be proficient, they have to look for informal settings, and to quote Nortons' (2010) concept, 'invest' in every opportunity available to them to communicate with second language community even in school settings. Fadi, for example, invests his break time to communicate with the language school staff in an attempt to practice speaking English and learn about the British culture:

I am kind of involved with language teachers, in the break time, I always go to the reception area, try to talk with them(#Fadi)

With my host family, I always talk with them, talk about our cultures, watch TV programs, discuss ask and they answer my questions (#Fadi)

It seems that Fadi's moves to communicate with the British community and know more about the British culture are informed by his belief that English language learners must invest in every opportunity to practice the language both formally and informally. He described the relationship between language and learners as one of obligation and commitment, and the outcome of this process was perceived to result in the successful acquisition of the language. Fadi reiterates that:

successful language learners don't go to the language, rather, if they are diligent, it will come to them (#Fadi)

It seems that this learner has developed strategies to invest in learning English within predominantly native speakers' community. His investment initiatives were also in line with his integrative orientations towards native speakers by enjoying learning and expending efforts through findings ways to talk and communicate with native speakers whenever possible. This transition from expressing reasons of learning English through a willingness to communicate with native speakers to truly mingling, speaking and communicating with second language community is at the heart of Gardners's (1985) integrativeness component explained above. It stresses that having positive attitudes to the L2 community as well as expanding efforts will bear on students'

success (Gardner, 2005). Taking into consideration positive social interdependence principle, the student seemed to be happy about how second language community both in formal and informal settings helped him grow as a language learner through acceptance and inclusion by the community he lives with. This was expressed when Fadi said that his language teachers in the language school and his host family undertake what Norton calls “investment” in the learning process through discussion and sharing ideas and thoughts about the Saudi and British cultures.

Hadi expressed similar views and reported that studying the language in a formal setting and gaining a bachelor qualification was not the main reason for him to study English in the UK. Rather, for Hadi being within a native language community gave him the chance to communicate with them to reinforce formal language learning and enhance using it in real-life situations with real people who speak the target language:

English has become a global language. However, I am not here to just study the language and get my bachelor degree, I want to communicate, take the best of the cultural aspects of the British people (#Hadi)

He further added that:

the best way is, first, mingling with the British. I and my British friend in my host family, we walk and talk together most of the time (#Hadi).

This seems to be another confirmation of the integrativeness principle as a motivator in enhancing success in language learning. The significant factor these students shared was living in a host family as their best way to learn the language. As mentioned by Gardner (2005) that: "..... an individual who has a high degree of integrativeness, has a favorable evaluation of the language learning situation, and is highly motivated to learn the language can be said to be integratively motivated" (p. 250).

When participants in this study were asked about their plans to achieve their language learning goals, their commitment to pursue their goals varied. For example, three students reported their persistence to meet their goals, but their efforts varied according to their attitudes and clarity of the goals (integrative or instrumental). Fadi, who was very particular about his integrative goals and has positive attitudes toward the British people, devoted his time equally to learning in formal and informal settings. In the former, he spends time in the classroom and at home studying English, reading and writing assignments which takes about three hours. In this regard, he reported a number of activities such as:

Talk and think deeply about what you say...besides, make spread charts or lists of new vocabularies.(#Fadi).

In the latter, he exerts every effort possible to speak with British people at the language school. In the host family he mentioned:

I spend most of my time talking with my host family lady.....we watch T.V. programmes, listen to the news, ask her about what I do not understand, talk about our cultures(#Fadi).

Even on his way to the school, he mentioned how he invests his time to listen to the native people and learn their culture through his smartphone

I plug my headphone and listen to BBC4 radio all the way to the language institute (#Fadi)

Moreover, Fadi's integrative motivation seems to drive him to interact and communicate with the British staff working in the language school:

in the break time, I always go to the reception area, try to talk with them" and" participate in class activities (#Fadi).

The other two students, Hadi and Radi, reported the same procedure except they were less punctual on their commitment to their goals than Fadi. Besides, the critical incidents of bad experiences with the British people negatively influenced their motivation to learn English. For example, Hadi concluded that “*the British people are not friendly, anyhow*”. Fadi was even hesitant about his best British friend in the host family and reluctantly described him as:

"excellent, ... well..not excellent, but not too bad (#Hadi).

4.2 Socially Constructed Investment

Taking into account the complexity view informing this study, and to assess investment and positive interdependence of both learners and significant others in their learning endeavor, learners' reported experiences of these were examined as well. With regards to the principle of investment, learners seemed to have invested their full potential to learn the language. Radi's approach to investment when communicating with native speakers in his host family was through collecting as many numbers of vocabularies as possible besides understanding how to use them. He said that:

I listen to them [native speakers], take vocabulary and leave accents and pronunciation as my last concern.... Only if pronunciation changes the meaning of words, then you can care about it (#Radi).

Radi's investment approach is probably different from the other two participants, Hadi and Fadi, in the sense that he was more pragmatic rather than perfectionist:

Sure, or why else we are studying in the UK? Of course, through friendship one wants to communicate with British people so that he can get by (#Hadi)

If one wants to study only for the purpose of passing exams, of course he would, but not as effective as talking with them [British people] (#Shadi)

A key emergent theme from the interviews was the extent to which significant others in the lives of the learners shared learners' investment and social interdependence. These were reflected in showing friendliness, openness, and investment by four types of community members. These are their host family members, language teachers and school staff, language learners in the school, and others in the life of the language learners. The themes seem to indicate the roles sympathy with language learners by significant others play in the development of L2 learners' proficiency.

Fadi described the friendly talk with his host family lady as a critical component of learning a second language:

I and my host family lady talked recently about the what was going on in Saudi Arabia and UK, it is important to talk (#Fadi).

This quote highlights that sympathy may not only be an emotional reaction by native speakers, but an informed action grounded in Norton's principle of investment. That is, native speakers' initiatives to talk and communicate with language learners to allow for the increased opportunity for L2 learners to acquire language through purposeful communication. In line with this, Fadi described the British people as

cool, friendly" and "they don't mind talking with us (#Fadi).

Hadi, also expressed his positive experiences about the British community:
especially because they appreciate the Saudi culture...they love talking about our culture (#Hadi)

4.3 Teachers' Openness

A recurring theme highlighted the roles language school community's play in enhancing learning the English language. These pertained to teachers, administrative staff, and learners. The participants appeared to have mixed feelings about the extent to which each category of the community members extends efforts to communicate with L2 learners. With regards to language school teachers and staff members, one participant described the abundance of opportunities to chat with them even in their break time. As Shadi said:

I am kind of involved with them, in the break time, I always go to the reception area, try to talk with them (#Shadi).

An important reflection of teachers' contribution to the enhancement of the learning process related to the pedagogical approaches that teachers implement to make lessons quite appealing and motivating to language learners. As Fadi said "some *teachers introduce activities that make you participate and make the classroom active and interesting. Some teachers don't. It depends on the teacher, either he either makes you participate or discourages you*". On another note, the language module might be a source of de/motivation. Radi mentioned that Academic English classes were both motivating and demotivating. As he said:

IELTS classes are killing a little because of the academic vocabularies and are making the class boring. However, I am not disappointed whatsoever. Rather, I feel this is motivating for me to solve the problems I face That is why I sometimes I ask my British friend in my host family about this (#Radi).

Despite the reported positive experiences about teachers' roles in enhancing learners' motivation to learn a second language, 50% of the participants considered teachers' awareness of the educational background of the learners to play a critical role in boosting students' motivation to

learn. Reflecting on his curiosity to learn more about language through asking questions, Shadi felt that this was annoying to some teachers. As he said, “there are some problems *with some teachers when you ask them, they don't say that they are annoyed but his reactions tell you he is bothered*” (Shadi). Radi also expressed negative attitudes towards some teachers regarding openness to students about questioning and their styles of teaching. He reported that:

there are some problems with some teachers when you ask them, they don't say that they are annoyed, but his reactions tell you he is bothered (#Radi).

With regards to the third category of the school's community and its impact on students' motivation learn English, 50% of the participants considered learning a second language to be more motivating when it occurs within a blend of different ethnicities. For those cohort's heterogeneity of language learners is considered a crucial element in enhancing and maintaining speaking in the target language as an attempt to strengthen and promote linguistic and communicative development. As Fadi said about learning English with homogenous groups of learners whose mother tongue is Arabic:

It is impossible to maintain speaking in the English language because we are Arabs and it is normal, we speak in Arabic as well (#Fadi).

Students' willingness to maintain communication in the English language with their classmates can be a reflection of their integrative orientation towards and purposeful investment in classroom community to enhance language learning. It seems that the heterogeneity of classroom students is a principle that participants in this study perceived to be conducive to successful language learning. Being within such linguistically heterogenous learners seems to provide language learners with opportunities for learning and language usage. As Hadi said:

I wish language schools recruit not only Arab learners but multicultural students such as Europeans and Asians because in the break time I would love to practice English with them. I can't speak in Arabic because they will not understand me. I have to communicate with them in English. This is good (#Hadi).

A recurring theme also concerns surrounding society's investment in and positive interdependence with language learners and the roles these play in promoting learners' motivation to learn a second language. A negative experience reported by one participant concerns the lack of investment by significant others in the target language community. According to Norton's (2001) investment principle, those with direct contact to students' learning such as those inside or outside of language school must exert scaffolding to help learners progress in their language learning endeavor. If this does not happen, then it can be perceived to be demotivating to language learners and may slow or impede the progress of L2 learning. One expressed theme in this regard was the role friendliness of target community members, or lack of it, plays in promoting/impeding learner's integrative motivation and willingness to speak with them. For Hadi, unlike the friendliness of schools' community expressed above, lack of friendliness by target language community members outside of school may play a major role in demotivating him to communicate with others in English.

Once I was lost in London, and I stopped a British passerby to help find my way. To my surprise, he said he was busy and went away. That was awful! I was so disappointed that I decided not to ask anyone any more (#Hadi).

While this situation might seem reasonable in a busy city like London, the experience itself highlights how based on the investment and positive interdependence principles, the shared vision of learning English through communication between native speakers and second language learners may increase learners' self-morale and better their language learning. The negative experience depicted by this incident can also lead to the conclusion that significant others' failure to cooperate with second language learners for any reason might be negatively perceived and can impeded learners' investment as was the case with Hadi when decided to avoid communicating with native speakers. This situation also highlights that motivation cannot and should not be interpreted quite simplistically as learners' having orientations to communicate with native speakers. A complex picture would pinpoint the principles of investment and positive interdependence as well. These highlight the shared consciousness and mutual efforts to be expended by all parties involved in formal and informal learning situations. This means that for a second language learner to be motivated, it takes more than having positive attitudes towards native speakers' community. The likelihood of the impact of mutual respect, relatedness and more importantly target community's attitudes towards L2 students could be considered to have equal importance. This understanding promotes students' sense of belonging and acts as a confirmation for their orientation to communicate with speakers of the target community. As Klem and Connell (2004, p.24) mention relational engagement, like positive interdependence, means the extent to which speakers of the target language care about second language learners' emotions and feelings outside of the classroom settings. The findings of this study also shed light on the positive experiences and instances of negative experiences resulting from the presence and lack of relational/emotional engagement, investment and positive interdependence. Attending to these factors is important as it enhances students' motivation to learn and promotes their linguistic proficiency. As Martin and Dowson (2009) explain, satisfactions of students needs for relatedness is essential to meet the cognitive and affective demands of school.

4.4 Space for Learning

In order to explore the findings related to this theme, a background description of the school (context of the study) is provided. The language school operates both an academic (AP) and a social program (SP) of study. The AP offers four course-based types of programs: Authentic English program (28 lesson per week), the Core (Main) program (20 lessons per week) Examination programs (28 lessons per week) and specialist courses program (28 lesson per week). The SP offers four classes is optional and subsidized by the school and aims to engage students in the English culture. It offers excursions and trips to local and landmarks and cultural places. There are other sorts of social activities such as cooking, board games, table tennis competitions, parties, evening-outs. The school also provides fully equipped classrooms with modern technology such as WIFI, television, projectors, DVD players. Self-access center also offers rooms with listening centre, computers and television. The sports and leisure room house things like board games, table tennis, and table football and other sports and leisure activities. The students in the case study joined the AP- the core program and the Examination program and

participated in school-based social activities such as the leisure and sports activities. For the AP, the students were placed in the upper-intermediate general English in the morning classes, and intermediate Examination program to be prepared for IELTS exam.

4.4.1 Formal Space for Learning

This theme presents findings about participants' experiences with the formal space for learning. The respondents were asked about their experiences with the core curriculum aspects such as the classroom, teachers, curriculum and learning resources provided by their language school. With few exceptions, the respondents reported positive experiences about the school, curriculum and the approaches teachers use educate language learners. Other respondents mentioned that the teaching approaches that teachers use to introduce new lessons as well the type of the lesson itself play major roles in motivating or discouraging students. With regards to the teaching approach, Hadi reported that the types of activities teachers utilize in class determine how motivated a student is to participate in a lesson. As he said:

some teachers introduce activities that make you participate and make the classroom very active. Other teachers don't (#Hadi).

The extent to which teachers engage students in interesting language learning activities was also reiterated by Radi who said that:

It depends on the teacher, he/she either makes you participate or discourages you from taking part in learning (#Radi).

The second factor that pertains to the impact of the physical learning context on students' motivation to learning a second language concerns the type of lesson to be learned. The participants found academic English classes boring compared to general English classes. As Fadi Said:

IELTS classes are killing me a little because of the academic vocabularies and are making the class boring (Fadi)

For Shadi However academic classes were seen as a source of motivation because these lessons encourage him to learn problem solving skills. As he Said:

I am not disappointed whatsoever. Rather, I feel this is motivating for me to solve the problems I face (#Shadi)

For the third participant, however, the academic English classes were considered to be motivating as these help learners to use new vocabularies and expressions when communicating with members of the target language community. As Hadi also mentioned that:

academic English make me confident; I use it even in informal situations and if I find any difficulty, I sometimes ask my British friend in my host family (#Hadi).

4.4.2 Social Space for Learning

With regards to the third component of the learning context, the participants had different views, but the overall impression seems to be positive experiences about the learning space both inside and outside the classroom. While the participants talked about leaning resources such as CD players, flashcards, dictionaries, and PC suites, they referred to these in passing, and therefore these were not considered recurring themes. The participants seemed to be more interested in telling their experiences with the resources that make social space for language learning through interactions and face to face communication. as mentioned above, these include but are not limited to the leisure activity room located on the ground floor and the back garden. Such space was perceived to be important in encouraging socialization among language learners from different parts of the world. As Radi Said:

in the break time, I like to talk with students from Asia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East, we sit in the garden and talk (#Radi)

This social space also encourages students to purposefully recall aspects of the lessons learned during the week and throws it to open space for learning by talking. As Hadi also mentioned:

when we sit on the benches on the back garden of the school, I plan to use the vocabulary and grammar we learned in class with my friends. Sometimes this is funny, we forget vocabulary, but it is a lot of fun we just sit and talk in English (#Hadi)

The leisure activity room also provided another dynamic milieu for communication among language learners. Mingling with learners from different backgrounds was perceived to be encouraging and motivating to students to speak and communicate in English. Radi and Shadi Expressed similar experiences. As Radi said said:

we meet in the lounge and play table football with friends. We speak English as we play, it is interesting and also we laugh (#Radi)

Shadi also mentioned that even with learners from the same background, he insists on using English language:

I love the break time because we meet and talk with friends from China, Turkey and also the Arabs. I speak in English to be better and learn more. I tell my friends to speaks in English Even Arabs. The school also tells us to speak in English". Agreeing with Shadi, Fadi sees the break time as an opportunity to practice real life English and was very cynical about students who speak with friends in their mother tongue. "why are we here? We are here to use the language and when we meet for playing table football, I speak a lot. But I don't like it when I hear my friends use Arabic language, it is upsetting (#Shadi).

5.0 Conclusion

This research study explored the experiences and perceptions of Saudi adult learners of English as a second language about what motivates them to learn English at a language school in the United Kingdom. The study adopted a tripartite theoretical framework and the findings

showed that Saudi students were highly motivated to learn English as a second language in a second language context and their motivation was attributed to three main factors reflecting the complexity of the term. These factors concern students' integrative orientation towards the second language community, their shared investment in formal and informal learning and positive social interdependence among language learners and the target language group. The findings of this study suggest that motivation is a dynamic and complex construct which is co-constructed by several actors and factors in the context in which it is enacted. Despite shortcomings related to its design, this qualitative research study has significant implications to learners of English as a second and foreign language, language institutes and curriculum designers.

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