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## A Comparative Study of L2 Motivation of English and Chinese Languages using Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System Framework at University Level Students

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### Abstract

*The objective of this study is to find out the contribution of Dörnyei's L2 motivational self-system framework for English and Chinese language learning motivation. It has been used as a conceptual model to find the motivation level of language learners. The study was conducted using the quantitative research approach. The sample comprised 100 English language learners and 100 Chinese language learners belonging to the public institutes of Dist. Lahore. Data was collected using two quantitative survey questionnaires. One questionnaire was used for the learners of the English language, and the other one was used for the learners of the Chinese language. The analysis of the data was done through SPSS software to find the answers to the study. The findings revealed that "L2 learning experience and Ideal L2 self" are the significant contributors to English language learning motivation rather than "ought to L2 self". In contrary to that, "Ideal L2self", "ought to L2 self," and "L2 learning experience" is not the strongest contributor of Chinese language learning as compared to the English language. The findings recommend that students' motivation can be enhanced by teaching quality of language learning centers and associated teachers should utilize various motivational techniques such as "ideal L2 self, ought to L2 self and L2 learning experience" to inspire their students to learn English and Chinese language effectively.*

**Key Words:** Ideal L2 self, Ought to L2 self and L2 Learning Experience

### Introduction

English became an official language of Pakistan after its creation; it became a part of economic, official use and for educational purposes, etc. One can view the high status of the English language in the first speech of Jinnah (1947), who was the first governor-general of Pakistan, which was delivered in English in the constituent assembly of Pakistan. In 1983, people, especially in the Pakistani government, claimed that language-related legislation was haphazardly done, and the things direly required pertaining to the proper policy-making of language were neglected

badly. In 1987, these policies were revised. Although the policymakers made Urdu-based policies, the influence of non-English medium education for many years and dismissed from professional use (public sector) remained obvious. Later, the officials realized that the worth of English could not be denied in the global economic and social context around the world. They made policies to sharpen the English language skills from school to university level to uplift the standard of English education. Various ways of alteration in policies was encouraged by most

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of the people because they wanted to prefer English over other languages to see its economic as well as social worth. Researchers like ([Shamim: 2001](#), [Mansoor: 2002](#)) are of the view that institutes need to address the learners' motivational needs by establishing collaborative efforts between teachers and learners for their successful learning.

While on the other hand, in the last few years, mainly after the declaration of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project in 2015 and many other mega projects – there has been an unpredictable wave in the number of students who want to learn the Chinese language. To enhance the momentum of relations between both countries in different academic programs of teaching, the Chinese language has gained significant importance in Pakistan in the last few years. It is a reality that the English language is used in all over the world as a tool to get the opportunities and to earn handsome money. There is no denying the fact that China is now becoming a global player, and the world is swiftly shifting its attention towards the Asian Century; new opportunities and breakthroughs will emerge from this part of the world.

In this study, Dörnyei's model has been adopted to explore the motivational behavior of the students towards the Chinese and the English language. It is based on three factors, namely, "Ideal L2 self, ought to L2 self and L2 learning experience". "Ideal L2 self" is the genuine and practical picture one can look at and listen to "one's ideal self" ([Dörnyei et al., 2006](#)). While on the other hand, "ought-to L2 self" works with the features that one ought to satisfy expectations and elude undesirable results. Lastly, the "L2 learning experience" is based on learning syllabus, second language teachers, group, and language teaching materials, and sometimes these sources become the positive causes of L2 motivation ([Papi, 2010](#)).

### Study Rationale

The significance of the English and Chinese languages has never been denied in Pakistan due to many reasons. The English language, because of being one of Pakistani national/official languages, is of great importance. As compared with the English language, the Chinese language has also created its worth in this region. It, because of CPEC and many

other mega projects, has become more important for Pakistani youth to learn and participate in these projects and get good opportunities. Many researches related to L2 motivation have been conducted by using Dörnyei's framework as compared to Chinese language learning motivation. Hence in this research, we will see the contribution Dörnyei's model for English and as well as for the Chinese languages motivation in the Pakistani context.

## Theoretical Framework

### Motivation and L2 Learning

Motivation is a primary factor which affects the most to second language learning ([Gardner, 1972](#)). In the past five decades, the research on motivation has tried a lot to know about the determining factors of motivation that motivate language learners to learn L2 and how a teacher can enhance the motivation level among language learners. [Dörnyei et al. \(2006\)](#) narrate that motivation deals with the way in which people act, that is, choosing an action, its continuity, and the struggle done on it. The studies related to L2 motivation were started with Gardner and Lambert's (1972) work. It was based on the idea of centralization, and hereafter in the 1990s, it was shifted towards the intellectual perspective, the self-determination and attribution theories. Gardner's motivational and social methodology was influencing compared to the earlier works of the 1990s ([Dörnyei, 2001](#)). Therefore, Gardner's views about the social model of motivation couldn't find their proper place in the emerging ideas of social identity. Therefore, most of the research on "L2 motivation" developed with the passage of time. Psychological constructs have been turned out to be huge in pedagogical settings therefore, the researcher connected them in L2 learning and teaching. Respectively, cognitive view "the self-determination" ([Gardner, 1972](#)) and motivational models came into existence. All these theories have focused the idea of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. ([Ghapanchi et al., 2011](#)). [Ushioda \(2011\)](#) has divided "L2 motivation" theory in the following phases:

### The Social-Psychological Period (1959-1990)

Motivation study was inspired by social psychologist Robert Gardner in Canada. Facing an Ethno linguistically separated association, his basic

concern in motivation was the reality that the motivation to know about the other association's language might be the key to the agreement of the francophone and Anglophone association.

### **The Cognitive Period (1990)**

This 1990 brought about a common discontent with the application of Gardner's theory. While nobody investigated the importance of the Canadian social-psychological way, the broad information coming from different regions of the sphere was that there is something more for motivation L2 motivation study became education-friendly, emphasizing on aims linked with classroom learning, and it also accepted a fixed way, emphasizing on the key elements of the learning setting.

### **The Process-Oriented Period (at the turn of the new Century)**

This approach tried to know about the continuous adjustments of motivation over time. Looking upon it from this aspect, motivation is not considered as a fixed characteristic but rather as a non-static factor that presents ongoing change, going through certain decay and flows ([Dörnyei, 2001](#)).

### **Gardner's Socio-Educational Model**

In 1972, Lambert and Gardner began demonstrating the hypothesis that motivation, to an extent than ability, legitimizes why some individuals learn a foreign language better than others ([Ushioda, 2001](#)). Instrumental and integrative dimensions are the fundamental factors in this research work, yet integrative motivation is viewed as the key factor promoting language achievement. Integrative motivation comprises of two factors: integrativeness, or "a real interest for taking a second language with the end goal to come nearer to the other community". And the behavior towards second language learning, which alludes to what a learner thinks about language to be learned and taught (Gardner, 2001).

Gardner sees that instrumental motivation to be an additional dimension, which explains why a language learner did not become successful, although some of them have great motivation. And on the other side, some contributors which explain language learning attainment involve the intensity of motivation and anxious nature, that is the negative

factor. Gardner and Pat Smythe formulated an AMTB (Attitude/ Motivation Test Battery) as a way to approach effective contributors included in the language learning process (Gardner, 2001). The test consists of five levels of questions to evaluate: the integration of attitudes to the learning situation, motivation and instrumentality, and language anxiety.

Hereafter, the latest and most acceptable motivational theory has been given by [Dörnyei \(2009\)](#), namely the "L2 Motivational Self System". [Dörnyei \(2005\)](#) specified that the importance of the social education approach was essential in its grasping attitudinal-based methodology. In reality, he trusted, the most imperative accomplishment in the historical backdrop of second language motivation research, conducted by Gardner and Lambert's, that achievement in the second language is a work of the student's attitude toward the language under consideration, along these lines including a social dimension to the learning of L2. Dörnyei model has been experienced and endorsed in many countries across the world like in China, Japan, and Saudi Arabia ([Al-Shehri et al., 2009](#)).

### **Significance of English and Chinese language in Pakistani Perspectives**

The English language is the lingua franca and it is the official language of almost 53 countries. There are plenty of reasons that make the English language a primary tool in the present time. When the people of different countries interact with each other, usually they communicate in English. In addition, English is to be considered a powerful symbol of status in Pakistan. Without denying the fact that the English language creates many opportunities in Pakistan and all over the world. The English language is spoken in all the major public and private departments of the country such as business administration, academics, and even political institutions. Therefore; English is the language of all major disciplines such as international trade, science, tourism, language of computer, aviation and diplomacy, etc. their informal conversation ([Rahman, 2002](#)). [Shamim \(2008\)](#) argues that "English is considered the vehicle for achieving modernization, scientific and technological development and economic advancement for self and the country; in short, for

improving one's life chances". English is widely spoken in Pakistan and is deemed the language of most renowned people in all walks of life i.e., bureaucracy, military, business, media, and education (Coleman, 2010; Mansoor, 2004; Rahman, 2002; Shamim, 2011). The socio-economic spirit of the English language has a great influence on students to learn this language (Islam, 2009; Norton & Kamal, 2003).

On the other hand, the Chinese language, because of CPEC, has become most important for Pakistani youth to learn so that there may be created cultural integrity between the people of both countries. Undoubtedly, the Chinese language is assuming a significant role across the world (Svartvik & Leech, 2006). Similarly, many people in the world have been learning the Chinese language for the last few years (Wang, 2014). In recent few years, the same trend of Chinese language learning is becoming popular in Pakistan. In the senate of Pakistan (2018), it was recommended that the courses of the official Chinese language should be introduced and commenced so that costly communications obstacles could be overcome.

### Intended Learning Efforts

Intended learning effort is taken as the criterion for L2 motivation. In previous studies, (Ryan & Taguchi et al. 2009) used it as a criterion measure for the L2 motivation research in the context of Asia. The objective of this construct is to measure a learner's perceptions with regard to their existing and expected future endeavors to learn L2. The items that are incorporated in this concept are not only for

measuring their efforts within the classroom environment but also outside classrooms.

The following research questions are formulated after reading the literature review.

### Research Questions

1. What is the effect of L2 motivation self-system on the English and Chinese language learning motivation of Pakistani students?
2. Are the effects of L2 motivation self-system varying between English and Chinese language learners' motivation?

### Methodology

Deciding to select a research design for data collection in research was very important. The design of this study was cross-sectional survey research as it collected data from the subjects at one point in time. It was established after a general literature review. The population includes the entire public institutes situated in the district of Lahore. Lahore was suitable and feasible for the investigation and this population can provide educationally best feedback. Two questionnaires were designed to gather the data from English and Chinese language learners. The questionnaire items were adapted from a recent study (Islam, 2013). However, I made a few changes in the items that make it suitable for this study. Moreover, the items could be answered by using a five-point Likert scale which is categorized from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The data was collected from the learners of the Chinese and the English language. Prior to data collection, and informed consent was sought from participants.

### Comparative Analysis and Descriptive Statistics

**Table 1.** T-test and Descriptive of L2 motivational self-system by Gender

Scales	Male Mean	Std.	Female Mean	Std.	Mean value Diff	T value	Df.	P. (2-tailed)
Ideal L2 Self	3.678	.6750	3.757	.7174	-.0794	-.805	197	.422
Ought To L2 Self	3.602	.7252	3.360	.7475	.2426	2.32	197	.021*
L2 Learning Experience	3.824	.6637	3.673	.6414	.1509	1.63	197	.104
Intended Learning Efforts	3.850	.8093	3.811	.7242	.0385	.354	197	.724

Table 1 shows the t-test results, whether the statistically difference exist between female and male students related to motivational factors. The results show that a difference exists in "ought to L2 self". With reference to L2 self, male students have possessed more ought to L2 self in comparison to female student (male=3.602, SD=.7252,

female=3.360, SD=.7475, df=.021 t=2.32, p< .05). This factor is also linked with extrinsic motivational factor. In which someone learn language to get reward and praised by others. Furthermore, there is no significance difference exist between both genders in other factors, namely, "ideal L2 self, L2 learning experience" (p>.05).

**Table 2.** Multiple Regression Analysis of English and Chinese Group

Scales	B value	SE B	B value	Zero-order	Partial value	Part	Significant Value
<b>English language learner group</b>							
L2 Learning Experience	.450	.145	.371	.741	.307	.195	.002
Ideal L2 Self	.245	.107	.216	.633	.231	.144	.024
R <sup>2</sup>	.610						
F for change in R <sup>2</sup>	26.842**						
<b>Chinese language Learner group</b>							
L2 Learning Experience	.150	.025	.013	.041	.171	.195	.210
Ideal L2 Self	.045	.079	.149	.203	.132	.144	.341
R <sup>2</sup>	.039						
F for change in R <sup>2</sup>	2.218						

Standard multiple regression was conducted, in which intended learning effort as a dependent variable and "ideal L2 self, ought to L2 self and L2 learning experience" are the predictors or independent variables. Multiple R for the regression was statistically significant,  $f(6, 99) = 105, p < .001, R^2_{adj} = .610$  indicating that regression model overall predicts the dependent variable significantly well. A significant regression equation was found that the "L2 Learning Experience ideal L2 self" are the significant predictors of criterion measure ( $p < .05$ ). It means that "L2 learning experience and ideal L2 self" are the significant predictors of English language motivation. Independent variables explain 61% of the variation in intended learning effort. In other words, 29% variation in criterion measure/intended learning effort cannot explain by the model listed in the table; therefore, other variables must have an influence on intended learning effort. As far as the Chinese language is concerned, standard multiple regression was conducted, in which intended learning effort as the dependent variable and "ideal L2 self, ought to L2 self, L2 learning experience" as the predictors or independent variables. The multiple regressions were performed to determine the ability of various predictors to forecast the students'

intended learning efforts after the assumptions were checked and met. It is concluding that "Ideal L2 self, ought to l2 self and l2 learning experience" are not the significant predictors of the Chinese language. Multiple R for the regression was statistically significant,  $f(6, 99) = 105, p < .001, R^2_{adj} = .302$  indicating that regression model overall predicts the dependent variable significantly well.

### Findings and Discussion

If we summarize all the results, in the English language group, "L2 learning experience" is the strongest significant motivational factor. "L2 learning experience" is based on the attitude of the learner from the immediate learning environment. We can say that, the power politics, unemployment, social environment and poverty have a strong impact on the process of second language learning either it is English or Chinese. Majority of the students are not willing to learn the Chinese language because they just want to learn the Chinese language because there are multiple projects have been launched in Pakistan with the help of china. They just want to get jobs by learning Chinese language.

The results of this study also show that their teachers put a good effort to learn the English language so that they can learn language effectively and teachers give more lessons on English at school. Students find English interesting while covering their courses and their time runs interestingly. They wait for their English classes, volunteer answers in the classes and enjoy group activities rather than Chinese. In the global context, Lee (2014) has confirmed the validity of “L2 learning experience and ideal L2 self” in various studies. According to him, “L2 learning experience and ideal L2 self” are closely related to dependent variable or intended learning effort rather than of any other motivational factors. In many other studies, “L2 learning experience” has also found a strongest significant predictor of second language motivation, especially where English language is compulsory in academic institutions. “Ideal L2 self” is significantly the third significant contributor to the criterion measure. Keeping in view the learners needs, it is widely accepted that most teacher training programs for foreign and second language teachers need to be designed accordingly as motivation plays the role of soul and body for learners. There is no denying of the fact that, English have a great importance in Pakistani society since long as compare to the Chinese language. The reasons which made it important may be the colonial mentality prevailed in our society and the syllabi which are taught throughout Pakistan. Furthermore, English is deemed mandatory for getting employed not only in Pakistan but out of the country also. The longing for learning English gets manifold provided one is interested in doing something extraordinary living in one's own country or going abroad. Almost all the subjects that are being taught in Pakistan are in English language. Certainly, it is the curricula that necessitate English to be learned. If I relate the current significant result of “ideal L2 self” with previous studies, I found in previous studies that “ideal L2 self” and attitudes towards learning a second language are the strongest motivational contributors to the dependent or criterion measure e.g. [Csizér & Kormos et al., 2009](#). Many learners of English language consider that this language have a great effect on their job opportunities and becomes a reason of a better future in Pakistani perspective.

Lastly, ought to “L2 self”, did not prove a significant contributor construct in English and Chinese language groups. The learners of both languages considered that they are not learning the language to avoid the negative outcomes from their boss, teacher, or any other higher authority. Notably, in previous studies ought to L2 self-do not contain positive results such as, [Islam's \(2013\)](#) and [Papi's \(2010\)](#) found in their studies, that “ought to L2 self” is the lowest contributor construct of L2 motivation rather than “ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience”.

On the other hand, students do not study Chinese to please their parents, friends and society. Chinese is not important to them because of others' compulsion. They opine that it will not leave any bad impact on others if they are not a good learner of Chinese language. They want to learn English just to make themselves its ideal speakers rather than the Chinese language. The results of “ideal L2 self, ought to L2 self and L2 learning experience” show that Dörnyei's model is not proved a significant motivational self-system in the learning of Chinese language motivation. The learners of the Chinese language are less likely to impress their friends, members of the family, colleagues and bosses etc. In addition, the environment does not seem to be quite influential in motivating the students.

## Conclusion

Summing up all the discussion, we see that the L2 motivational self-system seems to be more influencing and significant for English language learners group in comparison to the Chinese language learners group. Literary texts corresponding with “L2 motivational” exercise may use to enhance the motivation among the learners to establish a good relationship between L2 learners and English literary texts.

It might be because of the fact that the Chinese language is comparatively a new language into this region. It is being perceived by the learners as bringing new opportunities in the backdrop of CPEC and related mega projects. While on the other hand, the English language has already a dominant status in the Pakistan and all over the world.

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