The L2 Motivational Self: A Case of College Students at Ibra College of Technology

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Abstract

Stemming from the seeming lack of motivation of EFL students at Ibra College of Technology, the present study explores the L2 motivational self system of Omani college students by means of Dornyei's (2009) framework. It particularly underscores the degree of existence or absence of the L2 self among the study participants. With the use of grounded-theory, four students in the general foundation revealed information about the factors that contribute to the use of their ideal self, ought-to self, and L2 learning experience as their source of motivation. Findings reveal that the students' reasons, such as complacency with regard to their way of life in Oman and convenience in speaking their L1, act as hindrances to gain motivation to learn English. Moreover, the students reported that people around them do not have a huge impact on their English language learning journey, but they expressed use of ideal self with regard to obtaining a job. Findings are indicative that to a certain extent, the students make use of their ideal self and ought-to self as a source of motivation. Pedagogical and theoretical implications are also provided in the present study.

Keywords: motivation; L2 self; L2 motivational system; L2 motivational self-system; ideal self, ought-to self

Introduction

The previous decades have witnessed the development of models pertinent to motivation in second language learning. Consequently, there has been a plethora of empirical studies that have been conducted to highlight the importance of motivation in L2 learning. Quite evidently, this phenomenon is due to the commonly accepted notion that motivation serves as a driving force in language learning taking into consideration the undertaking of L2 learners in achieving their goals. As

Dornyei (2001) states, it is a factor that may greatly influence the L2 learner's achievement.

Since Gardner and his associates' early studies (e.g. Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Gardner, Smythe, & Brunet, 1977) on motivation in language learning, other prominent scholars have joined the conversation. For instance, Gardner and Lambert (1972) proposed the motivation theory which underscores the value of integrativeness or the instance when the learner shows an openness and identification with the target language community and their culture. Weiner (1985) later suggested the Attribution Theory that assumes that people try to determine why people do what they do such as in the case of L2 learning, that is, interpret causes to the behavior. Another is Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory which proposes that motivation and personality address three universal, innate and psychological needs, i.e., competence, autonomy, and psychological relatedness. In a more recent study, Dornyei (2005, 2009) introduced the L2 Motivational system which is a reconceptualization of Markus and Nurius' (1986) possible selves and Higgins' (1987) ought selves. Dornyei's recent framework is composed of three facets: namely the Ideal L2 self, the Ought-to self, and L2 Learning experience.

According to Dornyei (2009), the ideal self is a representation of the instrumental and integrative motivation as it represents the ideal image a learner would like to have in the future. For instance, if a learner wants to become a fluent L2 speaker who engages in interaction with foreign friends, the image formed out of this desire is a fluent speaker, which as a whole might act as a strong motivator. Moreover, the ought-to self, from that of Higgins (1987) concept, is concerned with the attributes that the learner ought to possess to meet the expectations of extrinsic factors such as family, praises and rewards. Meanwhile, the L2 learning experience is centered on situation specific motives (e.g. curriculum, the L2 teacher, learning materials) that are said to have influence on motivated behavior (Papi, 2010).

Since the conception of the L2 Motivational Self System, a number of scholars have tested the applicability of the framework in various learning conditions. Some of these studies aimed to validate the existence of L2 self in EFL learners (e.g. Kim, 2009a; Chen, 2012; Kim, 2012; Papi, 2010; Chen, Warden & Chang, 2005; Tuan, 2012; Taguchi, Magid & Papi, 2009; Lamb, 2012; Cruz & Al Baushi, 2018). There are also studies that have emphasized the importance of specific L2 self di-

mensions. For instance, Kim and Kim (2014) revealed that ideal self has a positive impact among Korean contexts in the Korean context in which it posited that more manifestation of the Ideal L2 self leads to higher level of English proficiency. Also, Taguchi et al. (2009) demonstrated positive correlation of Ideal L2 self with integrativeness and emphasized L2 learning experience as an important factor in L2 self motivation. In contrast, studies like that of Islam, Lamb and Chambers (2013) and Papi's (2010) claim that ought-to self does not act as a strong contributor in motivating learners if compared to ideal self, although according to Taguchi et al. (2009), results may differ in Asian contexts due to family and school pressure.

L2 motivational self studies have also become learner specific. For example, Al-shehri (2009), Rajab, Far and Etemadzadeh (2012), Madkhali (2016), Al-shahrani (2016), Moskovsky, Assulaimani, Racheva and Harkins (2016) and Alqahtani (2017) focused their studies on Arab learners and revealed the dominance of ideal self. While the said studies have considerably contributed to the rich literature on L2 motivational self, the present study acknowledges the view that more empirical studies have to be conducted as there is constant change in learning conditions and English education policies on a global perspective. One that can be cited is the case of English language learning in the Arab nation of the Sultanate of Oman.

Education in the Sultanate of Oman was revolutionized in 1970s following the reign of its leader Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said. Part of this education reform included English language education. Several government agencies oversee higher education in Oman, and among them is the Ministry of Manpower which is in-charge of seven Colleges of Technology, which have English courses in both the General Foundation and Post Foundation programs. For several years now, moves such as construction and provision of school facilities and hiring of expats as staff have been done to aid in improving the education in the said Islamic nation. However, despite the massive efforts of the Omani government to improve the educational system in the Sultanate, the motivation of students to learn English appears to be an issue. Al-Mahrooqi and Denman (2014) state that there are factors that are social and cultural in nature cause of the lack of motivation of Arab students in learning English. Sivaraman, Al Balushi and Rao (2014) add that Omani students need to be further motivated in their English language learning endeavors. With these observations at hand, the students of Ibra College of Technology (ICT)

are not spared from this motivational issue. In a preliminary interview, both expatriate and local teachers indicated that there are indeed students who do not seem to be motivated to learn English. According to Donald Domalaon (personal communication, January 28, 2018) a lecturer at the ICT, "there are students who are not very much into it; they do it simply for their marks." Another lecturer, Jehad Al Harthy (personal communication, January 28, 2018) stated, "there are students who are motivated to learn, but what is surprising is that the number of those who do not have the motivation is not far behind."

In literature and firsthand accounts, motivation is a preponderant concern in English language learning for Omani students as well as teachers. It is then this study's objective to use Dornyei's (2009) L2 self motivation framework to obtain information on the L2 motivation of Omani college students. More specifically, the study not only attempts to validate the existence of L2 self among Omani learners but it also captures the factors from a few perspectives that lead to the status of their L2 motivation. In cases where there are L2 self dimensions present among the learners, it is the study's aim to determine the superior contributor in the students' L2 motivation.

Method

Four college students in the general foundations program (GFP) of ICT were randomly selected to participate in the study (see Table 1). Considering Slavoff and Johnson's (1995) suggestion that participants in studies on English language learning must have at least three years of exposure to English classes, it was affirmed that the selected participants in the present study fit the criterion as all of them took English classes in primary and secondary school. Moreover, the participants claimed that they have had no experience studying abroad but have been taught by Omani and native and non-native expat teachers. At ICT, they have at least 18 hours of classes in English per week regardless of their level in the GFP. All of them agreed to have their first names mentioned in the study.

Table 1. Profile of Study Participants

	Name	Age	Gender	Specialization	Town
S1	Saleem	20	M	IT	Sur
S2	Fatma	18	F	Business	Jalan
S3	Abdullah	20	M	Engineering	Jalan
S4	Ahmed	19	M	Engineering	Bidiya

The study adhered to Dornyei's (2001) principle that a deep interview with a language learner provides relatively rich data in order to achieve the study objectives; hence, the employment of qualitative approach. A semi-structured interview from previous studies (i.e. Chen, 2012; Cruz & Al Balushi, 2018) was adopted and modified, based on the goals of this study, and then translated to Arabic. The questions were validated by a Tunisian ICT lecturer with a PhD in Applied Linguistics, whose participation later allowed for the analysis of inter-rater reliability. The questions were divided into three sections. The first section focused on the participants' ideal self; these questions determine the participants' future image as an L2 learner. The next part concentrated on ought-to self or questions that intended to obtain information about the way they imagine their environment to be towards them with respect to their L2 learning. The third part sought details about their L2 learning experience or those related to the sources of motivation in the environment.

The pilot interview and the interview proper were conducted in the post-midterm period of the second semester of academic year 2017-2018 (i.e. February-March 2018) upon the approval of the ELC administration. The two participants in the pilot study were two males in the bachelor's level. Both interviews were audio recorded, and all questions were answered with sufficient details. The questions were asked in Arabic by an Omani lecturer to make the process more convenient for the participants. However, three students still opted to give some of their responses in English. A portion of the responses underwent thematic analysis approach based on Corbin and Strauss (2007) and the analysis was then validated by the inter-rater. The interview proper with the study participants was conducted two days after the participants were asked for their available time. On the day of their respective schedules, the participants came to a classroom dedi-

cated to the data gathering process. On average, the interviews which was carried out in a span of three days, lasted 22 minutes. Similar to other L2 self motivation studies such as Kim's (2009b), additional related questions were asked to gain more detailed responses. After two days, transcription and translation of the responses were conducted. Validation of the transcribed and translated responses by the second rater took place after 12 days. There was at least 95% agreement between the researcher and the other rater in terms of the transcription and translation of the responses and the analyses. Thematic analysis or open coding by the researcher and its validation by the second rater occurred in a span of three weeks. Aside from studies on L2 self, scholarly studies on the nature of Arabic students were used for analysis concerning the students' behavior (e.g. Al-Rabaani, Al-Salmi, & Al-Salmi 2016; Elyas & Picard, 2014; Eaton & Dembo, 1997).

Results and Discussion

To address the objective of obtaining information on the L2 self, statements that pertain to the students' acknowledgement of factors relating to L2 self were sought. Findings demonstrate the manifestation of ought-to L2 self among the participants. All the students stated that their marks in their quizzes and major examinations are what pushes them to study English.

Excerpt 1

    S1: Our midterm and final is important to us. Our exams like IELTS and it is difficult. I need to know speaking, reading, writing, listening in English.

    S2: If I want to take advance diploma, I need high marks.

    S3: I do not want to repeat Level 2 so I need to pass this for one time.

    S4: I don't want to fail in this class.

Although the responses of the participants appear to be instrumental in nature, it must be noted that their need to pass their examinations have the features of the ought-to self. Dörnyei (2009) stated that when the idealized image is associated with being professionally successful, the imagined self is concerned with the ideal self. On the other hand, if the instrumental motives are linked to prevention focus such as avoidance of failure in examination, the source of motivation is the ought-to self. The participants were unanimous in voicing out academic concerns as the reason they are learning English, and this is indicative of the Omanis and other L2

learners' similar perspective with regard to learning English. Koreans for instance in Cruz and Al Balushi (2018) were engrossed with their L2 learning, and one of their common reasons was because their parents provide the schooling expenses, thus, they reported that they do it partly for their parents' efforts. The case, however, is different with Omani students at ICT as they do not pay for their tuition fee and they are provided with a monthly stipend by the Ministry of Manpower. This situation may have contributed to a more self-focused response by the participants in which they were merely attributing their academic success for themselves, as there were no mention of other persona in their responses but themselves. The participants were then sought for opinion on their parents' appraisal for them in relation to their English learning sojourn. Most of them responded that their parents appear to be somewhat relaxed with unfavorable situations that arise regarding their English education.

Excerpt 2

S1: It is fine if I do not learn English well or if my marks are not very good… my parents will not be angry.

S2: My parents say that I should learn something or learn that… but if I fail, it is okay.

S3: I do not want to fail. Last semester I failed in English. My father was angry. But no problem, he said to study again.

S4: They do not speak in English also so maybe if I fail, there is no problem.

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something unfavorable, and this may imply that there are Omani students who learn for themselves and their individual goals rather than for the approval of other people such as their family, or in other words, intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). When further asked about the people that matter when it comes to their L2 learning, the participants mentioned their teachers and future managers to be significant people who are supposed to show their approval of them. Excerpt 3 shows these statements.

Excerpt 3

S1: If I work in a company, maybe the manager of company will need to speak in English when he talk to me.

S2: I study English because I want my teacher to give me high mark and it is good if they know I am good.

S3: My teacher in speaking… should think I'm good and smart student.

S4: When I find job, and my boss is not Omani, I should speak English with him.

With reference to Excerpt 2 and Excerpt 3, it seems evident that to a certain degree, the Omani learners attribute their L2 learning motivation to their teachers and future superiors in their future profession more than their parents. Asian parents are known to involve themselves in the education of their children (Eaton & Dembo, 1997); however, student responses imply that this is not the case for the Omanis. This is not to say that the Omani parents are not concerned with their children's education, but in Al-Mahrooqi, Denman and Al-Maamari (2016) and Al-Harrasi and Al-Mahrooqi, it was found that Omani parents cited personal reasons such as the unimportance of parental involvement in school matters, the perception that their influence does not make a difference, and the belief that the teachers are the best people to handle their children's education for their non-involvement in their children's academics. It should also be said that a number of Omani parents of the current generation are known to be not proficient in English primarily because of the EFL environment, which means that there is comparatively lesser input. It may be then safe to say that the ought-to self of the learners is in use when it comes to their teachers, the people who teach them in the classroom, and managers, the people who are in charge of promotion and salaries, but their parents are not key motives.

When asked further about their L2 ought-to self, the Omani learners believe that they will still earn the respect of other people around them regardless of their proficiency in English.

Excerpt 4

S1: Everyone will still respect me if am not very good in English… we can live good life if I speak Arabic.

S2: If I do not learn English, I can still have business... my family will think I am successful.

S3: English is important but I can graduate without much knowledge in English. I think most subjects in diploma do not need English.

S4: Here in Oman, speaking Arabic is no problem.

The responses in Excerpt 4 establish that while the Omani learners appreciate the value of English in their academic and professional endeavors, they still insinuated that English is not what they only need to gain the approval and respect of their environment. Moreover, it may seem that there is some form of resistance from the Omani learners to embrace English and make it part and parcel of their life. Elyas and Picard (2010) said that learners may show this kind of behavior due to certain beliefs and values deeply rooted from their Islamic orientation. Additionally, these learners may have a strong belief that Arabic language is central to their identity as Muslims and that English is a mere accessory to their goals. Based on the notion that the ought-to self also refers to attributes that L2 learners believe they ought to have to meet the expectations of the people around them, it is possible that the learners feel less demand from their significant others or family with regard to L2 their learning. The situation refers to the learners' lesser use of extrinsic forms of their ought-to self.

Excerpt 5 shows the responses of the participants when they were asked about their L2 learning and their future job. It can be seen how the participants show their desire to find a job in the future. Another thematic category from the responses is that they prefer to stay in Oman when they land in a job.

Excerpt 5

S1: I want to work… here in Oman… my family is here.

S2: Finding a job… maybe in Muscat… or in my village…here everything is good….

S3: Have good job…I don't want to work in another country… Oman is fine.

S4: Search for job in Oman… life in Oman is good.

The satisfaction of the students with their country is apparent in their responses. The participants cited their family and their perception about the quality of life in Oman. In several periodicals (e.g. "Oman 7th globally", 2015; "Oman ranks 2nd", 2017), it is mentioned that Oman is one of the top countries where people enjoy a good quality of life. Some criteria used to describe quality of life were healthcare, pollution, safety, and purchasing power. This desire of the participants to stay in Oman may lessen their need to study English (Arabic is the first language of Omanis). Although the workforce of Oman is currently dominated by expats, a good number of them speak Arabic (e.g. Indians, Pakistanis, Bengalis, Egyptians, and Iranians), which practically implies that learning English, despite its perceived importance for learners at the moment of their academic career, may be of less use in the longitudinal aspect. Chen, Warden and Chang (2005) emphasizes that the lack of need from the environment for learners to be exposed to and use the target language is typical in Asian EFL contexts which affects the L2 motivational self of the learners. The concept of integration states that learners are driven to learn English for integration with a speech community speaking the target language (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), and for the participants in this study, there appears little reason to integrate themselves in an English-speaking community since the people around them, even the expatriates, can conveniently speak their first language and have similar cultures. Dornyei (2009) emphasized that integration is applicable in a multicultural society, but apparently, in the case of Oman, this may not be entirely true.

The participants were asked further about the use of English in their future job. Unanimously, they acknowledge the use and usefulness of English in their profession. Again, they are aware of the presence of expatriates in Oman. In Excerpt 6, the participants also suggest that they are motivated to learn English because of increased competition.

Excerpt 6

S1: I need to get a job and good salary.

S2: Before I have my business, I need to have money…I want work in company to get money

S3: We need to do learn English because finding job is difficult. There are many Indians are here in Oman so I must have more skills like speak in English.

S4: It is difficult to find job now. Everyone thinks English is very important to find a job… I also need to learn English because if not, I cannot find a good job with good salary.

Similar to previous studies (e.g. Cruz & AL Balushi, 2018; Kim, 2009b), it was shown how the ideal self of students from this part of the Arabian peninsula is driven by their desire to obtain employment. As it is, this aim is a global phenomenon given that good command of English is a basic qualification for young professionals. The students seem to have realized that competition is tough among job seekers since English is usually the medium of communication especially in multinational companies or where there are expatriate employees such as in Oman. Apart from the consistent participants' use of the word "job" in all parts of the interviews, they cited salary, competition and struggle in finding a job as additional motives for learning English. Such statements can be attributed to instrumentality (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Kim (2009b) suggests that the learners could be expressing something about their motive and not their motivation. He adds that there is a need to verify the learners' level of participation with reference to the participants' comments which apparently remain to be seen, at least in a sociocultural perspective. While it is safe to say that the participants may be motivated to learn English for their future job, the participants could be speaking in reference to an imagined self of having a job, or preventing themselves from failing a job interview. Both of these are attributed to ideal self or those that may pertain to growth and aspirations (Higgins, 1987 in Dornyei 2009) and ought-to self or those that may refer to prevention focus (Dornyei, 2009), respectively.

Another noteworthy observation from the students' statements in Excerpt 6 is they intend to be good at learning English to find a job, although this contradicts their statements in Excerpt 4 where they expressed strong inclination towards their L1 based on Excerpt 4. Understandably, the students may be utilizing the instrumentality of their ideal self as they desire a future image in which they are able to use their L2 to acquire a job, which comprehensively is a form of aspiration. On the other hand, their preference for Arabic is purely for convenience since not all transactions in Oman are conducted in English.

In relation to their job, the participants were asked about what they imagine themselves doing with their job in connection to learning English, and they mentioned the need for English communication with foreigners. These narrations are seen in Excerpt 7.

Excerpt 7

S1: speak English with people from other country… people working in company.

S2: maybe customers are from different country.

S4: can speak to other people who don't understand Arabic…like American who work in company.

The participants' descriptions in Excerpt 7 show their evident use of their ideal self. Categorically, the responses may be in accordance to what Ueki and Takeuchi (2012) stated regarding ideal self that focuses on specific situations. One of the tenets of ideal self is that the learner imagines himself or herself engaging in communicative events with foreigners, and this has been a fixture in studies that explored the L2 self of learners (e.g. Cruz & Al-Balushi, 2018). In their self image of learning English and being able to find a job, an inevitable scenario is dealing with foreigners who do not speak Arabic, since as mentioned, Oman has a workforce dominated by expatriates. In this case, the result is not distinct in previous studies (e.g. Taguchi, 2013) in which learners still have high utilization of ideal self in the manner of "communicating with foreigners in English" (p. 182) despite the learners' non-commitment to learn the language.

When asked about their learning experience, the participants mentioned three different things: their teacher, the prescribed textbook, and their curriculum. Excerpt 8 shows their narrations.

Excerpt 8

S1: My teachers are very good… they are number 1… they teach me many things.

S2: The teachers in college help me to study writing and listening.

S2: The books is so very boring… I always go out of classroom.

S3: Everyday same same… reading, listening… I want to sleep.

S4: The book… I do not like it. It is very difficult… I cannot write in the book.

S4: I do not learn many things because I cannot understand the teacher when she talks.

It can be seen that the participants have inconsistent views about their teacher. S1 and S2 expressed their satisfaction with their teachers, but S4 lacked positive words for his teacher, specifically when it comes to pronunciation. In terms of their prescribed textbook, the participants are unanimous in saying that they are not in favor of it for several reasons; some reasons cited were boredom, repetitiveness and limitations in their usage of the book. It has to be noted that the textbooks in the General Foundation Program of ICT and other Colleges of Technology come from an outsourced publishing company. The students loan the book for a semester and return it for utilization by another student in the proceeding semester. With this, the students are not allowed to write on their books, and they are encouraged to use pencil so that erasures can be done when they have to return the said materials. S3 also mentioned the repetitive nature of their lessons. This is because the students are trained every day to pass an IELTS type of exam with focus on the four macro skills (i.e. listening, speaking, writing, reading). For four to five days a week, the teachers provide them activities that ensure their familiarization in the said type of examination. With the collective responses of the four participants, the value of L2 Learning Experience seems incongruent with previous literature (e.g. Islam et al., 2013) and it can be thematically considered as the participants' dissatisfaction with their L2 learning experience. Dornyei (2009) stresses the importance of 'executive' motives in the form of L2 learning experience to maintain a learner's self image. However, as Dornyei himself mentioned the necessity of elaboration of this construct, other considerations regarding the L2 learning experience aside from teachers, curriculum and peer group may have to be explored to strengthen a position.

Excerpt 9

S1: Before I did not like to study English. Now, because I need to pass my exams, I like to study more. After graduation I think I will study English.

S2: In school, we did not know that English is very important. Now, in college, everything is in English so I need to learn English.

S3: Maybe now I want to learn English. But in the future, maybe not anymore. When I have my business, then it is fine if I do not speak English.

S4: Because all lessons are using English, I want to learn English. I cannot be Engineer if I do not learn it. When I was young, I thought I can be Engineer if I speak Arabic only. Now, I really like to be very good especially in speaking.

During the interviews, there were inquiries about the participants' view about their desire to learn English then and now, and possibly in the future. Their responses are indicated in Excerpt 9. For S1, S2, and S4, their motivation to learn English became greater due to certain realizations on the use of English, while S1 and S3 stated the possibility that his motivation to learn the language may be non-existent when the time comes that he has no use for it. The responses are suggestive of the dynamic nature of L2 motivation. While this aspect is not a component of the L2 motivational self system, the statements are patterns that naturally emerged which deserve to be mentioned. Dornyei (2009) himself has recognized that motivation's dynamism displays continuous shift and fluctuation within a process-oriented approach. This is to acknowledge the possible diverse factors and conditions that prompt behavioral changes vis-à-vis the learners' motivation. With the interweaving of the responses in the interviews, it is apparent that their jobs and the environment are prominent factors in the motivational changes.

As can be seen in the data report, the participants had the motivation to learn English primarily because of their desire to obtain a job, and this is consistent in establishing L2 ideal self as the most important factor for learners in the L2 Motivational Self System based on previous studies. (e.g. Islam et al., 2013). However, aside from foreseeing themselves interacting with foreigners, it is apparent how much of their narratives and elaborations seem to say that the participants' ideal state is limited to this aspect, and the participants themselves mentioned a variety of reasons that are socially driven, e.g., the convenience of using their L1 and their confidence with the quality of life in Oman.

Moreover, the study has gained further attestation that ought-to self is not much of a source of motivator for L2 learners even if the prevention focused ought-to self was the notable in the responses. Although studies like that of Taguchi, et al. (2009) found the ought-to self as a credible self image in the Asian context, the participants, who are Omanis and Asian by virtue of their location, do not exhibit much concern about pressure from significant people around them once they fail to excel in learning English. Despite their use of prevention focused ought-to self,

this particular finding is deemed inadequate for generalization. An Omani lecturer, Dr. Thuraya Al-Riyami (personal communication, April 08, 2018) expressed hesitation to entirely agree with the participants' claims. "It depends on the background of the parents because some of them, especially those who come from remote areas, did not have formal education", says Dr. Al-Riyami. Considering this issue at hand, if the extrinsic motivation and ought-to self are two interchangeable concepts (Dornyei, 2009), then it is safe to say that there is a need to improve the promotional aspect of the ought-to selves of the participants.

This study also demonstrates that the learning experience does not generate sufficient motivation for the learners. In Dornyei (2009), it was mentioned that the L2 learning experience refers to the immediate learning environment and experience that the learners are exposed to, examples of which include the teachers, curriculum, peers and experience of success (Papi, 2010). It could easily be understood that this dimension is not a form of self-image but the learners' satisfaction from the learning environment, thereby making the situation prompt the improvement of the learner's attitude in learning. The participants demonstrated some inconsistencies in their views regarding their learning experience. The fact is that they have various teachers as mostly expatriates comprise the teaching workforce in the college, and as they are exposed to different teachers, they are able to generate their opinions about their mentors. It goes without saying that their opinions are products of various aspects; hence, further empirical data may be needed to dig deeper on teachers as a learning experience. Moreover, the students' expression of dissatisfaction with the book may imply that revisions are necessary, as teachers are compelled to use such. In addition, it seems difficult to affirm that the external factors, i.e., the learning environment, are internalized and eventually turn into intrinsic motivation, which, according to Noels (2009), is closely associated to L2 learning experience since the participants stated negative feelings about their environment. As a whole, the inability of arriving at clear conclusions regarding the L2 learning experience is a consequence of varying responses of the participants, and this is suggestive that further elaboration on L2 learning experience is imperative.

It is then this study's additional goal to propose some parameters on the coverage of the L2 learning experience. In 1994, Dornyei conceptualized what he believed was relevant to the learners' environment, namely course-specific

motivational components, teacher-specific motivational components, and group-specific motivational components. Course-specific motivational components are related to materials used in the classroom, syllabus, and the classroom activities. Teacher-specific motivational components are related to the personality of the teachers, as well as their behavior and beliefs about teaching. Group-specific motivational components are related to the communication among the learners. Indeed, these components of the learners' environment are substantial elements in the L2 learning environment. Taking into consideration the temporal aspect of a learner's experience additional components may be added. For instance, facilities in this generation is as important as the other components due to the learners' penchant for technology and visual aid varieties. According to education scholars (e.g. Blair, 1998; Chan, 1996), there is likelihood that well-designed school facility may have positive effects on the learners. In the present study, the participants may have missed mentioning the use of facilities perhaps because the college has adequate facility that other glaring factors such as their teachers and teaching materials were instead mentioned. Furthermore, the classroom itself may directly influence the learner's motivation as its design or set up affect the learning atmosphere in any given condition. Furthermore, there might be a need to formulate intangible components related to the learning experience that do not overlap with previously stated components. Although this idea may still be far-fetched, non-classroom induced aspects such as the internet may be of consideration as part of the learning experience. In Cruz and Parina (2018) it was mentioned how virtuality has become a learning factor for Korean learners. With the rapid development of technology outside the classroom, it is possible that it may also be considered a part of the students' learning experience.

Conclusion

With the dearth of studies on motivation in language learning in the Sultanate of Oman, Dornyei's (2009) L2 self framework was used in this study to provide information on the L2 motivation of Omani learners at the ICT. In the study, it was attested that much work is still needed on examining L2 motivation in relation to factors such as learning context. Based on grounded theory, it was found that there are seemingly incongruent findings as far as the present study and the previous literature are concerned. While the Omani L2 learners demonstrated the use of ideal

self as the dominant form of their L2 motivational self, there are certain factors (e.g. long term goals) that allude to exceptions on its full utilization. It was also deduced from the students' accounts that they do not seem to capitalize on ought-to self and L2 learning experience, which results from specific sociocultural orientations and learning situations. The study also saw the interplay of the learners' L2 learning goals and their motivation which Gardner (1985) has earlier described. The study also strengthens this generation's awareness of the salience of English with regard to professional aspirations. With the continuously evolving shifts in environment such as globalization and the complexities of the learners' psychological profile, the study paves way for more explorations on L2 motivation. It also confirmed the dynamic and unpredictable nature of the learners' L2 motivation, a case which has been gaining attention from recent studies that describe how motivation can shift from time to time or context to context. It would then be noteworthy to conduct a follow up on the participants' motivational self as they progress in their college life. Although this study is not longitudinal in character, students indicated that their motivation had shifted and they foresee further changes post-graduation. With this, socio-cultural theory was indeed found useful in explaining the learners' L2 motivation since they are exposed to various societal fixtures overtime.

Pedagogically, it was noted how the influence of teachers can be maximized to put emphasis on the role of motivation in their L2 goals. Perhaps expatriate and local teachers at ICT can consider using their learning experience to heighten the motivation of the students in learning English. This strategy may be of help in guiding the students to imagine themselves as a member of a globalized speech community while and after achieving their learning goals. It may also be helpful if teachers and ELT professionals alike can maintain the motivation of the students given the fact that Omani students, and EFL learners in general, find English difficult to learn.

Results-wise, the findings in the study cannot be generalized due to the employment of the grounded theory approach, in which a relatively smaller number of participants were tapped to share their insights about the study's foci. However, the personal narratives of the participants were able to provide valuable and specific information that is similar to quantitative data. Nevertheless, it is also acknowledged that a mixed method approach could provide a broader perspective

of the L2 motivational self of Omani learners. A longitudinal approach may also be plausible for future research of identical nature as it should be noted that there are certain unmentioned factors that may influence the level of L2 motivation of the learners of the current generation. For instance, it is interesting to note how the current Omanization program, a policy implemented by the government of the Sultanate of Oman which aims to replace expatriate workers with trained Omani personnel (Al-Lamki, 2000) may affect the learners' motivation to be proficient in what they now consider as a very important language. With the priority in employment given to the Omani citizens, the question about the students' desire for language achievement is something worthy of empirical investigation. Most importantly, it is the researchers' desire to improve the L2 learning experience domain of the L2 motivational self.

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