Are Saudi Girls Motivated to Learn English?

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Abstract
This paper is based on data drawn from Ph.D. research investigating the relationship between language and motivation. It specifically describes the motivating and demotivating factors that influence young female language learners in the Saudi context. This study aims to investigate what factors could motivate female learners of ESL classrooms. Further, the author utilizes sociocultural theory to explore what factors could affect participants' motivation as female Muslim Arabs. She also supportsher arguments using data drawn from classroom observations, pupil focus group interviews and one-to-one teacher interviews. The current study involves 132 second-year pupils from a secondary public school in Taif city and three Saudi English language teachers.The findings indicate the impact of various social factors relevant to the Saudi identity, culture and everyday life on girls' ESL learning in the Saudi context. Participants' beliefs and practices of ESL appear to be influenced by certain imaginative views towards their local identities and cultures, their possible selves in the future, and the linguistic communities. In addition, findings regarding autonomy indicate that identity and culture attributes affects teachers' and learners' roles in the classroom and their motivation both inside andoutside the classroom. Finally, the study recommends extending the setting of the sample for future study to include more than one city in order to compare cultural and social attributes that impact ESL, ascultures and identities vary from one area to another in Saudi Arabia.

Keywords: Autonomy, beliefs, culture, identity, motivation, second language learning

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Background

Historically, Saudi Arabia has occupied a special place in the Islamic world; thus an appreciation of Islamic history and culture is essential for a genuine understanding of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, its Islamic heritage and its leading role in the Arab and Muslim worlds (Education, 2010). Religion may affect education in Saudi Arabia more than the government (Al-Aqeel, 2005) as the Saudi royal family supports the religious movement (Al-Banyan, 1980; Molavi, 2006).

In Saudi Arabia, Arabic is the official language used in everyday transactions and in most educational environments. However, for more than 50 years, English has beenthe only foreign language taught in public schools, starting from the seventh year to year eleven in secondary school (Al-Mutawa&Kailani, 1989); recently it has been taught during year 6, and from an age as early as kindergarten in most private schools.

According to different studies conducted in Saudi Arabia (Al-Ahaydib, 1986; Al-Aqeel, 2005; Al-Kamookh, 1981; Al-Mulhim, 2001; Al-Mutawa&Kailani, 1989; Al-Qurashi, 1988; Al-Subahi, 1989; Hijailan, 2003; Khafaji, 2004), people seeking training in English as a foreign language (EFL) in the Gulf in general and in Saudi Arabia in particular have what is perceivedto be low English language attainment. Al-Ahaydib(1986) stated that English has become more important than ever before, but due to pupils' poor level of educational attainments concerning English, as defined by the government, it has become necessary to review the English language program in the intermediate and secondary stages, in order to identify aspects that need to be improved.

Therefore, many studies looking at English as a second language (ESL) call for more investigation in order to determine the obstacles and the challenges that constrain pupils' learning process and how to overcome difficulties (Al-Abed Haq&Smadi, 1996; Al-Ahaydib, 1986; Al-Kamookh, 1981; Al-Mulhim, 2001; Al-Nujaidi, 2003; Al-Otaibi, 2004; Al-Qurashi, 1988; Anton, 1999; Dornyei, 2005; Elyas, 2008; Freeman & Freeman, 1998; Iter&Guzeller, 2005; Karahan, 2007; J. Lantolf, 2006; Little, 2009; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004; Zaid, 1993). This study focuses on investigating some aspects offemale English learners,specifically, their classroom interaction and communication that play a significant role in the development of their language learning from a sociolinguistic perspective. The researcher concentrated on the motivating and demotivating factors that impact pupils' learning and performance.

The proposed study intends to enrich the research of English learning and teaching in Saudi Arabia and fill this gap between cultural differences by observing a number of English lessons in order to explore real English language practices regarding motivation and determine the extent to which these motivating factors can affect pupils' learning process. It also aims to investigate teachers' and learners' attitudes towards English and explore what could discourage them fromusing English communicatively.

Aims of the study

This study aims to explore what factors could motivate female learners of English in second language classrooms in Taif city, Saudi Arabia.

In order to achieve the aims and desired outcomes, the researcher followed many steps and objectives in relation to classes.

Objectives of the study

- To explore girls' attitudes towards English language and culture.
- To explore teachers' attitudes towards English language and culture.
- To explore the influence of images and future possible selves on motivating ESL learners in the Saudi context.
- To explore social and cultural factors that could motivate or demotivate ESL in the Saudi context.

Literature review

This section reviews the literature relative to the proposed study. Itbriefly examines language in relation to some sociolinguistic theories related to language learning, motivation and culture.

Motivation in ESL

Much debate surrounds the importance of motivation in language learning, and it has been agreed that motivation is one of the influential factors in ESL. Ellis (1994) states that "SLA research... views motivation as a key factor in L2 learning" (p. 508). McDonough (1986)supportes this argument, pointing out that the "motivation of the students is one of the most important factors influencing their success or failure in learning the language" (p. 142). In addition, a lack of motivation could reduce learners' attention and sometimes push them to misbehave, while motivated pupils are likely to concentrate and behave to a certain extent (Spolsky, 1989). Motivated learners tend to work autonomously and accept responsibility for their learning more readily than those who do not enjoy the process (Benson, 2001; Oxford, 2003). Teachers also argue that pupils who are interested in language learning perform better than those who are not motivated.

What is motivation?

Given the complicated nature of motivation that varies according to the dynamic changes in a person's psychology, it is not an easy task to define this phenomenon.   Furthermore, the literature on motivation provides no single agreed-upon definition of motivation; but ratherthe definitionvaries according to the relevant factors and surroundings. Gardner (2006) argues that "motivation is a very complex phenomenon with many facets... Thus, it is not possible to give a simple definition" (p. 242). In order to define 'motivation' it is important to identify its sources. Harmer (1991) describes motivation as the "internal drive' that pushes somebody to do something. If we think that our goal is worth doing and attractive for us, then we try to reach that goal; this is called 'the action driven by motivation"(p. 3). It has also been explained that learning and motivation are two fundamental components necessary to reach a goal; learning enables us to obtain knowledge, and motivation attracts us to become involved in the learning process (Parsons, Hinson, & Brown, 2001). Other researchers define motivation as a complex task that could be explained through two aspects: the pupils' need to communicate during class and his/her attitude about the language speakers (Lightbown, Spada, Ranta, & Rand, 2006). Some researchersalso identify motivation and attitudes as two vital, equivalent factors in the

language-learning process. Karahan (2007)concludesthat "positive language attitudes let learners have positive orientation towards learning English" (p. 84).

Categories of motivation

Motivation is categorised by numerous studies (Csikszentmihalyi&Rathunde, 1993; R. Ryan, 1995; R. Ryan &Deci, 2000) according to its sources and goals. It is identified by the self-determination theory (Deci& Ryan, 1985) as two notions: 'intrinsic' or 'extrinsic' motivation. The term 'intrinsic' motivation refers to one's own self-perceived needs and goals that push him or her to perform an action, while 'extrinsic' motivation refers to persuading a person to perform an action to gain an external outcome or to avoid a punishment. It is argued that intrinsic motivation aims to fulfil an innate need; for example, allowing a person to choose to perform an action will increase his or her enthusiasm to do this action (Deci& Ryan, 1985). Kruglanski(1975) also refers to the similar concepts of 'endogenous-exogenous' attributions. The term 'endogenous attributions' refers to the intrinsic motivational factors such as learning a language to satisfy one's own need with no other goal, whereas exogenous refers to any external factors that energise a person to do something, such as securing a good job. Moreover, Schmidt, Boraie, and Kassabgy(1996) develop two other similar notions: 'instrumental' as a subcategoryof extrinsic motivation and 'integrative' as a subcategoryof intrinsic motivation to avoid punishment in reference to the same goals and outcomes.

A teacher's role in motivating learners

The role of the teacher in motivating learners has provoked a great deal of debate among language-learning researchers and acknowledged its significance in watering pupils' learning roots and improving their performance (Dornyei, 1994; Ellis, 1994; Tanaka, 2005). Dornyei and Ushioda(2011) state that teachers have to "whet the students' appetite" and motivate them to engage in language learning''(p. 114). Gorham and Christophel(1992) conducted a study about which factors could demotivate language learners, using open-ended questions. The results reveal that 79% of the responses were related to the teacher, which accounting forthe main if not the only factor in influencing pupils' motivation. Another study also (Chambers, 1998) investigated the demotivating factors among pupils in a group of schools in Leeds, UK. The study involving 191 pupils and seven teachers and concludes that teachers were a major demotivating factor in the classroom context.

The teacher-learner interaction might also play a fundamental role in creating a stimulating classroom environment (Williams & Burden, 1997). Alison and Halliwell(2002) point out that a teacher's classroom behaviour could also affect learners' motivation; thus, teachers should create a class environment of trust and respect with pupils. Oxford (Kramsch, 1998) conducted a study that included 250 American academic institutions to investigate how teachers demotivated their pupils. The study proposes that teachers' beliefs about the course and the student-teacher relationship have a direct relationship with the demotivation of pupils. It has also been argued that unenthusiastic teachers can also demotivate their learners to do a task (Dornyei&Ushioda, 2011). Increasing learners' expectancy for success could also impact their motivation, while reminding pupils of their failures and difficulties in language learning might negatively impact their enthusiasm and performance (Atkinson, Raynor, & Birch, 1974). In response to this theory, teachers should increase pupils' expectations for success and help them form positive images of themselves as future members of the community connected to the language. Moreover, Bandura (1986, 1997) proposes that what a person believes about his or her

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abilities could dramatically impact his or her motivation to perform a particular action than actual capabilities, information, and achievements.

Finally, teachers can motivate pupils by relating the lesson to learners' needs and interests (Dornyei, 2001).

The motivational Self-System and parental encouragement

Many studies stress the impact of parents on their children's self-system and future self-images (Kormos&Csizer, 2008; Taguchi, Magid, &Papi, 2009).   Bandura (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, &Pastorelli, 1996) find that parents' beliefs about their children's academic success and failure could affecttheir children's motivation and beliefs about their academic capabilities. The impact of the social context on language learners' motivation was observed by Lamb (2010) in his study conducted in Indonesia. He argues that urban language learners could create more images of their ideal second language than rural learners could. Moreover, rural learners have shown less interest and were less motivated than pupils from urban societies. Poor ideal second language images could result from a lack of social encouragement, which issometimes caused by a lack of role models or a conflict between the current social identities and one's possible selves (Oyserman&Fryberg, 2006). Numerous studies stress the importance of parental encouragement in enhancing learners' motivation (Gardner, 1985; Kormos&Csizer, 2008; S. Ryan, 2009; Williams & Burden, 1997). Others also identify role models as the main factor in energising pupils' possible selves and, thus, their motivation.

Motivation and the stereotype of a Muslim woman in the Saudi context

A Muslim female plays a significant role in her society, whether a mother, a wife or a sister. This role is emphasised dramatically in Islam; therefore, a female should be a good example by appearing ideal and pure. This image creates a stereotype of an ideal Muslim woman who should preserve herself. The Saudi educational system also stresses this ideal view of a woman in its general education objectives, which aim "to bring 'a woman' up in a proper Islamic way so as to perform her duty in life, be an ideal and successful housewife and a good mother, ready to do things which suit her nature as teaching, nursing, and medical treatment" (Alireza, 1987, p. 123).

Research suggests that in the Saudi context, a female language learner feels conflicted about protecting her identity as an ideal Muslim Arabic female and being involved in the globalised world through English language learning without being affected by its non-Islamic ideologies. Abu-Ali and Reisen's(1999) study about Muslim girls living in the United States suggest that gender roles can be modified through involvement in multicultural environments, such as a culture that encompasses both Western and Islamic cultures. This conflict between the two civilizations regarding women's lives does not lead to a clash or crisis; however, it is a significant sign of the ability of Muslim females to adaptto different cultures, creating a fascinating hybrid identity. This identity negotiation, whether clash, modification or hybridity, is strong evidence of the relationship between identity and language learning.

The role of Imagined Communities in motivating language learners

A large number ofstudies argue that imagined communities play a positive role in enhancing language learning (Dagenais, 2003; De Bot, Lowie, &Verspoor, 2005; Kanno& Norton, 2003; Murphey, Chen, & Chen, 2005; Norton & Kamal, 2003). In addition, imagination

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can energise language learners to achieve their future goals towards which they strive (Simon, 1992). Moreover, promoting learners' imagination as members of higher communities beyond their accessible EFL worlds is crucial to energise their motivation to understand the significant language skills they require to interact with those imagined communities. Vygotsky(1978) also argues that imagination plays a vital role in learners' development. Norton and Kamal (2003) state that imagined communities can direct language learners to achieve what they imagine by influencing their learning trajectories and outcomes and energising their investment in language learning. Moreover, Kanno and Norton(2003)argue that:

> On a temporal dimension, the notion of Imagined Communities enables us to relate learners' visions of the future to their prevailing actions and identities. It is a way of affirming that what has not yet happened in the future can be a reason and motivation for what learners do in the present (p. 248).

Therefore, language teachers can play a significant role in transmitting cultural ideologies to their learners and enhancing the construction of their imagined community, and "what kind of adult the students will grow up to be and what communities they will join in the future" (Kanno& Norton, 2003, p. 287). On the other hand, teachers ignoring learners' imagined communities might lead to resistance to language learning (Norton, 2000).

Imagination to provoke a reaction: the Possible Selves
"The self is one of the most actively researched topics in all of psychology" (Baumeister, 1999, p. 1), as it could affect, and be influenced by, a complicated network of factors whether internal or external. "Possible Selves are hypothetical images about one's future, including the ideal selves that we would like to become, such as 'the good parent', 'the successful business person', and 'the loving spouse', as well as the selves that we are afraid of becoming, such as 'the alcoholic', 'the college dropout', and 'the lonely spinster'" (Strahan& Wilson, 2006, p. 3). In addition, "a possible self is to imagine, and the more detailed the possible self, the more available it will be. If a possible self is available, then it will influence one's actual behaviour to attain or avoid that possible self" (Norman &Aron, 2003, p. 501).

The idea of 'possible selves' (Markus &Nurius, 1986) is a theory that links language learners to how they envision themselves in the future. This theory is built on learners' imagination of themselves, what they wish to become and what they are afraid of becoming as members of the imagined communities. Imagined communities inspire learners' vision of possible selves. As Norton (2001) proposes that "a learner's imagined Community invite[s] an imagined identity, and a learner's investment in the target language must be understood within this context" (p. 166). Imagination can also provide teachers with opportunities to provoke learners' reactions towards language learning by imagining their 'possible selves' (Markus &Nurius, 1986) in the future, and what they desire to be or what they are afraid of becoming. "Possible Selves are specific representations of one's self in future states, involving thoughts, images, and senses, and are in many ways the manifestations or personalized carriers, of one's goals and aspirations 'and fears, of course' " (Dornyei, 2005, p. 99). This notion can motivate language learners to create a plan for their future by creating a balance between their goals and fears byimagining possible negative outcomes if they have not achieved their wishes (Markus &Ruvolo, 1989). In this regard, Higgins (1987) develops another theory called 'self-discrepancy' that aims to employ motivation to reduce discrepancy and link a person's current actual self or

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selves and his or her possible selves in the future. Moreover Dornyei(2009) argues that 'Possible Selves' is a crucial motivator, stating that "if proficiency in the target language is the part and parcel of one's ideal or ought to self, this will serve as a powerful motivator to learn the language" (p. 4). He furtherstates that "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" (Dornyei, 2005, p. 105). Moreover, Markus and Nurius argue that future self-images increase a person's motivation and transfer them from their present self towards the imagined desired selves or away from the feared selves (1986). Norton (2010) argues that for second language acquisition it is crucial to develop the notion of investing to stimulate learners. Moreover, Possible Selves can affect learners' achievement; Marsh and his colleagues argue that a strong relationship exists between self-concept and academic achievement (Marsh & Craven, 1997; Marsh, Trautwein, Ludtke, Koller, &Baumert, 2005).

Motivation and 'Possible Selves' or 'L2 (second language) Self'

Within the debate of defining the concept of motivation, some identify it as a learner's requirement to approach a goal (Gardner, 1985) When motivating learners, it is important theyhave a goal to which to look forward as they learn a second language, such as getting a good job or gaining a high social status. This argument suggests that language learning could be a vehicle by which a learner achieves his or her goals. Dornyei(2005) also suggests a model that considers the essential power that energises language learners as the images of their future selves as successful speakers of that language. This model includes two second language self-aspects: The ideal second language self and ought-to second language self. The first aspect refers to the learner's ideal and positive future image he or she creates of him- or herself upon becoming a user of that language. The second aspect refers to a language learner's desire to learn a language to avoid certain negative outcomes (Dornyei, 2005) such as losing a social status or a job.

Although the relationship between motivation and self-future images is strong, it might be affected by other social /cultural and emotional forces, such as fear, hope or even obligation (Higgins, 1987). Dornyei(2009) mentions that possible selves play a vital role if they are "perceived as realistic within the person's individual circumstances", and possible selves are effective if they suit a person's current social identities (p. 9). Furthermore, "a particular possible self may fail to sustain regulatory action because it conflicts with other parts of the self-concept" (Oyserman&Fryberg, 2006, p. 118). Thus the power of the target language culture over the learner's culture and identity can motivate or demotivate learners depending on how the two cultures are congruent or conflict with each other (Schumann, 1976).

Investment as a motivating factor

To understand the idea of 'investment' in language learning, it is important to refer to the concepts of 'Imagined Communities' and 'Possible Selves' as well ashow language learners can make the greatest investment through their possible selves in the future and the imaginative engagement in language communities. These three notions are useful in shedding light on the findings as they affect and are affected by each other. This correlation will be clarified through later data analysis and discussion.

Simon (1992) argues that people struggle to fulfil their expectations; however, these expectations can be enhanced with the help of their imagination. Norton (2001) proposes that Imagined Communities play a crucial role in second language learning through investment in communities

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that do not have the boundaries of the classroom. Therefore, Imagined Communities inspire a learner to create an imagined identity and possible selves for the future that facilitate investment in language learning and the struggle to meet these expectations. The research suggests that if language teachers ignore their pupils' imagination, this might lead to resistance to language learning.

To conclude, future-self-images play a crucial role in enhancing language learning. However, this impact can only be effective and positive if the images are congruent with the learner's circumstances and do not conflict with the learner's current social identities.

Practise and use of English in meaningful ways as a motivating factor

It is widely believed that language practise plays a fundamental role in the attainment of language (Aljaafreh&Lantolf, 1994; Anton, 1999; Ellis &Fotos, 1999; Hall, 1995; Lantolf, 2006; M. Long, 2006; Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Swain &Lapkin, 1998). Moreover, pupils' negative attitudes towards English could be justified with their belief that English is only a concrete subject rather than a live language. Therefore, a second or foreign language is not only a concrete subject or a group of grammar rules to be studied, but also a dynamic process of communicative competences that allow learners to use language practically as a tool of communication. In addition, it is essential to understand that the main aim of learning grammar rules is to employ those rules communicatively in everyday life (Long, 1981, 1996).

Methodology

This section discusses the research design, methodology, and methods used in the current study. The researcher explains the rationale behindusing a case study approach. Moreover, it discusses the research participants. In addition, it includes the procedures of the data collection and research ethics.

Research methodology refers to the study approaches and methods used for data collection, procedures, data analysis and the justification for selecting those approaches and methods. Methodology has been defined from different angles. According to Wellington &Szczerbinski(2007) methodology is "the activity or business of choosing, reflecting upon, evaluating and justifying the methods you use" (p. 33). Frankfort-Nachmias and David Nachmias(2007) refer to methodology as the processconcerned with how a researcher analyses data using certain methods in order to theorize or conceptualize a particular phenomenon. Methodology has also been defined as a group of rules and procedures as well astools that help a researcher evaluate and understand specific knowledge (Miller & Brewer, 2003).

Methodology and methods

According to Silverman (2013), a methodology encompasses the process of studying a certain phenomenon and selecting a case study, tools and methods used for data-gathering and analysis. Meanwhile, 'methods' refers to procedures, tools and techniques utilized for data-collection (Kaplan, 1973) including quantitative and qualitative techniques such as questionnaires, interviews, surveys and case studies. There are no true or false methodologies or methods; however, some can be more or less useful and suitable to the specific research topic (Silverman, 2013).

Case study approach

In order to match the study objectives, the researcher adopted a case study method that involves one secondary school involving ESL pupils and teachers.

A case study can be explained as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 2003, p. 13).

The selection of the case study approach is justified as "it provides an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in some depth within a limited timescale …" (Bell, 1999, p. 10).

The case study method may allow for multiple sources for data-gathering, such as visits, observations, interviews, discussions and field notes.

The choice of a case study approach is significant and appropriate for the current study, as this approach is suitable for studying complex settings involving social aspects such as culture, gender and religion.

Moreover, in order to answer why and how questions in this study, the case study is the best choice because as Yin (2003) explains"How or why questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (p. 1).

Research participants

According to Patton, no defined criteria exist for the size of sampling in qualitative studies (2005); however, this approach relies on small numbers of participants to study a phenomenon in more depth (Miles &Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2005). The current study sample involved 132 second-year pupils from a secondary public school in Taif city and three Saudi English language teachers. The researcher interviewed thirty pupils, divided into five groups of five to six pupils. The study sample groups met at least half an hour three to seven times throughout a period of four months. The researcherinterviewed the five focus groups from 27 March 2012 through 6 May 2012. In addition she interviewed the three English teachers individually once or twice at the end of study according to their availability. The researcher was the only person who had access to these data.

Only females were involved; male schools would bedifficult to include due to cultural reasons that do not allow direct contact between males and females.

Methods of data collection

According to Silverman (2013), a methodology encompasses the process of studying a certain phenomenon and selecting a case study, tools and methods used for data-gathering and analysis. 'Methods' refers to the procedures, tools and techniques utilized for data collection (Kaplan, 1973), including quantitative and qualitative techniques such as questionnaires, interviews, surveys and case studies. There are no true or false methodologies or methods; however, some can be more or less useful and suitable to the specific research topic (Silverman, 2013). In this research,the researcher used focus group and individual interviews, classroom observation, field notes and multimodal materials. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003)explain that:

"Three areas in which mixed methods are superior to single approach designs:
Mixed methods research can answer research questions that the other methodologies cannot.
Mixed methods research provides better (stronger) inferences.
Mixed methods provide the opportunity for presenting a greater diversity of divergent views"(pp. 14-15).

Interviews

Interviews were usedbecause "interviews can reach the parts which other methods cannot reach … allowing a researcher to investigate and prompt things that we cannot observe like interviewee's thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, views, feelings and perspectives" (Wellington, 2000, p. 71).

Focus group interviews

The use of pupil group interviews was preferred in order to "discover how interpretations were collectively constructed through talk and the interchange between respondents in the group situation" (Morley, 1980, p. 33). This method is useful for reflecting the social realities of a cultural group and relevant to identify pupils' implicit beliefs and thoughts about their English learning and how it might be affected by certain cultural practices whether inside school or in everyday life (Hughes &DuMont, 2002).

This study focuses on perception and thoughts; therefore interviews were open-ended and empowered participants to speak out and develop their ideas without the restriction of closed, specific questions (Denscombe, 1998). Furthermore, these interviews were semi-structured to allow the researcher to address any new and unexpected points that arose during the interview without losing the main focus, which may occur in unstructured interviews.

The use of pupil focus group interviews was preferred because people are more encouraged to express ideas and opinions in groups versus individually (Denzin& Lincoln, 2000; Morgan, 1993, 1995; Mouton &Babbie, 2001). Moreover, focus group interviews allow the researcher to observe the discussion and find evidence of differences and similarities in participants' ideas and thoughts (Denzin& Lincoln, 2000; Morgan, 1993, 1995; Mouton &Babbie, 2001). In addition, group interviews encourage shy and silent pupils to participate and develop ideas; all participants can interact in a stimulating atmosphere while a researcher observes and compares opinions (Brodbeck, 2002; Pahl-Wostl& Hare, 2004).

These interviews consisted of five focus groups of female secon-year pupils from one state secondary school in the western region of Saudi Arabia. Each focus group included six pupils who participated from two to five times. Using six participants in each group was considered a sufficiently large number to encourage participation, especially for shy members, and yet small enough to ensure that the group did not lose focus while allowing each student an opportunity to participate (Morgan, 1993, 1995). According to Denscombe(2007), focus group interviews last longer than one-to-one interviews because multiple opinions and thoughts are involved; they may last 90 minutes to two hours (Denscombe, 2007). During the interviews, pupils talked about the problems they face regarding their English learning and shed light on matters relating to their families' and other relative's attitudes towards using English in their everyday life.

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The researcher avoided video recording due to the segregated nature of female society in Saudi Arabia; to overcome this restriction, she used an audio recorder to record participants' responses with their permission. Sheavoided taking notes during the interviews to ensure that the chat was smoother and more natural.The researcher explained the interview questions and discussed them with pupils to facilitate discussion and ensure that participants understood all questions. At the end of each interview, the researcherreviewed and summarised the main points of the discussion for the participants.She asked participants for corrections and additions to their interview answers. Finally, the researcher thanked participants and encouraged them to contact herwithfurther inquiries, opinions, ideas or additional information. The ethical issues regarding interviews are discussed in detail in the section considerations of research ethics.

Pupils involved in the interviews were selected with the help of their teachers as friends, which allowed the researcher to understand deeply when listening to their narration of previous experiences.The researcher involved bolder pupils to encourage and facilitate interaction among the group. During the interviews, discussions were shaped and refined by the group interaction. Pupils encouraged each other and stimulated opinions and views. Moreover, group discussion allowed pupils to access others' views and thoughts and helped them to crystallise their own opinions and understandings.

The researcher conducted pupil focus group interviews informally in the pupils' resources room to break free from the formality of the classroom. This place was suitable and allowed pupils to speak openly without fear of being embarrassed by their peers or teachers. The setting needed to foster friendly interactive conversation. It was easy at the beginning to book this room; however, the researcher later needed to book it one week in advance. The room was comfortable for pupils as it had an informal atmosphere and offered some interesting games, such as billiards, which they played during our interview breaks. Each interview was recorded with the date, time and place. Towards the end of the semester, it was difficult to find time for theinterviews since teachers were rushing to finish their curriculum and revise lessons. The researcher conducted two interviews in the school activities room as the resources room had been reserved by one of the math teachers. Re-contacting pupils for further clarification was facilitated by the use of smart phones and audio and text chatting. This interactive innovative method was preferred by most of the study participants as an easy and available way of communication using any smart phone or computer. It also allowed the researcher to speak in a friendly and informally way with theparticipants without the restrictions of time or place. Furthermore, this method encouraged respondents to provide the researcher with further data even without making a request.

However, gathering pupils to be interviewed was difficult because some pupils signed up for the meeting only to escape instead to the playground. The researcher needed to exert effort and self-control to work with these pupils without making them feel that they were being controlled or pressured.

Teachers' one-to-one interviews
Teachers' interviews were friendly conversations informally arranged according to the availability of the teachers and conducted in the pupils' resources room to allow teachers to speak freely and avoid any fear of being embarrassed by other teachers and school staff. One of the three teachers refused to be interviewed in the resources room and selected the teachers'

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room instead. However, it was not easy to interact in the presence of other teachers. In addition, the interview was interrupted many times and the audio recording was poor as a result of ambient noise. However, the data obtained from this interview were rich and valuable asthis teacher was open-minded and straightforward in voicing her views. For example, she explained clearly why she feels forced to control pupils' discussion and not allow them to speak freely on most occasions. The researcher interviewed each teacher twice for 30 to 45 minutes. Further explanation of ethical issues is provided later.

Classroom observation

The main aim of observing participants is to allow researchers "to see things that might otherwise be unconsciously missed, to discover things that participants might not freely talk about in interview situations" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000, p. 306). It also allows the researcher to be an inside observer of a phenomenon in its natural context. This helps interpret the language of the culture in light of its context and natural cultural practices. The classroom observation gave the researcher an opportunity to participate in the pupils' culture and provided her with a clear vision of what they referred to during their focus group interviews. For example, the researcher gained a better understanding of pupils' silence during English classes by observing their teacher's practices and responses. This encouraged the researcher to ask further questions duringthe interviews to find out what cultural factors might affect this phenomenon, whether inside or outside the school environment.

The researcher audio recorded the classroom observations, labelling them with date, time, location, name of group, and name of the teacher. She also took some brief descriptive notes during her observations, which she subsequently expanded. Furthermore, she took into account the distinction between the observation field notes and her own comments. After each observation, the researcher tried to re-organise and elaborate upon these notes in a more detailed description and comments as her information was still fresh. At the end, the researcher wrote her notes in a handy organised way, giving each note a unique title that facilitated returning to them later with more detailed descriptions and analytical comments.

Considerations of research ethics

In any research, ethical issues, including consent, anonymity, confidentiality and protection of participants involved, play a significant role (Cohen, 2007; Fontana & Frey, 2005; Lodico, Spaulding, &Voegtle, 2006). It is important that participants feel secure that their information will be protected during the whole study process. Transparency is another crucial factor to ensure respondents' integrity and respect. Borg and Gall (1983) state that "the investigator should obtain the individual's consent before gathering data on him" (p. 110).

Therefore, the researcher submitted her ethics forms, research proposal, study aims and significance, study setting and length of study to her department in the university as an essential protocol. After that, she obtained permission (without amendments) to proceed with her study. She considered education and the schools' permission as a second step in conducting her study.She contacted and met with administrators to provide them with a general plan of the research, including an overview of its objectives and benefits. Appropriate anonymised forms are appended.

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The researcher met with the school administrators and teachers involved, explaining the process of her study and their participation. She also met with pupils and provided them with an information sheet translated into Arabic giving them an overview of thestudy and how she would conduct it. She provided a written declaration to the three teachers, all the pupils and the pupils' parents with an information sheet about the study. She secured their agreement to participate in the study and to be audiotaped when interviewed and observed. Furthermore, the researcher informed participants that participating in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. Shearranged meetings with pupils and teachers according to their timetable, preference, and available location. The focus group interview lasted from 45 to 55 minutes. In between each meeting, the researcher gave participants a 10 minute break, as they preferred. She conducted all interviews in Arabic, which was also as participants preferred. She explained every aspect of the study to participants. After each meeting, she listened to each recording and registered her notes regarding any information that needed clarification from participants. She used telephone and online chat for clarifications. In addition, at the beginning of the following meeting, the researcher asked participants to verify the information and requested any additional comments regarding the topics. She tried to finish this process before the start date of the summer holiday, when the participants would become busy. However, some participants continued to send the researcher valuable data that contributed to this research, such as snapshots of their chats with friends and relatives that included some uses of English words.

Furthermore, the researcher informed participants that the data gathered would not be made available to their teachers or anybody not involved in the study. She explained that the study data would remainconfidential as defined by the Concise Oxford Dictionary, 'spoken or written in confidence; charged with secrets', while anonymity is defined as 'of unknown name, of unknown authorship'. In the ethics literature, confidentiality is commonly viewed as being akin to the principle of privacy (Gregory, 2003; Oliver, 2010). Furthermore, the researcher informed all participants that the data obtained, including recordings, would only be available to her, the project supervisor and examiners. The data would be destroyed after the completion of the project and would not be used by any other third party. In addition, participants were worried about the use of their real names in the study; therefore, the researcher confirmed that real names and other identifying information of participants and the school would not be used in the study (pseudonyms were used) so as to protect their identities (Denscombe, 2002). She also took into account solutions in case of any withdrawal, such as changing the class groups or even the school, if needed.

Data collection

Data collection took four months, which is a full academic semester, and involved five groups of second-year secondary pupils. The data collection employed different qualitative methods: focus group pupil interviews, individual teacher interviews, and classroom observation. The researcher conducted pupil and teacher interviews in the pupils' resources room, except one meeting held in a teacher's room, as previously discussed.

Discussion

The aim of this paper is to explore pupils' beliefs about ESL and whether certain social factors affecttheir motivation to learn and use the English language in the context of Saudi Arabia.

During the data collection process, the researcher noticed different factors affectingpupils'learning of English as well as their views and attitudes towards language. These factors seem to have a direct or indirect relationship to pupils' motivation, and hence attitude and performance. Motivation can be identified as an 'internal drive' that encourages a person to do an action (Harmer, 1991). The data obtained suggest that the lack of motivation might lead to restricted language learning or even hatred or rejection of English. This finding is in line with the literature reviewed by the researcher. In this study, the researcher discusses the motivating and demotivating factors that influence young female language learners in the Saudi context. These factors might be of the most relevance to the Saudi cultural and social setting because learners are part of this society and cannot be separated from this context. In this paper,the researcher analysesseveral factors that motivate or demotivate language learners. This chapter discusses various motivational variables in language learning and teaching:

- Fear of social criticism as a result of the idealised view of a Saudi female, in addition to lack of self-confidence.
- Fear of teachers' reaction.
- Practise and use of English in meaningful ways.
- Pupil belief that language learning is difficult.
- Parental encouragement and awareness of the significance of English.
- The researcher provided examples from her data highlighting the sources and consequences of these motivational variables on the learning of English.

Figure 1: **Girls' motivational variables**

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Fear of social criticism as a result of the idealised view of a Saudi female, in addition to lack of self-confidence

Throughout the data collection, the researcher noticed pupils' and teachers' concerns towards social criticism and judgment in relation to some cultural perspectives espousing theideal view of a female in Saudi Arabia. The words 'criticism' and 'perfect' also attracted the researcher's attention as being among the most repeated words in thedata, which encouraged her to explore their relevance to language learning. Moreover, participants repeatedly referred to those social stereotypes of a female as boring and disappointing. Thus, the researcher provided examples of the impact of social criticism in demotivating language learners and teachers, highlighting the sources of this criticism and how it affects female language learners. This section discusses how this social criticism is strongly related to the idealised image of a Saudi female and how it influences the way she perceives herself as a language learner.

Teacher interviews

The following quotation is a typical example from teachers' interviews explaining how society sometimes demotivates and restricts the learning of English and how these social and cultural practises might pass among generations.

> **Teacher 'D'**: Pupils do not like to speak English or choose anything because they have a fear of making mistakes in front of their friends, especially because our culture can be very critical. We are a criticising society and even when I was in the university, I avoid speaking English because I do not want to lose respect in front of my tutor. Our society warns us to be perfect and to do everything correctly and properly. The teacher should be perfect the student should be perfect. This is expected without giving others a chance to try or to learn from their mistakes.

> …Our relationship with our pupils is restricted by cultural rules. I am in fear of not following these rules (Teacher interviews: June 2012).

In this quotation, teacher 'D' tried to clarify the main reason behind the social criticism of English language learners and users. She thinks that females' perceptions of themselves as ideal people area demotivating factor in learning and practising English in the Saudi context. Females' fear of making mistakes and appearing unqualified to others is a nightmare following those learners wherever they go. Teacher 'D' described her personal experience when she was at university as an example to clarify her fear and anxiety about learning English in this critical society. The presence of the word 'warns' in the phrase 'our society warns us to be perfect and to do everything correctly and properly' emphasises the serious struggle of these learners as a result of social restrictions. This pressure forces learners to perceive themselves in light of this stereotypical view of women, which in turn forces them to feignperfection. This idealised view demotivates them to practise English to avoid the risk of making mistakes and losing respect.

Pupil interviews

Pupils also highlighted some of the reasons behind the social criticism of English language users and learners. They explained how this critical environment influences pupils' motivation to learn English. The following pupil interview quotations are examples of the power of society to discourage language learners and restrict their practise and use of English.

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Azizah: Our society wants us to be perfect and ideal without make any mistake. They don't know that our mistakes might guide us to success. Our faults and mistakes is not a crime. Criticism is disappointing. We avoid saying even one word to avoid criticism. For me, I prefer to be silent than to be blamed for saying anything whether right or wrong (2-2 S: pupil interviews, April 2012).

Azizah explained how society idealises and criticises her at the same time. She described her disappointment when people around her assume her perfection and idealisation. This pressure forced Azizah to act cautiously to satisfy society, ignoring her right to learn language and benefit from mistakes. This image affected Azizah's language learning by reducing her self-confidence and increasing her fear and anxiety. She justified her preference to keep silent during English classes with her desire to avoid the risk of making mistakes in front of other learners and teachers who are used to seeing her as perfect.

Azizah: Even our society doesn't support us to learn English. It's not easy to speak English everywhere, we need to select a particular time and place to practise English language to avoid people's criticism, they criticise us when we make a mistake. We don't have enough space to practise our English language. Arabs do not accept speaking English with each other (2-2 S: pupil interview, May 2012).

Also, she felt that her use of English was restricted among those 'Arabs' who reject making mistakes or even refute English as a means of communication. She said that this critical atmosphere is disappointing and demotivating to language learners.

Fatimah: We dislike to speak English with our teacher, with some relatives as well, who always criticise and comment with silly things, I feel that I am doing the right thing, but they discourage me to carry on, they do not accept learning and trying, they want you to say everything correctly, frustrating (2-1 S: pupil interview, May 2012).

Fatimah: My mum is a teacher, she helped me subscribing to an English website for learning English, she likes English, and my sisters as well, my mum wishes to see me fluent in English like my sisters. I like to be confident like my mum and sisters. English adds a lot of things to their personality, people's respect, trust, confidence. People think that those who speak English think positively and seriously, do not think of silly things, respect people, know what is going on around them, they are stronger than me because their language is number one in the world, I wish to learn it (2-1 S: pupil interview, April 2012).

Fatimah discussed her frustration with those people who criticise her when she speaks English. Social idealisation of a female in the Saudi context has restricted Fatimah's learning of English by forcing her to act as the ideal woman. Her desire to appear perfect in front of others demotivates her and reduces her enthusiasm to learn English; she wants to avoid the risk of making mistakes. Fatimah's wish to speak English perfectly is justified by her dream to eliminate the social criticism that frustrates her. Although Fatimah seems to struggle to learn English, her imagination has inspired her to invest within this disappointing atmosphere to achieve two goals:

- To gain more social respect when speaking English perfectly without any mistakes.

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- To gain more confidence, power and trust as a result of the high status of English in Saudi Arabia, which might provide English language users with more opportunities than those who do not speak it.

These concerns and wishes clarify the impact of this social pressure on English language learners, who find themselves caught between their fear of society and their dream to eliminate this fear to learn English peacefully without any restrictions.

> **Khadijah**: Our society is critical if we make a mistake, we will be remembered with this mistake for a year and people will make fun of us for a long time. Even at home it is very difficult to speak English with my grandmother; I cannot imagine myself saying one English word in front of her (laughing) because she believes that English is the language of non-Muslims. We need to feel confident then we will practice the language (2-1 L: pupil interview, May 2012).

Khadijahalso discussed the complex status of English in the Saudi context. She identified some demotivating factors that reduce her opportunities to use English. She expressed her desire to free herself ofthe social criticism in order to feel more confident and motivated to use English. She clarified two main reasons behind the social criticism of her use of English. First, the social idealisation of a female in Saudi Arabia forces her to appear perfect to satisfy the people around her. For example, Khadijah preferred not to use English in order to avoid making mistakes and losing face in front of her relatives who see her as ideal. Second, her grandmother's rejection of English, which is perceived as a way of Westernisation, was another demotivating factor that restricted Khadijah's English learning.

To conclude, idealising a Saudi female could negatively influence her language learning byforcing teachers and pupils to avoid speaking English to escape peoples' criticism. These cultural pressures obviously affect pupils' and teachers' self-confidence to practise English and influence their attitudes towards language learning. These cultural practises need more attention and investigation, particularly in the Saudi context, where culture plays a fundamental role.

Fear of teachers' reaction

During the classroom observation, the researcher noticed that most pupils were anxious, scared, and silent. Meanwhile, during the interviews, pupils frequently expressed their fear of teachers' reactions and correction, which provoked the researcher's curiosity to determine the sources of teachers' reactions towards pupils' involvement. In this section, the researcher discusses certain teachers' classroom practises that decrease pupils' motivation towards language learning. Moreover, she will introduce some of the pupils' narrations about their fear and anxiety as a result of certain teachers' practises and reactions towards pupils' mistakes or even involvement and participation during class.

Pupil interviews

The following quotations are from pupils' interviews collected over different periods of time during the data collection process; they exemplify the effectof teachers' reactions in demotivating language learners.

> **Ahlam**: I hesitate hundred times before thinking to say anything in the class, teacher 'N' is so nice, but I do not want to be embarrassed in front of her. If I ask the teacher, she will

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think that we do not concentrate with her, and she threatens us with losing marks, even if we ask. It is not important to say everything correct, we are learning from our mistakes. We wish to have more peaceful environment to learn English, and we wish to have anybody to speak English with outside the school without any worry (2-1 S: pupil interview, June 2012).

Ahlam is a language learner who struggles to free herself of the restrictions created by language teachers. She wishes to get rid of her fear and learn English in a more peaceful environment. Her teacher's threatsand efforts to assign blame force pupils to prefer silence and hide behind each other to avoid the teacher's blame and embarrassment. These demotivating reactions create a scary and stressful atmosphere that makes pupils hesitate a hundred times beforespeaking one English word or even asking about what they do not understand.

Noorah: I do not like English classes because I cannot ask the teacher if I didn't understand something, I worry about her reactions when I ask about anything. She is not satisfied with my language ability (1-G F: pupil interview, June 2012).

Noorah also clarified the impact of her teacher's reaction in demotivating her language learning. She described her hesitation and anxiety to discuss anything with her teacher. This fear resulted from the teacher's scary reaction that revealed her dissatisfaction with and anger towards pupils' language ability. These negative reactions could reduce learners' motivation, where interest and encouragement play significant roles in the attainment of language.

Khadijah: English classes are boring and stressful. I avoid participating to avoid being corrected and blamed by the teacher. We need to be corrected, but not all the time. We need to be more confident during English classes than in other classes because it is a new language and we need to be more encouraged and motivated as well.

…My friend said that why our education is so useless in comparison to her learning in Turkey. She is so good in English, she tried to ask, but the teacher always stops her and asks her to stop, she feels that this is unfair, and our education is useless (2-1 L: pupil interview, May 2012).

Meanwhile, Khadijah mentioned her boredom and stress related tohow her teacher corrects pupils' mistakes. She expressed her desire to be corrected by her teacher; however, the teacher's method was to blame rather than correct pupils. These practices could reduce pupils' self-confidence and motivation, which are vital factors in language learning (Alison &Halliwell, 2002; Chang & Cho, 2003; Dornyei&Ushioda, 2011). Khadijah's narration about her Turkish friend, who was stopped and prevented from participation by the teacher, highlighted the struggle of those learners. The teacher's reaction to that pupil was an obvious message to other pupils to receive information and keep silent; otherwise, they would be stopped or ignored.

Arwa: We do not understand anything, anything at all, and it is very scary, boring, and difficult to ask the teacher. If we say even one word, we will lose marks. She threatens us with marks and we do not want to lose marks, so, we prefer to stay silent and do not participate because this participation might affect our marks. In addition, I am afraid of making mistakes in front of my teacher because she corrects our mistakes loudly and angrily and deals with us with marks. We cannot learn English and we do not know even simple words.

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…At home I feel that I am learning, my brother explains everything to me. I use English words with him, we benefit from each other more than the teacher, I am scared to fail or to make a mistake in the class, I wish to learn from my mistakes, but we do not know how (2-1 S: pupil interview, June 2012).

Arwa described her teacher's scenarios during English classes as boring and scary. She thinks that her learning is useless as it is restricted by her teacher, who ignores pupils' needs and interests. The teacher's way of correcting pupils' mistakes and ignoring their involvement seems threatening and demotivating. These practises also could increase pupils' boredom, passivity and silence. On the other hand, a motivating environment could encourage pupils and increase their self-confidence. Arwaindicated that she is more interested in practising English at home as a result of the motivating environment her brother has created. Her brother's help, understanding and encouragement motivated her to enjoy and learn English without any obstacles. Therefore, addressing pupils' needs, feelings and interests could be of benefit in motivating and promoting their language learning.

Israa: Our teachers think that there should be restrictions between her and pupils.

Rana: Even participating is scary.

Muna: Even if we did not understand, we cannot ask. We are scared to ask her.

Amal: we know her answer (concentrate and you will understand), and if I did not understand, I won't ask her because I want the class to finish.

Muna: we want the class to finish, that's all (2-1 L: pupil interview, May 2012).

During pupil interviews, four participants engaged in a conversation, in which they described English classes as scary and boring. Their teacher's reaction to their participation created a frightening atmosphere that demotivated them to ask questions or even say one word. Those learners preferred not to ask questions to make the scary class pass more quickly. The teacher's ignorance of pupils' needs and interests reduced their motivation and desire to learn English, which might have an impact on their attainment of English skills.

Fatimah: The teacher just says the correct answer without explaining, it is blaming rather than correction. If we know the correct answer we do not need to go to school (2-1 S: pupil interview, April 2012).

Fatimah confirmed the same problem by describing her language experience as miserable and terrifying. The teacher's fearful, 'mad' and boring reaction towards pupils' involvement and mistakes created a negative attitude towards English and English classes. Moreover, the teacher's efforts to assign blame force pupils to remain silent and passive during class. Yet when pupils receive positive reactions, they could react positively towards language learning. Pupils' interest in using English outside the classroom was justified with their sense of liberty from the teacher's restrictions, as Fatimah argued.

Jana: I like English in chatting with my friends. When I speak English with them I feel that I'm stylish, it is more interesting. When I speak to my friends in English at home, I feel that I'm not forced by time or place or anything. But in the class I have to speak in front of my teacher, forced by the place and time, which makes me afraid of losing face and making mistakes in front of her. Even if we work in groups we chat in Arabic, not in

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English. I avoid speaking English with my teachers, but I feel more comfortable with my friends. My friends help me to be more confident to speak English and promote my confidence (2-2 S: pupil interviews, April 2012).

Jana also provided a clear image of the impact of the negative and positive reactions on pupils' attitudes towards language. She compared her use of English inside and outside school, providing a set of contradicting adjectives. She feels optimistic, happy and free of time and place restrictions when she uses English with her friends. Her demotivating classroom environment resulted in encouraging, helpful and cooperative friends who enableJana to try to enjoy learning without the fear of criticism. On the other hand, the teacher's reactions towards pupils' mistakes and involvement prevent Jana from practising English during class. Furthermore, the teacher's reactions force pupils to use Arabic during English classes to avoid making mistakes and being blamed by the teacher. This demotivating classroom setting negatively affects pupils' attitudes and restricts their language learning.

> **Rana**: When I become an English teacher, I will make pupils love the lesson. If they like it, they will understand it. Even I want to punish pupils; I will do it in a way that does not make them hate it. I will make everything in the lesson practical because we learn language to use it practically in our everyday life. I will also encourage pupils by giving them gifts, even simple things. I remembered one of my English teachers, who gave me a crystal because I was active that day. I still have the crystal, I still remember that day (2-1 L: pupil interview, June 2012).

In this quotation, Rana's promises for when she becomes an English teacher in the future reveal her serious struggle and the need for change to learn English in a more motivating atmosphere. She promises to improve pupils' language peacefully without worry or fear. She believes that providing pupils with more opportunities to speak and practise without fear could promote their language learning. Rana promised to encourage her pupils with rewards, exemplifying that rewards from her teacher had an impact on her motivation to learn English. The positive impact of Rana's reward is evidence of the role that positive reactions and encouragement play in motivating learners. She believes that her suggestions could create a more motivating classroom that attracts pupils to enjoy learning and love English.

Teacher interviews

The following quotation is from the teachers' interviews and exemplifies how language teachers sometimes demotivate pupils and restrict their language learning.

> **Teacher 'D'**: And even if pupils have the opportunities to use language during the class, I think that this will not be that useful. It will be beneficial just for those clever pupils who want to learn, discussing them might inspire me with new and creative ideas, but I need to finish my lesson on time, but not with those tiring pupils, who could not say one correct sentence, I mean low-level pupils (Teacher interview, May 2012).

In this quotation, teacher 'D' acknowledged some of her classroom practises that prevent her learners from discussing and learning. She also acknowledged her refusal to answer pupils' questions during class, justifying her refusal with her desire to save class time. Although she believes that pupils do not speak enough during English classes, she feels that allowing pupils to speak and ask questions might waste her time and not be of benefit to all pupils. These beliefs

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influence her teaching and the way she reacts to her pupils' questions. The teacher's discomfort and boredom with pupils' questions and engagement seem demotivating to learners who want to understand and learn as they need and like.

Thus farthe researcher provided a number of quotations as typical examples of certain demotivating reactions and practises of teachers. She also provided some of the sources and consequences of these practises on language learning from a learner's perspective. Moreover, the researcher provided recommendations from pupils for creating a more motivating classroom environment free of fear and anxiety.

Practise and use of English in meaningful ways
It is widely believed that language practise plays a fundamental role in the attainment of language (Aljaafreh&Lantolf, 1994; Anton, 1999; Ellis &Fotos, 1999; Hall, 1995; Lantolf, 2006; Long, 2006; Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Swain &Lapkin, 1998). Asecond or foreign language is not only a concrete subject or a group of grammar rules to be studied, but also a dynamic process of communicative competences that allow learners to use language practically as a tool of communication. In addition, it is essential to understand that the main aim of learning grammar rules is to employ those rules communicatively in everyday life (Long, 1981, 1996).

During the data collection, the researcher noticed that language teachers focus on the traditional teaching methods that centralise the role of the teacher, while pupils' role was restricted and passive or even ignored. Moreover, teachers' and pupils' interviews confirmed the lack of using English communicatively whether inside the classroom or in everyday life. Therefore, pupils' negative attitudes towards English could be justified with their belief that English is only a concrete subject rather than a live language. Furthermore, the data obtained suggested educational and cultural factors in the Saudi context that restrict the use of English. All these obstacles seem to reduce pupils' motivation to practise and use English in meaningful ways or even lead to their resistance to language learning. The following quotations are examples of the impact of certain educational and cultural factors in motivating or demotivating young Saudi female pupils to use English communicatively and in meaningful ways.

Pupil interviews
During the interviews,pupis discussed the influence of educational and cultural practises on motivating or demotivating their use of English interactively as a tool of communication.

> **Arwa**: The teacher just allows us to say easy answers like yes and no, or rearrange a sentence, she does not allow us to say even two or three sentences, just words like kids, we wish to speak friendly with the teacher and our peers. I think no way to learn English at school; we study English to pass, that's all.

> … We want conversations to apply these grammar rules we studied, we hate memorising sentences and passages for the exam. We want to study English as a language not as grammar and concrete subject, when I travelled to Dubai, I could not even order a glass of juice in a restaurant, I feel that all the English classes I studied were wasting of time, I could say only several words, shame, I feel that they are not English, I could not catch up what people were saying, embarrassing, so difficult if you want to say something, but you cannot.

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…If I will be a teacher, I will be honest with my pupils, let them talk, activate their role, integrate games to motivate them. Let them work in groups as one team, teach them practically, not theoretically. Language is communication in real life (2-1 S: pupil interviews, March 2012).

Arwa explained her struggle as an English language learner in a context where English use is not encouraged eitherwithin or outside of school borders. She seemed disappointed and demotivated by her teacher, who restricted her use of English. The teacher's lack of awareness of the importance of using language communicatively meant that pupils were not provided with enough opportunities to practise English, which resulted in their feeling shy about and frustrated withtheir language ability. Furthermore, the teacher's excessive-focus on grammar rules and memorisation restricted pupils' use of English and allowed them to employ only simple sentences. Arwa's experience in Dubai, where English is used communicatively, opened her mind to think seriously about her English learning. Herlack of communicative language learning prevented her from ordering a glass of juice in a restaurant, which seemed to reduce her motivation to continue learning English. Arwa's wishes at the end of her interview clarified her need as a young Saudi female learner to deal with English as a live language and not as a concrete subject.

Abeer: I do not like English, I always fail, and I cannot learn it. At school they do not help us to use English, they give us several words to memorise before the final exam, and this is the Saudi style of language teachers, no way to speak a word. All English institutions that have non-Saudi teachers are better than schools, they are so understandable; they help us to learn, not say everything and go out like our school teachers.

… I started learning English at summer in an institution, I like it, I felt that I am learning a real language, she gave us a chance to speak, to chat, to interact, to decide and to play.

…I use English at home with my father, in my computer, my phone and TV, but it is just words, the teacher does not teach us how to make full sentences. We do not speak at school, our lessons are so boring and repetitive, we need interesting and enthusiastic teaching method. But no way to learn it as our teachers always say that it is so difficult and we will fail.

…If I becomes an English language teacher, I might change a lot of things, I will change the curriculum, integrate conversations, I will bring a foreigner group of counsellors to create new curriculum, they are more aware of pupil needs, one of my friends was Egyptian, she was better than our English teachers, she was not allowed to ask the teacher because she was better than her, I asked her about how she could speak English fluently and she said that they were using English during the class, she said that their teachers were so flexible and cooperative, they taught them real language and let them apply the curriculum in their everyday life, she said they did not speak one word in Arabic, this way forces pupils to use English (2-1 S: pupil interviews, March 2012).

Abeer's demotivation to learn English resulted from various educational and cultural issues:

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1. The classroom's excessive-focus on memorisation and grammar rules,therby limiting pupils' opportunities to use English communicatively and deactivating pupils' role to speak, discuss and use English interactively.
2. The cultural perception of a female as an ideal person.
3. Teachers' and pupils' belief that English is difficult and cannot be mastered easily.

Abeer'scommentsclarified that some educational and cultural factors interfered and created dissonance towards language learning. The teacher's resistance to employing more communicative strategies could be justified byher desire to appear ideal and perfect as her community expects, which leads to the perception of language learning as difficult or impossible. Abeer's experience and the Egyptian girl's situation clarified the impact of certain cultural factors on the teaching and learning of English in the Saudi context. The teacher's resistance to engaging fluent language learners justified idealising females and forcing them to act perfectly to satisfy people around them even at the expense of their own benefit or that of other learners. The teacher's fear of appearing unqualified in front of her pupils forced her to keep learners as silent as she could. These restrictions also transcended the classroom and reduced learners' opportunities to use language in meaningful and communicative ways. Although Abeer has more chances than other pupils to use English at home, her lack of communicative competence reduced her motivation to speak English and even affected her attitude to perceive language learning as a complicated task that is impossible.

Abeer's comparison between language learning at school and in private language institutions opened her eyes to the difference between language as a concrete subject and language as a tool of communication. The Egyptian friend's experience also enabledAbeer to distinguish between a 'dead' and a 'live' language. Abeer's realisation of the problematic areas in her language learning encouraged her to promise to engage her future pupils in more motivating, effective and communicative language learning that appreciates theirneeds to learn English as an authentic language.

> **Rana**: I will relate the lesson to their everyday life. Not as a concrete thing, talking about their life, food, clothes (2-1 L: pupil interview, June 2012).

> **Amal**: We like to use English without restriction, to work in groups, to cooperate, to explain to each other, to practice the language by speaking to each other in English. It gives each pupil a chance to learn and do something instead of just staying silent.

> …We could not enjoy our learning of English as a real language. As most parents in Saudi are not educated, they know nothing about English, and they just know that it is difficult (2-1 L: pupil interview, June 2012).

> **Areej**: We study what is in the book and we don't practice English outside school. We need to study a language, not an English subject. We need to live with English and to feel that it is part of our daily life. The teacher cares only about how to finish the curriculum.

> …If I become an English teacher, I will integrate only the topics that pupils can benefit from. One of my brothers spent three years in learning English and it was just a waste of his time, then he travelled abroad and got it in only three months, and the difference is he used the language abroad in his everyday life. I spent seven years of my life to learn English without any benefit (2-2 S: pupil interview, May 2012).

Azizah: Because English helps us to communicate with other people. At school it's just learning English as a subject, not as a tool for communicating with people. At school we are not motivated but at home most of my family members are good in English, especially my father. So I feel that English is a language that I can speak naturally without being forced with the idea that it's a subject that I need to study and learn (2-2 S: pupil interview, May 2012).

Rasha: I feel that I'm studying a concrete subject, not a live language. We need to use English to be familiar with it. We need to learn English in an early age. To naturally feel familiar with it, like kids when they learn English they feel that it's a real language, they live with it, use it in their everyday life comfortably.

…Our language learning is out of culture, and we are leaning dead and boring language, only grammatical rules.

…If I become an English teacher, I will make language learning interesting and more interactive. Make it more close to pupils' everyday life. I will talk about things outside the educational environment like talking about feminine subjects such as fashion, technology, and hobbies (2-2 S: pupil interview, May 2012).

Areej, Azizah and Rashaalso clarified their desire to learn English as a real language that can be used for communication in everyday life. Areej exemplified her argument with her brother's experience; he learned English quickly and easily abroad as a live language. Areej's artificial language learning at school only allowed her to learn words out of context as a result of dealing with language as a subject. Azizah's comparison between her opportunities to speak English at school and at home clarified how learning English communicatively can motivate learners. Azizahargued that speaking English naturally as a language could help pupils live and feel familiar with English, like a child who acquires language naturally without learning grammar or being forced to learn it as a subject. Rasha's promise to provide her future pupils with more motivating and communicative uses of English indicated her need and desire to learn English as a real language.

Amal: Teachers do not like us to speak, to talk, to be involved in the class.

Israa: They do not give us a chance to speak, or to discuss anything.

Rana: There are a lot of restrictions between pupils and teachers. They do not accept our discussion.

Israa: No way.

Amal: Teachers think that our English language won't improve.

Rana: Yes they think we won't improve.

Israa: Our language ability is too low, and if we speak in English she will insult us and say that do you see, you can't say even a word correctly.

Amal: Our current situation is very difficult, and our English is so bad, it won't change, this is the problem. We memorise passages for the exam. We cannot write, just memorising. The teacher gives us some passages and says one of them will be in the exam.

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Khadijah: All teachers do not give pupils a chance to discuss or decide. They think that a teacher is a teacher, as they say, and pupils are only receivers.

Rana: Do not talk, do not ask, do not negotiate or select, just stay as a chair.

Amal: They think that this is one of their rights.

Khadijah: They think that a teacher should seem perfect in front of her pupils, and we might embarrass them by saying our opinions or asking questions that she may not know its answer.

Israa: There are bad teachers of other subjects, but English teachers are the worst.

Amal: Our silence is a problem in all subjects, but English class is the worst because we need to speak and talk more during this subject as a language.

Israa: Only yes-no questions, and sometimes she does not give us a chance to say yes. She embarrasses us by ignoring us.

Amal: Just saying 'yes, no, -ing, -s' and when I start asking or saying anything, she said give other pupils a chance to participate (Ss laughing). I remembered only one day that she spoke English outside the class saying 'out' (laughing) 'out' (2-1 L: pupil interview, May 2012).

In a conversation among four language learners during the interviews, pupils discussed their struggle to gain more communicative language learning that allows them to participate in discussions and be more fully engaged. The language teacher's resistance to employing communicative teaching strategies was justified with various reasons. The teacher's over-use of the grammar translation method focusing on grammar rules, does not encourage the teacher to employ these rules in meaningful ways and reduces pupil motivation to practise English. In addition, the teacher's sense of herself as an ideal person who should always appear perfect could also justify her resistance to applying a communicative teaching method. The teacher's fear of appearing unqualified if asked a question she could not answer pushed her to resist the communicative teaching method,which promotes speech and discussion. The teacher's ignorance of the need for pupils' discussion and communication left pupils feeling passive and perceiving themselves as silent 'chairs' during class. Moreover, the teacher's resistance to usingEnglish communicatively could result from teachers' strong belief that English is difficult and pupils' communicative competence cannot improve. This negative belief could reduce pupils' and teachers' motivation towards language learning, which in turn could restrict their discussion and interaction with each other.

Amal: We do not enjoy English because people criticise us when we speak it, I do not know why, (laughing), they feel that English is the language of the Western culture that sometimes contradicts our culture and religion.

…My brothers also make fun of me when I say words in English because they feel that I am arrogant and ignoring them when I speak some words in English, If I travel abroad, I might learn English in only two weeks because I will speak and break my silence, I will be free from the social criticism (2-1 L: pupil interview, May 2012).

Amal explained her struggle to gain more opportunities to use English communicatively. She justified her demotivation towards English learning with the social criticism she experiences

when using English. This criticism results from the social belief that English is a language of the Western culture that might clash with local Islamic ideologies. Moreover, Amal's relatives' perception of English as the language of high-class people was another demotivating factor that forced her not to use English and not to appear to show off or be arrogant, as society might think. All these cultural ideologies influence language learners and reduce their desire to practise English. At the end of Amal's interview, she stated that eliminating these cultural practises in Saudi Arabia could motivate, facilitate and speed language learning.

> **Eiman**: When I have somebody to speak with, for example, I feel so happy to speak English such as my friends, because they all speak English with each other. I have a Chinese friend. Wow, I wish to travel abroad and see her, she helped me love English, but with my relatives I feel disappointed (1-G F: pupil interview, June 2012).

Finally, although Eiman believes that English has become a social demand and sign of prestige in the Saudi context, it is not easy to use English because some cultural and social ideologies perceive using English as a way of showing off. This view towards English is a demotivating factor that decreases pupils' interest in using English. Eiman's experience with her relatives and friends clarified how some cultural factors motivate or demotivate the use of English. Amal's happiness and enthusiasm when using English among her friends resulted from a sense of freedom from all social restrictions that allows her to use English freely with no worries. On the other hand, using English among criticising relatives reduced Amals' motivation and restricted her use of English.

Teacher interviews
The following quotations are from interviews in which teachers discussed theirperceptions of their resistance to the use of English in meaningful and communicative ways.

> **Teacher 'D'**: I think that English should be just speaking and practising the language, without necessarily always teaching it as a subject. I feel this way is effective because pupils should not learn English only to pass the exam, but to use it in everyday life. Our education in Saudi Arabia is theoretical not practical, so it teaches us to pass exams. While in the Western countries English is taught practically to facilitate communication (Teacher interview, May 2012).

> **Teacher 'N'**: We are struggling (very long intonation) in Saudi Arabia with English speaking because pupils learn English as a subject that they only need to memorize, and pupils should practise English in their everyday life (Teacher interview, May 2012).

Teacher 'N' justified her resistance to teach English communicatively with her fear of losing time. Her admiration of her daughter's teacher's communicative teaching method did not encourage her to employ communicative strategies. She believes that the lack of communication during class could be resolved by recommending that pupils use English communicatively at home, ignoring the pupils' limited opportunities to use English outside the classroom.

> **Teacher 'W'**: I think that making training courses for parents to learn English is a good idea to motivate parents and motivate pupils as well to learn English. We concentrate on silly things and ignore the important use of English. Pupils should be motivated to employ language.

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…Teaching pupils this huge amount of information is difficult and does not allow a teacher to speak and discuss things with pupils.

…There should be English clubs in schools. This would allow pupils an opportunity to practise English and speak without any restrictions. I think that pupils of good ability in English will benefit from these clubs more than low-level pupils. Even classroom discussion depends on a student's ability. There should be discussion if pupils are fluent in English (Teacher interview, June 2012).

In addition, teacher 'W''s belief in the utility of using English communicatively has not encouraged her to employ communicative strategies. She justified her hesitation to allow discussion and interaction with her fear of losing time to cover the huge amount of information she must teach. She feels that this problem can be resolved by creating school English clubs to provide pupils with more opportunities to speak English. She also thinks that parents' awareness and motivation play a significant role in motivating children's use of English at home. The teacher's ignorance of her role in motivating pupils' use of English reinforced her resistance to allowing communicative language learning.

Thesefindings provided typical examples of the influence of teachers' and society's resistance to using English communicatively on demotivating and restricting pupils' use of English. Sources and consequences of this resistance have been introduced from learners' and teachers' perspectives in an attempt to deeply explore this phenomenon.

Pupil belief that language learning is difficult

While collecting the data, the researcher noticed a lot of complaining from both pupils and teachers that English is difficult or impossible to learn. This provoked the researcher's curiosity to investigate the sources of this belief and how it could affect pupils' and teachers' reactions towards language. The researcher kept these complaints in her field notes and added questions to her interview to investigate this phenomenon, which helped reveal the relevance of pupils' negative beliefs about language and anxiety. The researcher noticed a relationship between learners' beliefs about English learning and their beliefs about failure and success. In addition, she found that teachers who think that language is difficult have false expectations about pupils' progress, which might affect their reaction towards pupils. The following quotations are examples of the sources and the impact of believing that English learning is difficult on pupils' and teachers' attitudes.

Pupil interviews

These quotations from pupils clarify why some pupils and teachers think that the English language is difficult and how this can influence their reactions towards the language.

Khadijah: We need to feel confident then we will practice the language. Everybody around us say that English is difficult and we will fail, our teacher and even our friends believe that English is something impossible. How can we succeed? How can we speak and practice English with this frustrating environment?

… We cannot learn English, we suffer from lack of encouragement even at home, they just criticise us if we make a mistake, but when we do a good thing, they ignore our effort, we lost hope, and we lost our confidence.

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Israa: We do not study English because we believe that we won't succeed. The teacher brought some teaching materials at the beginning of the year, and then she stopped. She says you will fail, so, I won't bring anything for you anymore. She should help us and pay more attention to improve us (2-1 L: pupil interview, May 2012).

In this quotation, Khadijah serves as an example of those learners who lost their motivation and confidence to use English as a result of negative beliefs about English. She complains about her teacher and friends who remind her of failure and weakness. In addition, the lack of encouragement and help increased Khadijah's sense of failure and frustration with English. This disappointing atmosphere reduced Khadija's self-confidence, motivation and hope and influenced her attitude towards English learning.

Israa explained that she experienced the same struggle with her teacher, who demotivates pupils through her negative beliefs. The teacher gave up motivating her pupils as she thinks they will notimprove. This negative belief towards pupils' progress resulted from her belief in the difficulty of English, which seems not only to influence pupils, but also to affect the teacher's teaching process.

Muna: No way to learn English, it is so difficult

Amal: it is difficult.

Muna: English is difficult and stressful.

Rana: Even if we like it, it is difficult.

Amal: We do not like it because it is so complicated. And I do not like any English teacher (Ps laughing).

Amal: When we start learning English we were so optimistic and we thought that we will succeed, but because our English teachers forced us to feel with fail, we become so frustrated, I was so ambitious from my childhood, I was called the health minister, it was a wish, but because of this negative belief, I do not think I can succeed. Teacher say we will fail, then we passed without being able to say one correct sentence and we cannot improve, I passed all the previous years without even know some English letters.

…I tried to learn English, but I could not because I feel that I cannot do it, and my family do not help me or encourage me to speak English, they are not aware of its importance and benefit, and I will pass at the end of the year (2-1 L: pupil interview, May 2012).

Three pupils engaged in a conversation about their feelings towards language learning. These learners think that English learning is not easy and that there is no way to learn the language. They lost their motivation and desire to learn English as a result of their belief that English is complicated or impossible.

Believing that English is difficult also affected Amal's optimism and hope to learn English and achieve her expectations. Amal started learning English with high motivation and hope, seeing herself as the future Minister of Health; however, this hope was lost as a result of her teacher's negative belief about English. The teacher's belief was transferred to pupils, killing their ambition and motivation towards English. In addition, Amal's family's ignorance of her education and language learning negatively impacted her attitude towards English. Amal feels

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that the lack of encouragement and negative beliefs can influence pupils' attitudes towards language learning by increasing their anxiety and fear of failure, which can also influence their performance.

> **Hanoof**: It's very difficult to learn English. I have a strong belief that I cannot learn English. I started learning English four years ago, and I could not say one correct sentence. I wish to speak English, and I am so curious to discover that world, I really need it (1-G S: pupil interview, 19/5/2012).

> **Fatimah**: I do not have enough words to speak English, my mum keeps pushing me, but English is so difficult, our teacher says that she is an English teacher and found it difficult, what about me? It is not that easy as my sisters say. I do not like to study it (2-1 S: pupil interview, May 2012).

Although these learners received some sort of encouragement, they lost their enthusiasm and hope as they feel that English learning is not easy. Although, one of the pupils was encouraged by the idea of discovering the world through learning English, her curiosity and wish waned due to her strong belief that she cannot learn English.

Fatimah's comment'I do not like it (English)' clarified the impact of negative beliefs on demotivating her and influencing her attitude towards English. The encouragement of Fatimah's mother failed to motivate her daughter to study English; her confidence dropped and she was influenced by her sisters' negative beliefs towards English. Moreover, Fatimah's teacher's belief that English is difficult was passed to pupils and impacted their reactions towards English.

To conclude, negative beliefs towards language can be a demotivating factor that reduces learners' enthusiasm and hope to succeed. They can also negatively affect teachers' reactions towards pupils' progress, which in turn might demotivate those teachers to achieve their curriculum objectives. In addition, believing that English is difficult might increase learners' and teachers' anxiety and feelings of frustration and failure, which could also negatively affect their motivation and attitudes towards English. Therefore, language teachers and parents should be cautious in displaying their beliefs towards language as these beliefs can become demotivating or motivating factors for language learners.

Parental encouragement and awareness of the significance of English

In the field of foreign and second language learning, home environment plays a fundamental role in motivating learners(Gardner, 1985; Kormos&Csizer, 2008; S. Ryan, 2009; Williams & Burden, 1997). Parents' help, encouragement, and positive attitudes that value language can also motivate children and facilitate their learning. In contrast, parents who are passive in encouraging their children or show negative attitudes towards language can reduce their children's motivation.

In this paper, the researcher refers to the impact of parental encouragement and help on pupils' language learning, clarifying the sources of this encouragement. Shealso discusses the situation of those learners who struggle to gain more parental encouragement, explaining the consequences of this lack of encouragement. In this section, the researcherexamines variables that affect parents' attitudes towards their children's language learning, such as fear of Western culture, lack of awareness that English is important and lack of education.

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The following quotations helpanalys those variables influencing parents' willingness or unwillingness to support their children's language learning; they reveal the sources of parents' reactions and their impact on pupils' motivation in relation to the study context.

Pupil interviews

The following quotations are from pupil interviews collected over different periods of time; they exemplify how and why parents motivate or demotivate their children's language learning. They also discuss the impact of certain practises of some parents that can motivate or demotivate children to learn English.

> **Amal**: I tried to learn English but I could not because I feel that I cannot do it, and my family do not help me or encourage me to speak English, they are not aware of its importance and benefit, and I will pass at the end of the year, but with nothing as any student in Saudi, look at second pupils, they are better than us, they can speak and understand English because they enjoy their learning by the help of their parents. Second parents are aware of the importance of English, so they encourage their children to learn, while most parents in Saudi are not educated, therefore, they know nothing about English, they just know that it is difficult.

> … My parents do not want me to learn English (laughing), they feel that Westerners are wrong, and English is the language of Westerners because they look at the bad side of the Western culture that contradict with our culture and religion (2-1 L: pupil interview, June 2012).

Asthis quotation indicates, Amal explained her struggle to gain more parental encouragement to learn English, justifying her lack of encouragement and help at home with various factors, such as lack of education, lack of awareness and fear of Western culture. Herparents' lack of awareness of the significance of English resulted from their lack of education, which blocked Amal from opportunities for encouragement and support.   Moreover, their fear of Western ideologies has also increased their anxiety towards English and created a demotivating language environment at home for their children. For example, her mother's negative view of English and its culture negatively affected her attitudes towards language learning, which in turn resulted in resistance towards her daughter's English learning. Amal's story with her mother, who perceives speaking English as improper, exemplifies the resistance of some Muslim parents towards their children's English learning as they are anxious about its impact on their Islamic ideologies. The comparison Amalprovided between Saudi and foreign parents clarified her awareness of the role parents play in motivating and supporting their children's language learning. It also expressed learners' serious need for their parents' encouragement and motivation to learn language without fear or boredom.

> **Muna**: Parents do not support our language learning, they feel that English is dangerous, we lost hope. They are not aware that we need English. We need English everywhere in using the computer and the internet, in hospitals in schools and universities. I remembered when I want to buy a bag, its name was in English, I could not buy it because I did not know its name, it was in Saudi, English is important, everything depends on English (2-1 L: pupil interview, May 2012).

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Khadijah: We need to make people around us know the importance of English and how to use it in a way that does not harm our life and culture (2-1 L: Pupil interview, June 2012).

Muna justified her lack of encouragement at home with the same reasons that Amal provided. She described how the lack of parental help can negatively affect children's motivation to learn language. Muna lost her hope and interest to learn English because she did not receive enough encouragement at home becauseher Muslim family is scared of English. This fear influenced Muna and increased her worries regarding English. Muna's bag story clarifies the serious need for English in the Saudi context; however, it also exemplifies the struggle to learn English in a demotivating environment.

Meanwhile, Khadijah's lack of motivation was justified with her parents' negative practises at home as her parents perceive English as harmful and unimportant. The pupil's lack of confidence, hope and enthusiasm was due to family ignorance, criticism and a lack of help. This demotivating and criticising atmosphere could influence learners' attitudes towards English and reduce their motivation and self-confidence where positive beliefs play a significant role in promoting language learning.

Amirah: my mum does not mind if I fail, she says if you succeed, it is for you, and if you do not pass, you will only harm yourself. No way to convince my parents to love English. I asked my mum one day to go to my friend to teach me English, she agreed, but I could not go because I am so frustrated do not like studying English (2-2 S: pupil interview, April 2012).

As parents' negative beliefs towards English might influence children's attitudes, ignorance can also play a role in demotivating children's language learning. Amirah's experience with her parents, who do not like English, exemplifies those Saudi parents who demotivate language learning through their ignorance and carelessness towards their children's learning. Although Amirah's mother agreed to let her daughter study English with her friend, the lack of parental encouragement forced Amirah to reject this opportunity as she felt bored and frustrated. Amirah's mother did not resist language learning, but her ignorance and lack of awareness reduced Amirah's interest and hope to learn English.

Yet the home environment could be a motivating factor that facilitates language learning by providing learners with sufficient help and encouragement.

Azizah: Most parents in Saudi are not educated and know nothing about English. They do not support their kids because they are not aware of the importance of English learning. Some pupils do not have even friends to practice their language with.

…My mum is a teacher, she helped me subscribe to an English course during summer, she likes English, and my sisters as well, and my mum wishes to see me fluent in English like my sisters (2-2 S: pupil interviews, April 2012).

Asthis quotation demonstrate, Azizah emphasised the importance of family encouragement in motivating language learners by comparing her motivating environment at home with those who suffer from a lack of motivation and encouragement. Parents' positive beliefs towards language can encourage children to learn English. Azizah's educated, respected

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and self-confident mother and sisters encouraged her to perceive English positively to become like them. These positive beliefs about English motivated Azizahbyimagining her possible selves in the future as more respected, educated and self-confident. Therefore, family encouragement and positive views towards language and its speakers can motivate children by increasing their hope and inspiring their possible selves in the future.

> **Amal**: Another thing. We need our families to communicate more with the school. We suffer from this gap between school and home. Our families do not know anything about our education, even if the school arranges a parent meeting. It is silly, not practical. They do not give our mums practical tips for helping us. They do not make them aware of the importance of our learning. My mum does not care if I fail because English is not important to her. How do you want me to speak English at home in this environment? (2-1 L: pupil interview, May 2012).

> **Hanoof**: It is important to help people be aware of the importance of English, especially parents. I will help my children in the future doing their homework and give them a chance to practise the language like watching English television channels (1-G S: pupil interview, June 2012).

Some pupils expressed their lack of support at home positively and provided some recommendations forresolving their problems. Amal's struggle with her demotivating family pushed her to think positively and find effective solutions to learn English in a more encouraging environment. These recommendations clarified pupils' awareness of the role a family plays in enhancing children's language learning. Amal thinks that a lack of parental encouragement and support can be resolved by enhancing communication between school and home. She thinks that this strategy can help pupils by making parents more aware of their children's education.

Teacher interviews

The following quotations are from teacher interviews discussing how and why some families demotivate their children's language learning and how this can be resolved from the teachers' perspective.

> **Techer 'D'**: Our culture is not aware of the importance of English, Saudi parents are not aware even of the importance of education. They do not ask their children about what they have learned in school, while, second kids are better than Saudis in English as their families are more aware and value English.

> … Sometimes a student likes to learn English, but she feels that she doesn't have enough support at home. Even talented pupils do not receive enough support in our society, and I cannot help those pupils because I do not want them to be better than me (Teacher interview, May 2012).

> **Teacher 'N'**: I think that pupils of second parents have more chances to practice English and are more aware of the importance of language than those of Saudi parents. I usually ask pupils if they speak English at home and I notice that most of the pupils who raised their hands are of second parents, and also because some Saudi parents are not well educated (Teacher interview, May 2012).

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The above two quotations are examples of pupils who struggle to gain enough encouragement, whether at home or at school. Teacher 'D' explained the consequences of parents' lack of education and awareness on children's language learning. Teacher 'D' thinks that it is not only language learners who are not supported in the Saudi context, but even talented pupils do not receive sufficient encouragement. Although, the teacher believes in the role that encouragement plays in supporting language learners, she expressed her unwillingness to help pupils as she does not want them to become more skilled than she is. This negative attitude towards pupils' success can also be a demotivating and disappointing factor for pupils. These demotivating atmospheres might negatively affect language learners and reduce their motivation to learn English.

Both teacher 'D' and teacher 'N' think that the home can promote and facilitate language learning by providing pupils with more support, encouragement and opportunities to practise English. Teachers' comparison between Saudi and foreign parents emphasises the role a family plays in motivating and demotivating language learning.

> **Teacher 'N'**: Speaking English in all the Arabian Gulf countries is better than in Saudi, I don't know why it is better in Kuwait, in Emirate, in Qatar, and in Egypt. This is even the case if they are uneducated. Maybe this is because people in Saudi Arabia have more fear about losing their religion than in other countries. Rejecting the teaching of English from primary school is good evidence of this. Many people refuse to allow their kids to speak English and criticize parents who do allow their kids to speak in English (Teacher interview, May 2012).

In this quotation, teacher 'N' justified why foreign parents encourage their children's language learning more than Saudis as those parents are more educated and aware of the benefit of English. She also thinks that the resistance of some Saudi families to language learning can be explained by their lack of education and the Saudi culture that still fears English and Western culture more than other countries. This resistance could also result from a fear of social criticism in a society where English is not valued, but is perceived as dangerous and harmful to the Islamic identity.

> **Teacher 'W'**: I think that making training courses for parents to learn English is a good idea to motivate parents and motivate pupils as well to learn English. We concentrate on silly things and ignore the important use of English. Pupils should be motivated to employ language.
>
> …Teaching pupils this huge amount of information is difficult and does not allow a teacher to speak and discuss things with pupils.
>
> …There should be English clubs in schools. This would allow pupils an opportunity to practise English and speak without any restrictions. I think that pupils of good ability in English will benefit from these clubs more than low-level pupils. Even classroom discussion depends on a student's ability. There should be discussion if pupils are fluent in English   (Teacher interview, June 2012).

Finally, teacher 'W' recommended that language teachers resolve the lack of home encouragement by providing families with opportunities to learn English as a way to motivate

them and increase their awareness of the importance of English. This could also further reduce parents' fear and anxiety towards English, which might positively affect their children's learning.

The above quotations represent typical examples of the importance of the home as a motivational factor in language learning, providing the sources, the consequences of certain parental practises towards language learning and how these practises can be resolved if negative.

To conclude, the researcher discussed social factors that have a direct or indirect relationship withmotivating young female language learners in the Saudi context. Some factors are relevant to teachers' reactions and classroom practices. Others are relevant to social criticism and opportunities to practice English. Furthermore, some beliefs towards language learning seem to affect pupils' motivation, such as perceiving English as a difficult task. Finally, parental encouragement and awareness of the significance of English can also influence learners' motivation to learn English. The outcomes indicate that fostering pupils' motivation can enhance and facilitate English learning, while a lack of motivation can restrict language learning.

Thisstudy investigates the impact of social and cultural factors in the creation of an interactive and dialogic ESL setting in Saudi girls' schools. The current study aims to explore how girls and teachers account for their attitudes and assumptions and what their practices in ESL usage show about their attitudes and assumptions regarding the English language and culture.

Conclusion

This paper is hasexplored pupils' beliefs about ESL and whether certain social factors impact their motivation to learn and use the English language in the context of Saudi Arabia.

During the classroom observations, the researcher noticed that most pupils seemed bored, they were silent and inattentive. This apparent lack of motivation is supported by the definition of Lightbownet al. (2006)who identifiedmotivation andasserted learners' need to communicate during class. They sometimes demonstrate a preference to sleep or leave the room, pretending that they were sick or going to the toilet to escape the boring atmosphere. These practices suggest their lack of motivation and interest. These findings are similar to the results of other research (Spolsky, 1989)arguing that a lack of motivation could affect pupils' attention and lead to misbehaviour. Pupils' narrations also suggest various factors beyond their lack of interest in the English learning. The findings suggest four factors that affect girls' motivation in the Saudi context, which also impact girls' attitudes and assumptions about English language and culture as follows:

- Fear of social criticism as a result of lack of confidence and the idealised view of a Saudi female.
- Fear of teachers' reaction.
- Lack of opportunities to practise and use English in meaningful ways; and
- Lack of parental encouragement and awareness of the significance of English.

The findings reveal the pupils' claim that they hate English because of their fear of using it in their society, which does not value English learning. Pupils also think that their lack of interest in English learning resulted from their fear of making mistakes and appearing unqualified in

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English, which reduces their self-confidence and increases their anxiety and disappointment with English.

The findings also appear to indicate the teacher's role as a motivating variable in language learning. These findings are similar to those of other research empowering the teacher's influence in motivating learners and improving their performance (Arai, 2004; Dornyei, 1994; Ellis, 1994; Falout& Maruyama, 2004; Gorham &Christophel, 1992; Kojima, 2004; Tanaka, 2005; Tsuchiya, 2006). The findings also align with other research outcomes(Chambers, 1999; Dornyei&Ushioda, 2011; Hirvonen, 2010)identifying the teachers' role as one of the major demotivating factors in the classroom.

In addition, the findings suggest that pupils think that teachers' reactions are threatening, demotivating, scary, and stressful and might lead them to prefer silence or passiveness as well as hide behind their peers to avoid teacher blame and embarrassment. These findings reiterate Alison's and Halliwell's(2002) findings, which state that some teachers' classroom behaviours could affect pupils' motivation; theyalso seem to indicatethe difficulties teachers have with the status of English in the Saudi context. On the other hand, pupils think that positive teacher reactions towards pupils could increase learners' self-confidence and enthusiasm to learn English. These findings align with Oxford's (2003)study emphasising the significance of the student-teacher relationship in demotivating pupils. Moreover, this emphasises the complex status of English in Saudi Arabia that resulted from different educational and social factors.

Pupils' narrations indicated that thelack of opportunities to use English communicatively, whether inside the classroom or in everyday life, was demotivating. These findings are similar to those of Williams and Burden (1997), who argued that the teacher dialogue and interaction with pupils is crucial in stimulating them. Pupils expressed that the teacher's overemphasis on grammar rules and memorisation was a demotivating factor in ESL. Pupils also seemed disappointed and demotivated by teachers' ignorance of the importance of their roles and use of language during class. These findings align with the study by Chang and Cho (2003), whoemphasised the impact of deactivation of learners' role in the teaching process on reducing their motivation. Furthermore, pupils' believe that teachers avoid communication with pupils during the class to avoid making mistakes and appearing unqualified before them.

Pupils often express beliefs that parental encouragement and positive attitudes toward language could motivate them and facilitate their learning. These findings support other research (Gardner, 1985; Kormos&Csizer, 2008; S. Ryan, 2009; Williams & Burden, 1997) stressing the influence of parental encouragement in increasing learners' motivation. These findings also indicate that the lack of parental encouragement and help could reduce pupils' motivation and self-confidence and could negatively influence their attitudes towards English learning. These results reiterate other research (Kormos&Csizer, 2008; Taguchi et al., 2009)highlighting the influence of parents on children's self-esteem and future self-images. Such findings indicate that pupils do not prefer to use English because they do not receive enough parental encouragement and support. Pupils have suggested that parents' fear of the ideologies connected to the English language and lack of education are some of the factors that discourage parents from supporting their children's language learning.

The findings appear to indicate that negative perceptions towards English, such as perceiving it as a way of showing off or as a complicated task could demotivate language learners. These findings are supported by Karahan , who state that "positive language attitudes let learners have positive orientation towards learning English" (2007, p. 84). Theyalso align with Oxford's study (Kramsch, 1998), emphasising the role of teachers' beliefs about the course in demotivating learners. The findings appear to indicate that perceiving English as a difficult task is an obstacle to learning English and could impact pupils' optimism and hope to use English to achieve their expectations. Furthermore, believing that English learning is difficult can increase pupils' anxiety and fear of failure, which can also influence their performance. These findings reiterate Ellis's (1994) and McDonough's (1986) arguments that motivation is a key factor in language learning and one of the most significant factors in pupils' success or failure in language learning. These findings also support other research (Bandura, 1986; Chang & Cho, 2003; Dornyei&Ushioda, 2011)found that negative beliefs toward language learning and towards one's self-capabilities could reduce pupils' enthusiasm. In addition, these findings are similar to previous research (Arai, 2004; Atkinson et al., 1974; Bandura et al., 1996; Falout& Maruyama, 2004; Kojima, 2004; Tsuchiya, 2006), arguing that beliefs about success and failure could also influence pupils' motivation while reminding learners of failures and difficulties in language learning could reduce their enthusiasm and negatively impact their performance. Moreover, these findings align with Lamb's (2010)research that emphasise the impact of ideal self-images in motivating language learners.

Moreover, the findings suggest that teachers believe that motivation is one of the most important factors in language learning; however, their practices suggest the opposite. These findings are similar to other research (Chambers, 1999; Dornyei, 1994; Ellis, 1994; Gorham &Christophel, 1992; Tanaka, 2005)highlighting the role of the teacher in energising learners' motivation. One of the teachers explained that motivation is significant in language learning; however, she appeared to demotivate pupilswith her belief that not allowing themto talk, discuss, and ask questions empowers the teachers's role, ability, and authority and saves time in class. These findings reveal that certain teachers' practices demotivated pupils, which supports findings from previous research (Alison & Halliwell, 2002; Williams & Burden, 1997) stressing the importance of teacher-learner interaction in motivating learners. Another teacher expressed her desire to motivate learners; however, she restricted motivation when she claimed that only clever and creative pupils could be motivated to use English communicatively. These findings align with those of Oxford (1998) that empower the role of teachers' beliefs and the student-teacher relationship in motivating pupils.

The teachers suggested many variables that might impact ESL learning and pupils' attitudes and assumptions about the English language and culture. They expressed the belief that pupils' and teachers' fear of making mistakes in front of each other and their desire to appear perfect are demotivating factors in using English in the context of Saudi Arabia. One of the teachers also assertedthat pupils' negative perceptions of success area demotivating factor in ESL learning. Moreover, the teachers appeared to empower the parents' role in motivating children and arguedthat parents' beliefs about the English language and culture, such as perceiving it as a threat to the Islamic identity, are demotivating factors in language learning. These findings reiterate Bandura's (1997) findings, which stress the importance of a person's beliefs about his or her abilities in motivating her/him to perform an action.

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To conclude, the outcomes indicate the impact of various social factors relevant to the Saudi identity, culture and everyday life on girls' ESL learning in the Saudi context. The studyfindings seem to be interrelatedand merge with each other in a way that enriches the data and suggests various interpretations. Girls' and teachers' beliefs and practices of ESL appear to be influenced by certain imaginative views towards their local identities and cultures, their possible selves in the future, and the linguistic communities. Participants' narrations and practices indicate the effect of the Saudi and Islamic culture in identity construction on ESL learners in the Saudi context. On the other hand, the Saudi and Islamic cultures affected females' identity creation and influence the way females perceive themselves and the people around them. This interrelationship among ESL, identity and culture suggests the complex circumstances of those ESL pupils and the complicated social network in which they live. In addition, findings regarding autonomy indicate that identity and cultural attributes have an impact on teachers' and learners' roles in the classroom. Moreover, these social attributes can affect learners' motivation not only inside, but also outside the classroom, such as at home or within friends' and relatives' networks.

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