L2 Motivation in Higher Education: A Qualitative Study from Egypt

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Abstract

Drawing from mainstream psychology, research in L2 motivation started in 1959 with the work of Gardner and Lambert (1959). Since then, the field witnessed major developments, looking at the language learner's motivation from different angles: the cognitive, the social psychological, and the temporal. One of the models that looks at the language learner from a more holistic perspective is Zoltan Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) (2005, 2009a). The model examines motivation through three components: the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-to Self, and the L2 Learning Experience. Any or all these components can enhance the learner's L2 motivation.

This study explores the factors affecting L2 motivation in university students in Egypt from Dörnyei's theoretical perspective. It uses qualitative methods within an interpretivist/constructivist approach. 20 first-year university students from one higher education institution participated in the study. All participants responded to a qualitative questionnaire which focused on their motivation for English language learning. Subsequently,12 of them agreed to participate in an interview. Data were analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) Thematic Analysis both deductively and inductively. The findings demonstrate that the participants were motivated by all three components of the L2MSS in different levels. Nevertheless, the dominant motivator was the L2 Learning Experience, with special attention to the role of the instructor.

Various elements in the study underpin its significance. First, this study explores L2 motivation using the L2MSS as a model for the first time in a qualitative study in Egypt. Second, the study corroborates recent research exploring the overlap between the Ideal and the Ought-to Selves in the learner's perspectives. Third, this research not only demonstrates the significance of the L2 Learning Experience as a driver for L2 motivation, since it was the least researched component in the model, but also as a factor that can enhance/inhibit the other two components: the Ideal and the Ought-to Selves. The L2 Learning Experience is the dominant motivator according to the findings of the study, and this is supported by the salient role of the instructor. Furthermore, the study highlights the significant role of emotions in reflecting student motivation or demotivation. The findings may help policy makers, curriculum developers and instructors gain a deeper understanding of the different motivators at play in the perception of their students. This in turn can contribute to the creation and development of a better L2 learning environment for the learners.

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Author's Declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

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List of Abbreviations

AMTB	ATTITUDE/MOTIVATION TEST BATTERY
APA	American Psychological Association
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
CAPSCU	Centre for Advancement of Postgraduate and Administrative Reform
CEFR	Common European Framework
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
DMC	Directed Motivation Current
EDD	Doctor of Education
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
FLE	Foreign Language Enjoyment
FLL	Foreign Language Learners
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
L2	Second/foreign Language
L2MSS	L2 Motivational Self System
MOE	Ministry of Education
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TA	Thematic Analysis
TEFL	Teaching English as Foreign Language
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VET	Value-Expectancy Theory

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In my fifteen years of teaching English to university students, I was always fascinated by the diversity of student engagement in the courses. I was constantly keen to know other teachers’ views and to discover whether I was the only one facing this issue. Through the years, I experimented with different techniques to see what gained the attention of the students in class. In almost every class, there were always students who were actively engaged, those who needed some coaxing, and those who were never engaged no matter what I did. Prior to my studies, I did not know that this was an area of research in second language learning. I was not aware that as far back as the 1950s, there were researchers investigating individual differences in second language learning (Gardner and Lambert, 1959). Little did I know that L2 motivation, according to Boo, Dörnyei, and Ryan (2015), is considered the most developed area in the psychology of language learning.

When I first started my Doctor of Education (EdD) studies, I did not settle on a dissertation topic till it was time to draft the proposal. At that time, I was a Coordinator of Remedial English Courses at a university in Egypt, and I was in charge of developing the courses so that they would meet the students’ needs and proficiency levels. Extensive reading led me to a theoretical framework that fulfilled my personal as well as professional interest. I came across Dörnyei’s L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) (2005, 2009b). This was the end of my search for a topic and the start of a new journey of inquiry. It was an opportunity to contribute to the field of language instruction, especially in Egypt.

The literature pertinent to the Egyptian context led to the discovery that there is a gap when it comes to L2MSS in higher education in Egypt. There are studies about e-learning and student motivation in general, not focusing on a certain theory of motivation (e.g., Abou El-Seoud et al., 2013), or about the effect of teaching practices on student motivation (Ali, 2015), again not depending on any theoretical framework. Using a variety of models of motivation such as Pintrich (1989) and Dörnyei’s earlier work (1990), Schmidt, Boraei, and Kassabgy (1996) conducted a study on 1544 adult English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Egyptian language learners to identify intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, attribution of success and failure, and expectations of success among others. Another study targeting adult learners in Egypt (Khalifa et al., 2014) investigated the various effects of an English program in the workplace including motivation. This study did not depend on a specific theoretical framework as well. In the higher education context, Masoud (2019) investigated the effects of flipped learning on senior English major students' motivation to learn, also without referring to a theory of motivation. Drawing on Self-Determination theory of motivation (Deci and Ryan, 1985), Ali (2014) investigated the types of motivation experienced by university students studying English for Specific Purposes (ESP) at a university in Egypt. The results indicated that students were both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to study ESP, and that there were also factors affecting their motivation negatively. Despite an extensive research into the literature, it appears that there are no published studies about L2 motivation in higher education in Egypt that employed the L2MSS as a theoretical framework. If they do exist, they would be unpublished in university libraries across the country, and there is no way to trace them. The significance of the current study thus partly lies in addressing the gap in this area in Egypt, and in forming a basis for future research not only in the Egyptian context, but also in any context where English is seen as a necessity for university studies and future careers.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

Arising from mainstream psychology, theories of L2 motivation underwent three phases (Boo, Dörnyei, and Ryan, 2015). The first phase started with the work of Gardner and Lambert (1959), lasted till the 1990s, and was concerned with motivation from a social psychological perspective. The second phase shifted to cognitive and educational psychology and lasted until the end of the 20th century. The third phase started in the twenty-first century till the present. This phase looked into the contextual and dynamic nature of motivation. The L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009a) belongs to that third phase. It was created by Zoltan Dörnyei to explain motivation in terms of individual differences, incorporating theories from psychology, namely possible selves theory (Markus and Nurius, 1986) and self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987). It is also influenced by Gardner's socio-educational model of L2 motivation (Gardner, 1979, 1985, 2010). The L2MSS proposes that when the language learner perceives a gap between their current state and the desired self, the learner becomes motivated to bridge this gap (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009).

The L2MSS consists of three components: the Ideal L2 Self, the L2 Ought-to Self, and the Learning Experience. The Ideal and Ought-to Selves are two forms of the learners' future selves. The Ideal L2 Self is the desired future self of the learner. For Dörnyei (2009a), it 'can act as a potent self-guide, with considerable motivational power' (p. 17). However, there are criteria for the Ideal Self to be effective and motivating (Ryan and Dörnyei, 2013). First, the future self should be feasible so that people can be expected to exert effort towards achieving it. Second, the self must be in harmony with current social norms. Third, the goal should be challenging enough so that it is not too easy to achieve. Finally, the Ideal Self should be activated on a regular basis in order to have an impact on the learner. The Ought-to Self is the future self when driven by obligations such as family or career aspirations. The Learning Experience, on the other hand, is related to the situational aspect of motivation, such as the teacher, the curriculum, and peers. This component of the L2MSS was the least researched one (Al-Hoorie, 2018) and is yet considered the strongest predictor of motivation (Teimouri, 2017), as will be demonstrated in this study. The findings of the current study mark another contribution to the field of research on the L2MSS in the attention it gives to this component of the model, with particular reference to the Egyptian context.

Both the Ideal and Ought-to Selves are related to the theory of possible selves, whereas the Learning Experience is more related to the learning context (Martinović, 2018), which started to gain attention in motivational research in the 1990s (Dörnyei, 2003a). The educational context is course-based (such as the relevance of materials and interest in tasks), teacher-based (such as personality, teaching style, and behaviour), and group-based (group norms and cohesiveness), all of which are mentioned under the L2 Learning Experience proposed in the model. The L2MSS thus looks at motivation from different angles, which can render in-depth findings, since it looks at the learner without disengaging the language learner from the person (Ryan and Dörnyei, 2013). The model goes beyond the social psychological and cognitive outlooks to motivation to create a more holistic view at the affective, situational, and cognitive angles all at once (Ushioda, 2012). This holistic view made it the most appropriate theoretical framework for my study.

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

My research had multiple aims on the personal, professional, and academic levels. On the personal level, this study satisfied my curiosity about student motivation as I mentioned in the first part of this chapter. It shed light on the perceptions of English language learners at the university level regarding their motivation. The L2MSS provided an insight into student L2 motivation on three levels: 'the internal desires' of the L2 learner, the 'social pressures' imposed on the learner, and the 'actual experience of being engaged in the learning process' (Dörnyei, 2009b, p. 18). These three angles encompass both the learner's cognition and affect, two elements that are in constant interaction with motivation (Dörnyei, 2014a). When participants reveal their perceptions, they also give the researcher a glimpse into the various emotions driving their engagement in the English courses. This study aimed to investigate whether emotions were ingrained in the perceptions of the participants when they talked about their motivational drivers. I intended for the study to direct me in my future endeavours to better understand the drivers of L2 motivation in Egyptian students. This research may be considered a milestone but is by no means the end of the journey.

Ushioda (2013) states that motivation is currently a priority for education policy makers because of the unique status of the English language on the international level in the era of globalisation. At the same time, learning English may have become an obligation due to the pressure on the students to learn and keep up to date with the rest of the world. Egypt adopted the American credit-hour system in many of its universities for various reasons among which are its flexibility and the fact that English is the main language of communication (Regel, 1992). Hence, English is a compulsory subject in Egyptian higher education institutions (HEI) that follow that system in Egypt, where English is the medium of instruction. Similar to the Saudi context, the proficiency level and academic skills obtained from schools do not lead to successful students in the academic setting of higher education where English is also the main language of communication (Martino, 2013). Motivation becomes an important issue to consider with the realisation that without it, even good curricula and instruction are not sufficient to ensure that students are engaged in learning (Dörnyei, 2018). Hence on the professional level, the three components of the L2MSS (the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-to L2 Self, and the Learning Experience) present a well-rounded outlook on L2 motivation because they combine the cognitive and the situational aspects of motivation. Understanding the interplay between these three elements can help instructors and course designers (myself included) to work on developing their work by combining theory and practice. Understanding the cognitive and situational aspects of L2 motivation can be used to support the design of lesson plans and activities inside the classroom to increase student engagement.

On the academic level, this study is bridging the gap by introducing the L2MSS to the Egyptian higher education context. For international researchers in the field, the study introduces them to Dörnyei's model in the Egyptian context from an interpretive perspective. As I mentioned earlier, this study is significant in its introduction of the L2MSS in the Egyptian research context. Furthermore, it is a study grounded in practice and focuses on the students' perceptions while looking at L2 motivation. It is also contributing to the body of research, as it draws important attention to the L2 Learning Experience in the L2MSS as a significant driver of L2 motivation.

1.4 Research Questions

The aim of the research is to understand the factors affecting L2 motivation in a HEI in Egypt. I posed three research questions to achieve this aim. The English courses in this study are both Remedial English courses (B1 and B2 in the Common European Framework (CEFR)). If the student's placement test results place them in the first course (ENGL003), the second course will also be obligatory for them. If the scores place them in the second course, then only this course (ENGL004) is obligatory for them. Both courses are non-credit, however, they are mandatory to pass in order to graduate. It becomes important for the teacher to understand what drives students' L2 motivation and what affects this motivation. These factors can be internal (Ideal/Ought-to Self) or external (Learning Experience). If the drivers are internal, the teacher will benefit from understanding them and can work on creating and/or enhancing their Ideal L2

Self. If the drivers are external, then the teacher will benefit from knowing how different aspects of the learning environment can have a positive impact on the learner. Thus, my first question is:

RQ1. What enhances students' L2 motivation from their own perspective in this particular context?

As I explain more fully in Chapter 2, learning English in Egypt has gone through various developments, and the different types of primary and secondary schools in Egypt offer different types of language education. Egyptian students do not receive the same quality or even the same curriculum in English if they are taught in private language schools, for example, where English is taught from kindergarten. I wanted to know if the participants' previous Learning Experience in school had an impact on their motivation to learn English at the university, and whether it had a negative or a positive effect. Hence, my second research question is:

RQ2. What are the effects of previous language learning experiences before college?

Finally, understanding the drivers of L2 motivation cannot be complete without also knowing the motivational constraints. I was interested to know if some of the motivational drivers for some participants might be constraints for others. On the other hand, understanding the motivational constraints in a particular educational context might offer insight into how to address issues arising within the classroom which might adversely affect the learner's motivation and, hence, engagement in the language classroom. Demotivation in L2 learning, according to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2012), stems from external factors, but in other scholars' view (Sakai and Kikuchi, 2009), it can arise from internal as well as external factors. Internal factors can include negative attitudes towards the L2, as well as issues with self-confidence, whereas external factors can include the teacher, the curriculum, or the institutional facilities. This leads to the third research question:

RQ3. What are the constraints affecting students' L2 motivation?

It is noteworthy that the L2MSS is subjective and is not necessarily correlated with achievement. That is to say, it corresponds more to intended effort, which may not necessarily be mirrored in course results or proficiency (Al-Hoorie, 2018). Therefore, the study is fundamentally an attempt to interpret this subjective aspect of motivation in the form of student perceptions. Moreover, this study is based on the belief that motivation is a dynamic, temporal process (Ryan and Dörneyei, 2013). Levels of motivation may vary through time. The study gathered the perceptions of the participants both retrospectively and during their Learning Experience, to get as wide a perspective as possible.

1.5 Dissertation Outline

The dissertation is divided into nine chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction to the study. It provides a basic overview of the theoretical framework, the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the dissertation outline.

Chapter 2 outlines the educational context in Egypt as well as the research context. The purpose of this chapter is to link the study to its wider context. Thus, it includes information about the different type of pre-tertiary education in Egypt, higher education in Egypt, and the history of English language learning in both stages.

Chapter 3 provides a literature review of the different significant theories of motivation that in turn influenced L2 theories of motivation. The chapter moves on to discuss the development of L2 motivation theories, with a special focus on the L2MSS. It further discusses different empirical studies dealing with the L2MSS. Furthermore, there is a highlight on the scarcity of literature on the L2MSS in the Middle East and specially in Egypt, hence the research gap and the significance of the current study.

Chapter 4 moves on to the research methodology and methods. Finding answers to the research questions above, I deemed it necessary to take an interpretivist/constructivist approach. This is an empirical study based on an interpretivist/constructivist paradigm. I aligned myself to Lincoln and Guba's

(2013) constructivist approach. Accordingly, this study is subjective and does not aim to provide any generalisation about L2 motivation whether in higher education in general, although there may be findings which resonate with practitioners both in Egypt and in the wider L2 teaching and learning context. 20 participants from a HEI in Greater Cairo responded to the questionnaires, and 12 of them agreed to take part in an interview with me. For data analysis, I chose Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The data were analysed both deductively and inductively to investigate perceptions that may go beyond the L2MSS but would still demonstrate drivers for L2 motivation in this study. The data were coded both manually then using Atlas.ti.

Chapters 5 to 8 are dedicated to the analysis and discussion of the findings. Chapter 5 focuses on the possible selves of the participants. It analyses the Ideal and Ought-to Selves and emphasises the complexity of L2 motivation and the possible overlapping between the Ideal and Ought-to Selves. Chapter 6 tackles the difference between the Learning Experience of the participants at their schools prior to their university language education and their current L2 Learning Experience. Chapter 7 is dedicated to the role of the instructor, who is part of the Learning Experience but appears to be a dominant motivator in this research context. Finally, Chapter 8 ends the data analysis by examining the interplay between the different motivational constraints faced by the participants.

Chapter 9 provides a final overview of the study and discusses its limitations, provides recommendations for enhancing L2 motivation in Egyptian students, discusses the implications of the findings and concludes the dissertation.

1.6 Conclusion

In this introductory chapter I identified a gap in the Egyptian context pertaining to the L2MSS, and I aimed to fill this gap using the model as a framework within which to explore students' L2 motivation through a qualitative study. My purpose was to understand the drivers affecting L2 motivation at a higher education institution in Egypt as perceived by first-year students. Findings were analysed both inductively under the L2MSS as a theoretical framework, and deductively, using TA. In the following chapter I turn my attention to the educational context in Egypt, with special reference to English language learning. In addition, I will introduce the research context, discussing both the university and the courses under study.

Chapter 2 The Egyptian Context

2.1 Introduction

My research aims to understand the different L2 motivational drivers in a higher education institution in Egypt, employing Dörnyei's (2005, 2009b) L2MSS, looking at the students' future selves (Ideal and Ought-to Selves) as well as their L2 Learning Experience. Although the Learning Experience focuses on the immediate situational aspect of L2 learning, the learners' previous experience with English language education may have an impact on the present learning one. Understanding the educational context in Egypt helps in understanding the participants' educational background. This context also clarifies the changing role of English language education and education policy in Egypt. Reviewing the changing policies and outlooks regarding English language learning in Egypt provides a backdrop for the current study.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview on the educational context in Egypt, with special reference to English language learning. The first section of the chapter provides a background on pre-university education in Egypt (**2.2**). This is followed by an overview of higher education in the country (**2.3**). Then I discuss the history of English language learning and policy reforms, highlighting the role of EFL in both pre-tertiary (**2.4**) and tertiary education (**2.5**). The following section focuses on the research context (**2.6**). The concluding section (**2.7**) sums up the chapter.

2.2 Pre-University Education in Egypt

According to the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), the population of Egypt in 2020 has exceeded 100 million people, 20 million of which live in Greater Cairo (CAPMAS, 2020). Such population growth entailed a pressure on the Egyptian government to accommodate the rising number of students. The number of students in primary schools rose from 9.6 million in 2005 to 12.2 million in 2017. The number of enrolled students in the secondary stage rose from 6.7 million in 2009 to 8.9 million in 2015 (Mohamed, Skinner, and Trines, 2019).

2.3 Types of Schools in Egypt

There are several types of school education in Egypt. There is the national education system which is overseen by the Ministry of Education (MOE), and the foreign education system, or international schools. The schools offering the national education system are public schools, private schools, and experimental schools. The general public schools are government institutions, with low tuition fees and the majority of the subjects are taught in Arabic. Private schools are privately owned and subjects like Science and Maths are taught in English or French. Experimental schools are governmental schools but similar to the private schools in their educational provision. Currently, there are 49000 government schools, 7000 private schools, and 750 experimental schools in the country (Mohamed, Skinner, and Trines, 2019). In 2016, a partnership between Egypt and Japan resulted in opening Japanese schools in Egypt, incorporating both the Egyptian and Japanese educational systems, with 35 Egyptian Japanese schools operating in 21 governorates (State Information Service, 2019). Finally, there are around 100 international schools working under foreign curricula, mainly British, American, French, and German (Mohamed, Skinner, and Trines, 2019). These schools cater to both Egyptian citizens and expatriates. In the current study, only one participant had an international education. The rest of the participants were in national schools (government, private, and experimental).

2.4 Higher Education in Egypt

Egypt has a long history of higher education. It is home to the oldest still-running university in the world, Al-Azhar University, established in 998 A.D. (EACEA, 2017). Currently, higher education is provided through several types of institutions: universities (public, private, and non-profit), higher specialised institutes, technical colleges, middle institutes, upper middle institutes, and academies. For the context of my study, I will focus only on university education. Public universities are owned and funded by the government, private universities are owned privately, and non-profit universities are either state-run or private. According to EACEA (2017), in 2015 Egypt had 54 universities, 23 public universities, Al-Azhar University, 19 private universities, and 11 universities with mixed-status, either non-profit or foreign institutions.

The number of university students is increasing exponentially each year. In 2017-2018 the number of students enrolled in universities reached 2.3 million (CAPMAS, 2019). In an attempt to address this issue as well as improve the status of higher education and scientific research, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (2019) published the *National Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2030*. The report states the intention to create new programs and encourage the establishment of private universities. As part of a US$5.87 billion higher education plan, the government recently established 4 new universities (Sawahel, 2014). In addition, 8 new international university branch campuses are being established in the New Administrative Capital near Cairo (*Egypt Independent*, 2019). Finally, in 2020 the government pledged 30 billion EGP to fund the establishment of 10 new universities across the country (Abdel Nasser, 2020).

University admission depends mainly on the results of the *Thanwya Ama* scores (the secondary school leaving examination), which is a high-stakes exam and a major admission criterion in both public and private sectors. According to the OECD and the World Bank (2010), this dependence on *Thanwya Ama* scores leads to inequality in higher education access since the difference in results may underlie differences in access to private tutoring, family circumstances, and school quality. After their graduation, secondary school students are distributed among the universities by the University Coordination Office of the Ministry of Higher Education which takes into consideration the students' choices for majors, the total number of graduates, and the available slots in the universities according to the geographical distribution. Each student fills in a list of universities they wish to join, and the University Coordination office makes the final choice. Private institutions can have their own admission criteria as long as they adhere to the minimum scores for admission set by the Ministry of Higher Education each year (EACEA, 2017).

2.5 English Language Education in Egypt

Kachru (1992) divides the sociolinguistic profile of English into three concentric circles: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle, and the Expanding Circle. The Inner Circle refers to the traditional contexts where English is the first language. The Outer Circle refers to the countries which were colonized by English-speaking countries for an extended period of time. The Expanding Circle refers to countries which use English but in a foreign language context. Egypt, according to Kachru (1992) falls under the Expanding circle, making English as an EFL rather than an ESL. However, Schaub (2000) considers Egypt as part of the Outer Circle, since, aside from religion, 'English has found a significant role in the popular culture of Egypt, as manifested in advertising, television, clothing, and music' (p. 225), turning it to a second language rather than a foreign one. This reflects the sociolinguistic perspective in recent times in Egypt. In education, English language learning has taken various turns before having English emerge as the dominant second/foreign language.

Although English was introduced in Egyptian education under the British Occupation (1882-1922), English was not meant to be accessible to all the Egyptians. It was only offered in the elite schools, and it was not a language of instruction, but was just one of the subjects (Cochran, 2008). Only missionary schools attended by the children of Europeans, or rich Egyptians, and some science colleges offered English as the language of instruction (Ibrahim and Ibrahim 2003). The 1952 revolution made education more accessible to the people. English was abolished in primary education but was obligatory in preparatory and secondary stages. More students gained access to higher education and English education (Aboulhassan and Mayer, 2016). This expansion, however, had a negative effect on the general quality of education in Egypt, and consequently to English education (Abdel Latif, 2017). While Nasser's era (1954-1970) encouraged public education, Anwar Sadat's (1970-1981) encouraged private education. As part of the new open-door policy which encouraged foreign investment, more people were driven to private education which offered more English instruction. According to Cochran (2008), graduates of private schools at that time gained better jobs than those of public schools, because they had a better and longer English education. Nevertheless, English did not return to primary education in governmental schools until the 1990s. There has been an increasing awareness of the role of English as the lingua franca and the Egyptian government is increasingly paying attention to English language education (El-Fiki, 2012). Currently it is a core subject in all stages of pre-university education, and it is the medium of instruction in private and experimental schools (Abdel Latif, 2017).

In 1993, English was re-introduced to primary education in public schools in two phases. First, it was introduced at the fourth primary year (Grade 4) then in 2003 it became an obligatory subject from the first primary year, which in turn had a direct implication on the demand for English teachers (Abdel Latif, 2017). Before the 1980s, the government used to accept graduates from non-English majors such as history, geography, and tourism because there were not enough English-major graduates, and on the basis that these majors receive some form of English education in college. As compensation for the lack of teaching qualification, the Ministry of Education offered these teachers short training courses. With the increasing demand for English teachers after the re-introduction of the subject to primary schools, faculties of education started to be established and English-major graduates gradually replaced those teachers until it has recently become a requirement to have a qualification for teaching English (Abdel Latif, 2017).

In addition, there were several reforms in the English language curricula in schools, moving to a more communicative approach and the required textbooks were updated accordingly. In *The National English Language Curriculum Framework Grades 1–12* (2012) the Ministry of Education pledged its reform plans to 'providing high quality education for all, as a basic human right', with a realisation that 'the confidence to communicate effectively in speaking, listening, reading and writing English… will enable them to participate actively in a global society' (p. 4). However, according to Abdel Latif (2012) in a study conducted in the secondary education context, the participant teachers reported that they were not able to teach speaking and writing activities within a communicative approach because they had a large number of students and the students' prior non-communicative style of learning did not improve their levels enough to participate in such activities. El-Fiki (2012) notes that English language instruction in Egypt in general is characterised by a teacher-centred approach. Another issue that is overshadowing education in Egypt in general and secondary education in particular is private tutoring. In secondary education, 80% of the students are enrolled in year-long private tutoring (Sobhy, 2012). These are some issues which have had negative implications on the quality of English language learning in the country. They also have implications on English language learning at the university level.

The changing dynamics of education policies in Egypt and the challenges facing attempts at reforms indicate that English learning in Egypt has not enjoyed a sense of stability or reached the desired outcomes till now mainly at the level of government education, which includes the majority of students in Egypt. This is reflected in this study in the impact of the participants' Learning Experience prior to their higher education experience as discussed in the findings in Chapter 6. Despite the varying degrees of attention to the importance of language education in the era of globalisation and the reforms aiming at providing high quality language education, there are still problems in the implementation and practice, particularly at the school level.

2.6 English Language Education in Higher Education in Egypt

There is a gap in literature regarding the policies of English language learning at the university level in Egypt, despite the existing literature on language policies at the pre-university levels. This could be attributed to the fact that there is not a unified policy for English language learning in higher education. According to the Law on Regulation of Universities and its Regulations (Law no. 49-Year 1972), each Dean and Faculty department in a university is in charge of designing the curriculum and the content of its courses, and English is no exception (Ministry of Higher Education, 2006). Thus, there is no regulation for English learning at the university level in Egypt. Each university designs its own English language program, with its content and material.

Nevertheless, the importance of learning English in Egyptian universities is recognized and emphasised on more than one level. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2008) identifies English as a desired competency for professional capacity building frameworks. Accordingly, there is an awareness that proficiency in English can allow for better job opportunities in the era of globalisation (Erling and Seargeant, 2013), emphasising the significance of English in higher education on the global level. One of the initiatives aiming at reforming higher education through capacity building in Egypt is Pathway-Egypt, a project aiming to provide soft skills for underprivileged undergraduates in Egypt (Khalifa et al., 2015). Among these soft skills are English language skills for teachers and students. This project is funded by Ford Foundation and managed by the Centre for Advancement of Post Graduate Studies in Cairo University (CAPSCU). Furthermore, the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Reform (2014) in its *Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development in Egypt 2030* promises to adopt the Common European Framework for learning and teaching English in Egyptian education as well as to create a National Foreign Language Policy. Finally, there is an initiative to teach English courses to all faculties regardless of the major of study in an effort from the Supreme Council of Higher Education in Egypt to prepare students for the workplace by enhancing their English language skills (Shaaban, 2017).

2.7 Research Context

The University: The research site is a relatively newly founded, research-oriented university for science and technology in Egypt. The university aims at attracting high-achieving students in Egyptian secondary education. According to its brochures, the university provides a friendly environment for the students to interact with the faculty staff and to practice scientific research from an early stage in their education. The institution has several admission exams in addition to the *Thanwya Ama* scores. One of the admission tests is English, which places the student based on the scores of this test. The test evaluates the student's proficiency in the four skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). Based on the results of this test, the student may be placed in one of the two Remedial English courses, which are non-credit bearing and do not add to the GPA. If the student's proficiency is high (advanced), then the student is eligible to take one of the two obligatory credit-based advanced courses which address scientific writing, and communication skills:

Figure 2-1 The structure of the English Language Program at the University under Study

The Courses: The two Remedial Courses (ENGL003, ENGL004) address the four skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The purpose of the ENGL003 course is to enhance students' writing and speaking skills using an integrated skills approach whereby the listening and reading skills are developed to assist in academically expressing their ideas in oral and written forms. ENGL004, on the other hand, aims at developing students' speaking and writing productive skills within an integrated pedagogical approach. It trains students to look at different topics from various perspectives leading to a more advanced way of organizing ideas and writing about them in a structured and coherent way. It enhances critical reading to cater for academic writing. Students will enhance their listening skills to foster better speaking skills through engaging in general discussions, role plays, and presentations.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter was a brief overview of the educational context in Egypt. It started by explaining the types of school education, followed by the types of HEIs. After that, I highlighted the history of English language learning in the country, and the significance of the English language for the job market in Egypt. The last part placed the research context in the wider one explained earlier. English language learning in Egypt is diverse and is the subject of debate regarding teaching methodology and student proficiency. In the scope of this study, it is noteworthy to understand that participants come from different English language education backgrounds since they come from different schools. What is mentioned regarding the quality of English language taught in schools might be useful when I discuss the participants' previous L2 Learning Experience in their schools and how this might impact their L2 motivation (Chapter 6). The following chapter is dedicated to the literature review in terms of the theoretical framework and previous studies on the L2MSS.

Chapter 3 Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

The aim of my study is to gain an understanding of the drivers of L2 motivation for university students in an Egyptian HEI. Basing it on the interpretive/constructivist paradigm and using qualitative methods, I explored student perceptions of the factors affecting their motivation to learn English in their institution. I chose Dörnyei's L2MSS (2005, 2009a) as the theoretical framework. The previous chapter introduced the context of the study, giving an overview of higher education in Egypt and the development of policies shaping English language learning. Moreover, I provided background information about the research context and the research site.

This chapter explores the literature pertinent to the study. I divide it into four main parts. I start with an overview of the significant theories of motivation that prevailed in mainstream psychology and influenced L2 motivation theories, and on which the L2MSS was built (**3.2**). Next, I focus on the L2 motivation theories tracing the development of the field up to the L2MSS (**3.3**). Then, I explain the L2MSS as the reference upon which I prepared my study (**3.4**). Finally, I mention in brief the subsequent theories in L2 motivation research to show the recent updates in the field (**3.5**).

3.2 Theoretical Underpinnings

As mentioned previously in Chapter 1, educators are concerned with questions related to the drivers of a better Learning Experience for the students. One of these drivers is motivation which investigates 'why people behave as they do' (Dörnyei, 2014a, p. 519). Thus, understanding motivation in education entails an interest to find out why students want to learn, what drives them to learn or refrain from learning. In this section, I give an overview of four major theories of motivation that are integral in research regarding motivation in education in different stages. Their influence is widespread also in the field of language learning. The four theories are Self Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985), Expectancy-Value Theory (Eccles-Parsons et al., 1983), the ARCS Model Approach (Keller, 1984), and Attribution Theory (Weiner, 1972, 1974). They are all insightful in demonstrating that understanding the educational experience requires an understanding of the cognitive, psychological, and social aspects of the learner, all of which are influential in understanding the L2MSS and the current study.

3.2.1 Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory was postulated by Deci and Ryan (1985) and is still one of the most influential theories in the field. They identified different levels of motivation, amotivation being at one end of the spectrum, where the person 'feels no impetus or inspiration to act' (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p. 54) and the intrinsically motivated person who is 'freely engaged out of interest without the necessity of separable consequences' (Deci and Ryan, 2000, p. 233) at the other. Between these two extremes there are other types of motivation. Next to amotivation there is controlled regulation, where the person is motivated to work out of 'a sense of being seduced or coerced into doing the behaviour without a sense of choice about doing it' (Deci and Ryan, 2010, p. 1). Next comes introjection which rises within the person but only out of feelings arising from external forces such as feelings of shame and guilt. Moving more towards intrinsic motivation is identification. This happens when the person identifies with a certain value (i.e., going on a diet because it is healthier). Finally, the 'most complete form of internalization of extrinsic motivation' (Deci and Ryan, 2000, p. 236) is integration, which involves not only identifying with a certain value, but also integrating it within the self.

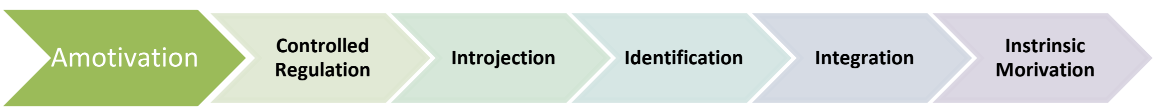

Figure 3-1 Levels of Motivation (adapted from Deci and Ryan, 2000)

This theory is used widely in different educational contexts, proving that students who are intrinsically motivated perform better than those who are extrinsically motivated and that there are elements that can be applied in the learning situation that can improve intrinsic motivation in learners (Deci et al., 1991). Various studies have linked autonomous motivation to academic achievement (González et al., 2012; Wormington, Corpus, and Anderson, 2012; Vansteenkiste et al., 2009; and Meens et al., 2008). Other studies were further conducted to link amotivation with low academic achievement (Taylor et al., 2014) and yet others traced motivation in students over time. For instance, Ratelle et al. (2004) examined the level of motivation of college students during their first two years of college. Their findings indicated that students' intrinsic motivation increased with time, just as their controlled regulation decreased. Finally, Kyndt et al. (2015) studied student motivation during the transition from high school to university. They found that while autonomous motivation increased during the university years, it had already started during the last years of high school. The significance of the theory lies in its distinction between internal and external drivers of motivation. This idea is further explored in other theories mentioned in this chapter. The link to the L2MSS is explored in section (**3.4**).

3.2.2 Value-Expectancy Theory (VET)

Another theory used profusely in the educational context to measure achievement motivation is value-expectancy theory (Eccles-Parsons et al., 1983). This theory postulates that the expectancies and values held by people are affected by their beliefs about their abilities, goals, how much they value the activity, as well as how difficult they perceive the task to be. The value-expectancy is linked to Ryan and Deci's (1985) concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as factors influencing values. The more people enjoy the activity, the more value they are likely to put on it. In their analysis of several longitudinal studies targeting primary and junior school students, Wigfield and Eccles (2000) conclude that children's values and beliefs about their abilities declined along the years till early adolescence. They note that there can be two explanations for this. Either the feedback they receive gives them a more realistic picture of their abilities, or the competitive school is responsible for that change. Not only does VET help in explaining children's perceived values, but it is also used in higher education. For instance, Cooper, Ashley, and Bronwen (2017) employed the theory to understand university students' experience with active learning with 25 first-year biology students. The findings revealed that the participants perceived an increased value from the active Learning Experience. Such insights can be significant in understanding how learners perceive elements of their educational experience and how schools and universities can work on enhancing and maintaining these expectancies and abilities. The theory is important in understanding the value of the Ideal L2 Self in promoting L2 motivation.

3.2.3 The ARCS Model Approach

The third motivational construct discussed in this section is influential in the field of education because it was intended for increasing and strategizing motivational instruction (Keller,1987). The ARCS model of instruction design (Keller, 1984) consists of four elements: **Attention** through arousing and maintaining the learner's attention; the **Relevance** of the content of instruction to the learner; increasing the **Confidence** of the learner that success is possible with the necessary effort; and **Satisfaction** to make the students feel good about their knowledge and progress. Under these components there are strategies for achieving them. Keller (1987) confirms that this model was tested and validated since its inception in different instructional components and various places. Using the ARCS model, Zhang's (2017) study designed a micro-lecture platform in the field of civil engineering. Showing the statistical differences between the experimental class and the regular one indicated that the participants in the first class displayed a greater learning interest, knowledge mastery, active learning, and knowledge consolidation. The model was also studied in the field of EFL in different countries like Turkey (Kurt and Keçik, 2017), indicating an increased motivation to learn English after designing courses based on the model. This theory has a significant relevance to my study because it links motivation to instruction. Chapter 7 explores ways in which the instructor can have a positive role in influencing L2 motivation for the participants.

3.2.4 Attribution Theory

The final theory mentioned in this section which holds a prominence in the field of L2 education in addition to other educational aspects is attribution theory. Though the theory started with the work of Fritz Heider (1958), it is Weiner's (1972, 1974, 1979, 1980,1986, 1992) significant work that put it into the spotlight. According to Weiner (1979), for individuals to explain their success or failure, they assess their level of ability, the expended effort, the degree of the difficulty of the work, and luck. Later, Weiner (1985) added some more attributions: typical effort, immediate effort, and mood. Then there are three dimensions to these determinants of achievement: locus, stability, and controllability. Locus refers to the internal and external factors of achievement. Stability indicates whether a cause is changeable or not. Control refers to whether people have control over the cause or not. For instance, luck is external and uncontrollable.

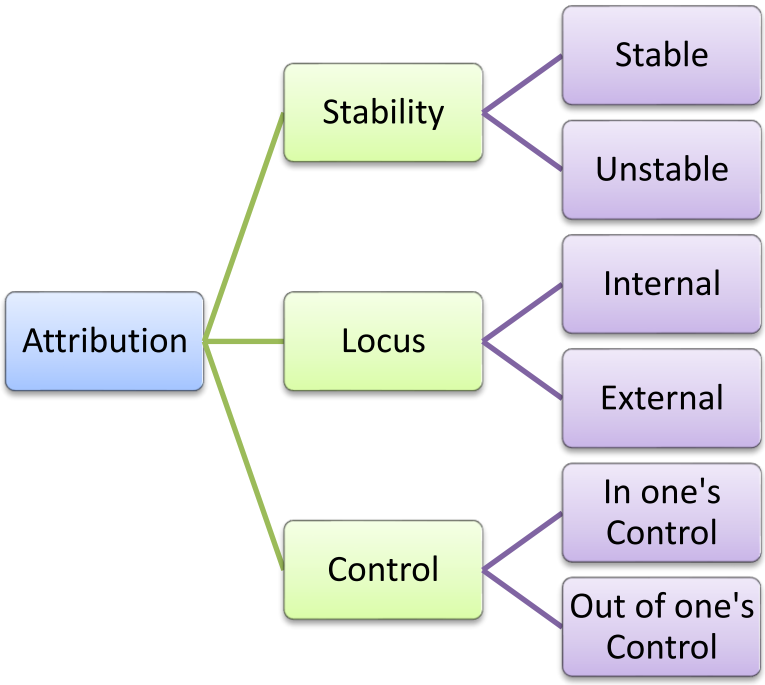

Figure 3-2 Attribution Theory Adapted from Weiner (1985)

Attribution is subjective. It portrays the perceptions of people. Hsieh (2012) remarks that if students realize that their effort is the cause of their success, they expect to do well in their tasks since they realize that these efforts will pay off. On the other hand, if they attribute their failure to their inability, they will tend to avoid similar tasks in the future. Finally, attribution theory pays close attention to affect, which will be discussed further in the coming section in this chapter, since emotions inevitably arise out of achievement or lack thereof. Weiner (1979) discusses this issue in detail. He mentions that there are three sources of affect. The first one is the direct result of achievement. One feels good or bad as a result of one’s achievement or lack of it. Second, there are emotions that go side by side with the first source, such as feelings of hostility or gratitude. The third source is related to the person's self-esteem, such as shame, pride, or humiliation, and it is these emotions that can either encourage or discourage a person from pursuing future activities. Hence, studying attribution in language learning is essential because there is an interest in the subjective perceptions of the language learner which is closely related to such concepts as language anxiety and the L2MSS discussed later in the chapter. In addition, emotions play a significant role as drivers for L2 motivation in my study as I will show in Chapters 5,6, and 8.

Since attributions are subjective, studies conducted to investigate them in L2 learning settings render diverse results. For instance, Bouchaib, Ahmadou, and Abdelkader (2018) found that the attributions of success in EFL are external (the teacher and classroom atmosphere) followed by internal factors (ability, interest, effort, and strategy) in Moroccan high school students. Genç (2016) found that participants attributed their success in the language class to internal factors, such as interest, while failure was attributed to external factors, such as luck. González (2016) revealed different attributions regarding language learning such as the first language, exposure to the language as well as the physical and emotional state of the learner. As my own results will show in Chapter 7, the role of the teacher appears to play a significant role in the motivation of the students.

This section of the chapter serves to indicate the increasing importance placed on investigating motivation in education for different purposes and in different contexts. It provides the background to which L2 motivation has developed, and which helps to explain why studying L2 motivation from different angles is of essential value. The four models and theories show that in order to understand and attempt to increase the level of motivation in the students, it is important to understand the interplay of psychological/cognitive and social aspects of the learner in addition to the educational setting, i.e., the curriculum, university, learning modes, etc. All these aspects are intertwined and together can affect the level of motivation of the learner. The intertwining strands of motivation will be unpicked and discussed in the findings' chapters (5 to 8). The next section takes this idea further, focusing on motivation and L2 learning.

3.3 Motivation and Language Learning

Motivation in language learning can be said to have started with the work of Gardner and Lambert (1959). Since then, several theories and concepts have emerged to explain the drivers of motivation for language learners. In this section, I trace the development of various key theories of L2 motivation and the differences between them, following a chronological order whenever possible. In order to stay within the limits of the word count of the dissertation, I will focus solely on the theories and concepts of L2 motivation that are relevant to my study.

3.3.1 Socio-educational theory of motivation

Motivation is one of the significant elements that distinguishes between first and second language acquisition since the speaker learns a first language for basic communication, whereas for the second/foreign language it is not necessarily essential (Ushioda, 2013). Attention to L2 motivation started in Canada in 1959 when Gardner and Lambert investigated L2 motivation in the Canadian bilingual high school setting (Ushioda and Dörnyei, 2012). They identified two kinds of L2 motivation from a sociocultural perspective: integrative and instrumental. Integrative motivation relates to the learner's desire to integrate within the L2-speaking community, by ‘adopting certain behaviour patterns’ similar to theirs, including communicating in the target language (Gardner and Lambert, 1959, p. 267). Instrumental motivation happens when the learner is extrinsically motivated to learn the language, for example for work or for an opportunity to study abroad. Their study involved forty-three high school students learning French. The findings indicated that integrative motivation played a bigger role in student achievement than instrumental motivation.

This theory set the tone for language motivation research for the following two decades (Ushioda, 2012), with varying results. For instance, contrary to Gardner and Lambert’s results, Lukmani’s (1972) study conducted in India, also in a high-school setting with sixty female students, revealed that integrative motivation may not play such a big role in the students’ overall motivation to learn a language, especially in a country that was colonized by speakers of that language. The students rated the importance of learning English in ten categories, ranging from finding a job, and a better understanding of college subjects to the ability to read literature and academic journals. Only the last two showed their desire to integrate themselves with English-speaking Indians: to be able to make friends with them, and to act and think like them.

The integrative model of L2 motivation was very influential for various theories that came after it, such as Schumann's (1978) acculturation model, Clément's (1980) social context model, and Giles and Byrne's (1982) intergroup model, all of which played on the concept of integrativeness (Ushioda, 2012). Nevertheless, the notion of integrativeness has been a cause of much debate in the literature. It was first criticized by Crooks and Schmidt (1991). To them, it was time to move on from the socio-educational model because it focuses more on the sociological aspect of motivation than it does on motivation itself as a construct. It also did not measure motivation in correlation to achievement. It was criticized by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2012) when they drew attention to the fact that most studies showed that a desire for integration came with an underpinning of instrumental motivation, which puts the distinction between the two types into question. Kim (2009) and Lamb (2003) note that integrative motivation is no longer applicable in the era of globalization, since English is no longer the language of a specific nation but is the international language of communication, international relations, entertainment, fashion, travel, among others. Another point raised by Dörnyei (1990) is that integrative motivation will render a different construct for foreign language learners (FLL) since they are not learning in the L2 community. He notes that integrative motivation for the FLLs will entail an interest in the foreign language and culture, a wish to expand one's views, a wish to engage in new challenges and a wish to integrate with the L2 community, which in the end rather fall under instrumental motivation and this creates an overlap between the two.

Ushioda (2009) further stresses that the notion of integrativeness focuses on the individual rather than the culture or the society. The idea enforces the separation between the individual and the outer world, so that integrating oneself to the L2 community comes from within the individual. Hence, her alternative model is the person-in-context, which does not separate the individual from the outer elements affecting the Learning Experience, the 'self-reflective intentional agent, and the fluid and complex system of social relations, activities, experiences and multiple micro- and macro-contexts' surrounding this person (p. 220). Another argument is Woodrow's (2012) claim that all language learners would have an integrative motivation to learn the language, so there is nothing to distinguish it from other types of motivation.

Gardner himself addresses this issue and elaborates on the concept of integrative motivation. He defines integrative motivation as the sum of integrativeness, attitudes towards the learning situation, minus language anxiety (Gardner, 2012). According to this formula, two students can score the same but for different reasons. In his book (1985) he deals with a host of literature addressing his socio-educational model, and in response to various points of criticism, he replies that one needs to distinguish between the integrative orientation and the integrative motive. Integrative orientation includes the reasons one wishes to learn the language, whereas the integrative motive is the sum of orientation and motivation. Hence, in reply to Lukmani's (1972) study in India mentioned above, he states that the results addressed the integrative orientation and not the integrative motive. In a further defence, Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) assert that Gardner's theory was not dealt with in its entirety by researchers. The theory was reduced to its basic two components (integrative and instrumental motivation). The reason for this, according to them, may be because this was a time when most applied linguists had either an educational or a linguistic background, and not a psychological one and were hence prone to simplifying more complex psychological concepts.

Finally, the amount of debate about the notion of integrative motivation resulted in confusion and this is enough reason to address it with caution in my study. Since my context is a FLL rather than Second language acquisition (SLA), it is less feasible to depend on it as a theoretical framework. It was more relevant to go with Lamb's (2003) and Kim's (2009) views and search for a concept that is more suitable to the Egyptian context and my own study. This is provided by Yashima's (2009) introduction of the concept of International Posture as a replacement for integrative motivation specially for English as a lingua franca. This concept refers to a desire to 'relate oneself to the international community rather than any specific L2 group' (p. 145). Looking at it from this angle, the learners consider themselves 'connected to the international community' (p.146) with a desire to interact with people from different parts of the world. This is also shown in various responses from the participants of the current study as will be clarified in the discussion of the findings.

3.3.2 Williams and Burden's model of motivation

As a response and a reaction to Gardner's (1985) theory, Williams and Burden (1997) provided a model of motivation based on a social constructivist approach to motivation that mixes cognitive constructivism and social interactionism. Constructivism focuses on the individual experience and orientation to motivation on the foundation that each experience is different. The model is also based on social interactionism in the firm belief that the individual is affected by the social and contextual aspects around him/her. They thus define motivation as: 'a state of cognitive and emotional arousal', leading to a 'conscious decision to act', and 'a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort' for the purpose of attaining this goal (p. 23). All these elements are dependent on the situation and are personal to the learner.

The model works on three levels: having the impetus to do something, deciding to do something, and sustaining this effort. This helps the language instructor know how to differentiate between the learners' motivation to learn and their ability to maintain this motivation. Like previous models or theories of motivation, this model also encourages the teacher to enhance intrinsic motivation. They also call for building up and developing a positive self-image. This is also similar to the steps leading to enhancing the L2 learners' Ideal L2 Self envisaged in Dörnyei's L2MSS (2005, 2009a) that will be mentioned later in the chapter (**3.4**).

3.3.3 Dörnyei and Ottó's Process-Oriented Model

The theoretical development in L2 motivation led to another model which considers motivation as a process. Building their model on a temporal aspect of motivation, Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) argue that the previous models did not focus on the implementation of motivation in the educational setting and focused instead on what drives people to act in a certain way. The model operates on the belief that motivation is not static but dynamic and evolves and fluctuates over time. They based their model on Heckhausen and Kuhl's Theory of Action Control (1985) which separates the intention to act from implementation. The Process-Oriented Model is divided into three phases: pre-actional, actional, and post-actional. The pre-actional phase consists of three sub-phases: goal setting, intention formation, and the initiation of intention enactment. In this phase, the person has not acted on his/her motivation yet. This where the individual is setting goals in order to start acting in the second phase: the actional one. During this second phase, 'subtask generation and implementation, a complex ongoing appraisal process, and the application of a variety of action control mechanisms' (p. 50) take place. It lasts until the action is either completed or abandoned. After that, the post-actional stage starts and is influenced by the following factors: 'attributional factors, self-concept beliefs, the quality and quantity of evaluational/attributional cues and feedback, and action versus state orientation' (p. 60). The process model was soon abandoned since it is non-linear, and a more dynamic model of motivation was created.

3.4 The L2 Motivational Self System

Dörnyei (2005; Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009) constructed the L2 Motivational Self System theory from two preceding theories, as I explain below (sections **3.4.1** and **3.4.2**). The L2MSS consists of three levels. The first level is called the Ideal Self, which is concerned with the future positive image the learner has of themselves as a language speaker. It is linked to both the integrative motive explained in Gerdner's socio-educational model (1985) mentioned above, as well as intrinsic motivation mentioned in Self- Determination Theory (**3.2.1)**. The second level is the Ought-to Self, which is concerned with obligations directing the learner's motivation, like fear of punishment or improving English to get a promotion. This component is linked to extrinsic motivation or controlled regulation discussed above. Finally, the last level is the Learning Experience: the curriculum, the teaching style and any other element that may influence the learner's motivation inside the class. This model is a comprehensive description of:

> the internal desires of the learner, the social pressures exercised by significant or authoritative people in the learner's environment and

> the actual experience of being engaged in the learning process. (Dörnyei, 2003a)

Before I explain each component thoroughly, I need to explain first the theories that brought them into shape.

3.4.1 Markus and Nurius's possible selves

Dörnyei stated that he incorporated two main theories in the L2MSS (Ryan and Dörnyei, 2013). The first one is Markus and Nurius's (1986) possible selves. Possible selves is one of the concepts of self-knowledge, concerned with how people view themselves in the potential future. Such views include ideal, potential and dreaded negative future images of themselves: 'An individual's repertoire of possible selves can be viewed as the cognitive manifestation of enduring goals, aspirations, motives, fears, and threats' (p. 945). What is significant about the possible selves is that it encompasses a mix of cognitive and social influences since the individual is deeply impacted by their social surroundings. They also serve as signposts to evaluate the current state of the individual by means of comparison between the present and the projected future. Hence, motivation and possible selves are connected since understanding one's possible selves can serve to motivate a learner in order to reach the ideal self, can help in sustaining that motivation, and finally serve as a warning when they are reaching a dreaded image, such as failure or disapproval. This concept is very useful in understanding Dörnyei's Ideal and Ought-to selves.

3.4.2 Higgins' self-discrepancy theory

The second theory Dörnyei made use of in his theoretical construct is Higgins' (1987) Self-Discrepancy Theory, which is somewhat related to the theory of possible selves, albeit focusing on what is called self-images. Higgins explains that there are two actual selves for each person. The self the one believes oneself to be, and the self as viewed by others. He further gives an account of three domains for the self: the actual self, which is what one perceives to have, the ideal self which is what one aspires to be, the ought to self which is what one should possess according to the expectations of others. This basically renders six forms of self-representations: actual/own (what one actually is), actual/other (what others perceive the person to be), ideal/own (what one wishes to be), ideal/other (what others wish the person to be), ought/own (what one should be), and ought/other (what others believe the person should be). The proposition of the theory is that one cannot meet all such expectations. When there is an incompatibility between such constructs, a self-discrepancy arises:

> The greater the magnitude and accessibility of a particular type of self-discrepancy possessed by an individual, the more the individual will suffer the kind of discomfort associated with that type of self-discrepancy. (p. 324)

An example of such self-discrepancies is the actual/ought-to one. If one feels they are not meeting their parents' expectations, for example, they may feel a sense of guilt at their failure to become the person their parents expect them to be. In his L2MSS, Dörnyei uses the concept of the ideal and the ought-to self but pertaining to language learning, as will be discussed below.

3.4.3 The Ideal L2 Self

Adapted from Self-Discrepancy Theory, the concept of the Ideal L2 Self refers to the ideal future L2 Self the language learner is aiming for or hopes to become. For Dörnyei (2018), this the 'key concept' of the model (p. 3). According to Ryan and Dörnyei (2013), such an ideal future self-image is more likely to 'direct behaviour due to a basic psychological need to reduce discrepancies between the perceived current self and this ideal self' (p. 91). Thus, a conflict between the current actual self and the future self is likely to motivate L2 learning. When a learner feels that their future self-image is a fluent and proficient L2 speaker, yet their current proficiency is intermediate, they will be motivated to work harder in order to reach their goal. The Ideal L2 Self as one of the future self-guides is related to the idea of having a vision. Dörnyei (2014b) asserts that having a vision can be one of the highest forms of motivation especially suited for long-term activities such as learning an L2. Such a vision can offer a 'broad lens to focus on the bigger picture, the overall persistence that is necessary to lead one to ultimate language attainment' (p. 12). Therefore, having a vision of what they like to become in the future as L2 speakers can be, according to Dörnyei, a strong predictor of their intended effort eventually.

Nevertheless, the Ideal L2 Self is not achievable merely because it exists. Dörnyei (2009b) draws attention to the following conditions for the Ideal L2 Self to be effective: the image of the future self has to exist, it has to be vivid and clear, it has to be plausible, activated on a regular basis, it should be accompanied by a clear roadmap to help reach this goal, and includes the negative consequences of not achieving the desired image. It is not enough to just have a vague idea of the future or Ideal L2 Self. The Ideal L2 Self is also related to the two concepts of integrativeness and internalised instrumental motivation. For Ushioda (2012), the Ideal L2 Self incorporates both the integrative motive, which is intrinsic, and 'internalized forms of instrumental motivation' (p. 65). This middle state between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can cause a problem when analysing a participant's motivation in the L2MSS because moving further towards instrumental motivation overlaps with the second component in the model: the Ought-to Self.

Kim (2009) highlights the shift from the internalised instrumentality of the Ideal L2 Self to the pure instrumentality of the Ought-to Self (explained in the coming section). An instrumental purpose for learning an L2, such as getting a better job, can be associated with the academic identity of the learner and can create a strong future image for this learner since this self-image is promotion-focused (Ideal L2 Self). On the other hand, if the same instrumental motive is not internalised enough and is more prevention-focused, such as avoiding bad marks, it is no longer an Ideal L2 Self. It becomes an Ought-to Self. Therefore, distinguishing between the Ideal and Ought-to Selves can be confusing. This overlap was also highlighted by Assulaimani (2015):

> This means that depending on the level of internalization, job related hopes and aspirations can be arranged along a continuum with the ought-to self, which represents the least internalized goals, at one end and the ideal self, which represents the most internalized hopes and dreams, at the other. In other words, some long-term career objectives can be identified as belonging in the ideal self as well, but only when these future goals and imaginations are internalized in the mind of the learner to the point that makes them become a part of his/her identity, and thus his ideal self.

I explain this overlap in my findings (**5.4**) as it shows in the participants' perceptions of their future selves.

Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) add six motivational strategies for the learners to construct and maintain their Ideal L2 Self. These six steps are important as well for teachers who wish to help their students work on their Ideal L2 Selves. The first step is creating the vision: this is when the learners can envision a future self using the L2. The next step is strengthening the vision. As mentioned above, it is not enough for the Ideal L2 Self to exist, it has to be vivid. In this step, the learner works on making the future self more vivid. The third step is substantiating the vision: making it more plausible, with feasible expectations. The fourth step is transforming the vision into action: taking actual steps to realize the vision. The following step is to keep the vision alive by activating it regularly, so it is not forgotten or taken over by other priorities. The final step is counterbalancing the vision. The Ideal Self should be counterbalanced by a feared self if the vision is not achieved. I was hoping to find out whether the participants in this study had taken any or all of those steps as part of their language learning journey.

In research, the Ideal L2 Self was the focus of mostly quantitative research, usually as an influence on a criterion measure (Csizér, 2019). For instance, Magid (2014) conducted a longitudinal mixed-methods study aiming to develop the Ideal L2 Self in students in the primary stage in Singapore. His findings included the possibility of increasing students' motivation by using imagery. Ryan's (2009) study focused only on the Ideal Self in his study in an attempt to validate the concept as well as compare it with integrativeness to see how it operated within the sample under study. Furthermore, Far, Rajabb and Etemadzadehc (2012) used the Ideal Self and integrativeness to investigate L2 motivation in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) students in Iran. Their findings indicated that students pass through two consecutive phases. They start by being motivated sociologically (integrativeness) then move into a more psychological state (Ideal Self). Such studies emphasise the primary role of the Ideal Self in L2 motivation. My study aimed at exploring this component in the participants' L2 motivation.

3.4.4 The L2 Ought-to Self

The second element in the model is the L2 Ought-to Self. It involves the 'attributes that one believes one ought to possess to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes' (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 80). It is related to obligations towards other people or expectations from peers or parents. Ryan and Dörnyei (2013) separate the obligations of young and adult learners. Whereas for young learners the Ought-to Self would include their parents' expectations for success or a desire to please their teachers, for the adult learners the Ought-to Self would include job promotion or better pay.

Contrary to the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-to Self is 'imported' and does not reflect the learner's own desires or ambition (Dörnyei, 2018, p. 3). According to Assulaimani (2015), it is related more to an extrinsic type of motivation, with the learners working on their learning to avoid negative social circumstances like unemployment or disappointing their families. For college students in a context like the one in my study, learners may study L2 because it is an obligatory subject, which they need to pass in order to continue their studies. It is worth repeating that the Ideal and the Ought-to Self may overlap. It might be helpful to envisage L2 learning placed in the middle between the Ideal Self (e.g., a famous scientist who is a good public speaker in English) and the Ought-to Self (e.g., to become a significant scientist, one needs to publish research and high-indexed journals are in English). This issue is raised by Csizér (2019), as she points out that it is hard to 'obtain a reliable measure for the construct' (p. 76) because the Ought-to Self varies depending on how one internalises motivation. She refers then to two distinct Ought-to selves: Ought-to Own and Ought-to Others. The L2MSS was designed so that the Ideal Self relates to promotional instrumentality and the Ought-to Self for preventive instrumentality (Dörnyei, 2005). Two prominent studies investigated this area.

According to Teimouri (2017), the two Self guides can show the level of motivation of the L2 learner, but the findings will not show a difference between the two components. Thus, he proposes a modification to the L2MSS's two Self guides, arguing that they should be: Ideal L2 self, Ought-to L2 self/own, and Ought-to L2 self/others. Based on this distinction, he conducted a study on 524 adolescent English language learners in Iran. The questionnaire questions followed the distinction between the Ought-to L2 self/own, and Ought-to L2 self/others. The study revealed that the learners' internalised motivation could not be separated into more than one construct. The Ideal L2 Self thus can be said to represent the most intrinsic form of motivation. The Ought-to/others, on the other hand, showed the highest level of extrinsic motivation in participants. In the middle comes the Ought-to/own as the least extrinsic motivation. Similarly, Al-Hoorie (2018) suggests splitting both the Ideal and the Ought-to Selves into own and other to show the difference between what one wants and hopes to be as opposed to what others want one to be, the obligations one wants to meet, and what others expect one to meet.

The second study taking this thread further was conducted by Papi et al. (2019). In their study, they not only focused on the learners' quantified motivated behaviour, but also on the qualitative difference in their strategies of behaviour. They proposed a 2x2 model for the two self-guides (Ideal L2 self/own, Ideal L2 self/others, Ought-to self/own, and Ought-to self/others). The strongest predictor of motivation in this study was the Ought-to self/own. This was followed by the Ideal L2 Self/own, the Ought-to self/other, and finally the Ideal L2 Self/other. Furthermore, it appeared that learners motivated by their Ideal L2 Self/own employed 'eager' strategies for motivation, whereas those motivated by their Ought-to L2 Self/own employed 'vigilant' strategies. The eager strategy focuses on the gains of the learning task, while the vigilant strategy focuses on minimizing losses. The learner using a vigilant strategy would work on avoiding decisions or choices leading to an undesired consequence (e.g., losing grades). The study thus stresses the need to pay more attention to different regulatory states arising from both promotion and prevention orientations to motivation. In my research, I was keen to know whether the Ought-to Self played a major role in the participant's L2 motivation.

3.4.5 The L2 Learning Experience

The third element in the L2MSS is the L2 Learning Experience. This one is not related to the learner's self-guides but to the learning environment and its impact on the learner, for example, the teacher, the curriculum, the experience of success, etc. (Dörnyei, 2005). Furthermore, Dörnyei (2018) remarks that the Learning Experience is not concerned with the future of the learner, but rather with the present situational aspect of the learner and the learning situation. Originally, the model was intended to comprise the two future selves only, but the Learning Experience was added to 'make the theory more comprehensive' (Dörnyei, 2014a, p. 521). On that note, Thompson and Vásquez (2015) consider this component to be very important since the other two (Ideal and Ought-to Self) are formed by the social interaction offered by the structured and situational contexts the Learning Experience provides. Csizér (2019) states that adding the L2 Learning Experience is an acknowledgement of the fact that the two self-guides cannot work in isolation from the learning situation.

As a concept, the learning situation was the focus of research on motivation during the 1990s before the L2MSS came into shape. This is one reason research on the L2MSS focused mainly on the Ideal and the Ought-to Self, with only a little attention directed to the learning situation (Al-Hoorie, 2018). In an earlier article on L2 motivation, Dörnyei (1994) refers to the focus on the learning situation in L2 motivation research. He then divides the concept into three categories: course-specific, teacher-specific, and group-specific motivational components. The course-specific components include the syllabus, instruction methods, and the instruction materials. The teacher-specific components include the teacher's personality, teaching style, feedback, and relationship with students. Finally, the group-specific components consist of the group dynamic of the learners. Although this may appear to be a clear definition of what the Learning Experience may include, this element of the L2MSS received some concerns from different key researchers on the model, including Dörnyei (2019) himself. Alharbi (2017) comments:

> The investigation of the Learning Experience remains the least-structured component when compared to the investigation of future self guides. The lack of shared common grounds among researchers with regard to this component could be traced back to the lack of a proper operationalization of this comprehensive construct (p. 13)

This is an indication that the Leaning Experience is not clear enough for researchers to agree on how to handle it in their studies. In addition, Moskovsky et al. (2016) refer to it as a 'construct that is notoriously difficult to operationalize' (p. 645).

In 2019, Dörnyei referred to the Learning Experience as the Cinderella of the L2MSS. This can be taken as an acknowledgement from him that this component is a tenuous concept. He states that the conditions he stipulated for the success of the L2MSS (mentioned earlier in this chapter **3.4.3**) are all related to the future self-guides and not the Learning Experience. He asks:

> So, where does this leave the third core component of the L2 Motivational Self System, the L2 Learning Experience? Why has it not featured more prominently in either the theoretical or the research developments of the past decade? (p. 20)

He then goes on to justify the neglect of the researchers to focus on the Learning Experience as much as the two self-guides because there was ample research on it in decades-worth of research and that it was only added to create a broader dimension to the model, and hence becoming 'hardly more than a broad, place-holding umbrella term that would need to be fine-tuned at one point,' (p. 22). Nevertheless, he admits that some studies demonstrate that the Learning Experience is the 'the most powerful predictor of motivated behaviour' (p. 22), such as Islam, Lamb, and Chambers (2013), Lamb (2012), Papi and Teimouri (2012), Alqahtani (2015), and Teimouri (2017). The problem is that the concept was used under different names and denoting different elements of learning. According to You, Dörnyei, and Csizér (2016), since this component did not originate with the L2MSS, there are variations in its use by different researchers. For instance, the Learning Experience was used interchangeably with attitude towards the language. Kormos, Kiddle, and Csizér (2011) referred to it as the L2 learning attitude, Papi (2010) referred to it as the English Learning Experience, and Papi and Teimouri (2012) referred to it in their questionnaire as Attitudes to L2 Culture and Community which is defined as 'the learner's attitudes towards the target community and its cultural products such as TV programs, music and movies' (p. 294). Hence, the L2 Learning Experience has been used broadly by researchers to cover different aspects of motivation. It has been 'treated as a broad and rather unspecified attitude factor' (Dörnyei, 2019).

In the same article, Dörnyei (2019) defines the L2 Learning Experience as student engagement covering different situational aspects. I will quote the whole definition so it may be linked to Gardner's socio-educational model and to elaborate how I used the Learning Experience in my study after that. The Learning Experience is the student's engagement with:

- School context (e.g., various aspects of belonging to the school community, adopting school norms and developing general academic confidence);
- Syllabus and the teaching materials (e.g., curiosity about and interest in the content; match between the syllabus to the students' needs; ownership and personalization of the materials);
- Learning tasks (e.g., utilizing the principles of task-based language teaching; application of project/problem-based learning; goal-setting and progress checks);
- One's peers (e.g., relevant areas of group dynamics/classroom management, particularly social acceptance, group cohesiveness, norms of cooperation and tolerance);
- Teacher (e.g., student-teacher rapport; utilizing insights from leadership models; conflict resolution). (p. 25)

This definition brings the concept back to its original explanation in Dörnyei's (2005, 2009a) earlier writings on the framework. Furthermore, it is similar to Gardner's attitude to the learning situation, which he correlates to integrativeness (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003). According to the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) he designed, the attitude to the learning situation entails two main categories: evaluating the course and evaluating the teacher. Gregersen et al. (2019) link this component of the model to Engagement in the PERMA model of positive psychology (Seligman, 2012, 2018). Seligman considers PERMA (positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment) to be the elements of well-being. Seligman (2012) correlates engagement with flow and the ability to become absorbed in a certain activity. It could be argued that this is close to the engagement in Dörnyei's (2019) view. Interacting with the immediate learning environment can enhance the student's well-being and accordingly enhance their motivation.

I conducted my study based on the original definition which focused on the situational aspect of motivation provided by Dörnyei (2005, 2009a). My interview questions addressing this concept were not targeting attitudes to the culture or attitudes to the language but their perceptions of the different aspects of the learning situation. I sensed this conceptual gap when I was reading the literature on the L2MSS. My research is thus helping in exploring the L2MSS as a whole while using the original meaning of the Learning Experience and can be considered an addition to the research which has found that the Learning Experience may be a major motivator for the learners. In addition, a major contribution this study is presenting is that the Learning Experience can have an impact on both the Ideal and Ought-to Selves.

3.4.6 Points of criticism of the L2MSS

The sections above highlighted one possible point of weakness for the L2MSS regarding the ambiguity surrounding the L2 Learning Experience. There are other points of criticism directed against the L2MSS. According to Moskovsky et al. (2016), most of the studies using the L2MSS, mainly focus on intended effort as a criterion for success. However, according to them, intended effort will not necessarily lead to the intended outcome. This was demonstrated by Alqahtani's (2015) study, which revealed that the self-guides cannot predict actual behaviour in the same manner the language learning attitude does. This is reiterated by Al-Hoorie's (2018) meta-analysis study of the L2MSS involving 32 research reports, 39 unique samples and 32,078 language learners. The meta-analysis revealed that researchers who used subjective measures such as perceptions found a stronger support than the researchers who used objective measures like test scores. It can thus be argued that qualitative studies offer more insight into L2 motivation than quantitative ones.

Furthermore, Al-Hoorie (2018) confirms that there is an ambiguity in the Ideal Self as a construct. The standard item in questionnaires about the L2MSS is formed as 'I can imagine myself…':

> if a learner cannot imagine herself mastering English someday, this could additionally mean that she does not believe she can do that (self-efficacy), that she does not want to do that (value of the activity), that she experiences a complete absence of motivation (amotivation), that she does not need to do that (e.g., she has already mastered English), or any other interpretations different learners might conjure up. (p. 736)

Hence, the recommendation is to differentiate between an imagined self and an Ideal Self that can be measured to demonstrate the discrepancy between the current and future self. Finally, Al-Hoorie (2018) does not consider the L2

Learning Experience to be a good predictor of learning regardless of what the learner thinks or believes. He argues that it is normal for a student to make a link between the grades they are getting and having a positive or negative attitude towards the course or the instructor.

It can be argued that many points of criticism of the model are not relevant to my study because I am not aiming to predict achievement or check grades. I was investigating the subjective perceptions of the participants to find out what may affect their motivation aside from their grades or achievements or any measurement of their actual learning. Those could be investigated in other studies made for this purpose. The contribution of this research to the field of L2 motivation is by offering an insight into L2 motivation using this particular theoretical framework in the Egyptian higher education context, something that has not been attempted before. This can be of great benefit to instructors and curriculum designers in their plans to develop and improve L2 learning in the country.

3.4.7 The L2MSS in different contexts

Researchers from all over the world have conducted studies using the L2MSS in their professional context. There are studies from the UK (Al-Shehri, 2009), Hungary (Kormos and Csizér, 2008; Csizér and Kormos, 2009), Poland (Pawlak, 2012), China (Lou and Noels, 2018; Liu and Thompson, 2017), Canada (Davidson, Guénette, and Simard, 2016), Turkey (Thompson and Erdil- Moody, 2016), USA (Ivaska, 2017; Thompson, 2017), Japan (Yashima, 2009; McEwon, Sawaki, and Harada, 2017), Hong Kong (Dörnyei and Chan, 2013), Indonesia (Lamb, 2012), Brazil (Cerqueira and Badger, 2015), Iran (Papi, 2010; Badrkoohi and Maftoon, 2017), Saudi Arabia (Alqahtani, 2017), and Pakistan (Islam, Lamb, and Chambers, 2013). Some of these studies were conducted to validate the theory, others were conducted to investigate the dominant factors in L2 motivation in these contexts, and yet others were conducted to use one of the three components as a criterion for motivation. However, there is a noticeable absence of research using the L2MSS in Egypt, making this study a significant addition in the field.

3.4.8 L2MSS in the Middle East

As mentioned in the previous sub-section, the L2MSS is popular in L2 motivation research and has been researched in various regions of the world, including the Middle East. Saudi Arabia in particular has more share in L2MSS studies in this region due to the work of prominent researchers such as Al-Hoorie (2018, 2019 among others), Al-Shehri (2009), and Al-Qahtani (2015, 2017). For instance, Al-Shehri's (2009) study used a self-report questionnaire with Arab students studying in the UK. The questionnaire focused on four main variables: motivated behaviour and effort, Ideal L2 Self, visual learning style, and imagination. There is little attention paid to the learning situation as well as the Ought-to Self. The study demonstrated that the Ideal Self is a strong motivational factor, and that visual learning can boost the Ideal Self. In Iran, Roshandel et al. (2018) used the L2MSS in correlation with self-efficacy and found that the Ideal L2 Self and the attitudes towards learning English (Learning Experience) were the strongest predictors to self-efficacy as well as motivation. In the Turkish higher education context, Tylan (2017) found that the L2MSS fits with L2 motivation in this context but suggests some modifications to the model to add the Ought-to own vs others as was suggested by Teimouri (2017) and Al-Hoorie (2018) (this chapter **3.4.4**). There is a clear absence of work on L2 motivation using the L2MSS in the Egyptian context. Hence, this study is an opportunity to introduce the model not only to Egyptian researchers, but also to the wider academic community, as it addresses a gap regarding context, as well as the inter-related elements of the model to produce new insights into learners' motivational drivers.

3.5 Subsequent Theories of L2 Motivation

The L2MSS has been followed by other prominent models and theories with researchers still looking at different angles. In this section, I focus on two main models/theories: Complex Dynamic Systems Theory which helped create Directed Motivational Currents (DMCs). The two theories have no bearing on my study, but I mention them to connect the current study with the developments in the field, especially since DMC was also developed by Dörnyei.

3.5.1 Complex Dynamic Systems

In an effort to move research in second language acquisition from 'reductionist explanations' into more dynamic systems, Larsen-Freeman (1997, p. 142) wrote a seminal work introducing the complexity theory in physics into the field of second language acquisition. Although her work has no bearing on L2 motivation, it was used decades later as the foregrounding theory of Directed Motivational Currents discussed in the following section (**3.5.2**). In her view, there are similarities between the dynamic and chaotic features of complex systems and the L2 class. Complex systems are created by the interactions of its different components. In such systems the effects are not equal to the cause. They are also unpredictable (e.g., the nature of avalanches is known but it is never predictable as to when they suddenly occur) and sensitive to their surroundings yet are adaptable to them. What Larsen-Freeman proposes in this article is that language learning is also dynamic. The changes that occur to the language over time are non-linear, and there is no way to predict which forms of the language will witness this change. As a system, language is also complex; composed of different subsystems like phonology, semantics, and pragmatics. Furthermore, each subsystem alone cannot explain the whole system. The same thing applies to second language acquisition. In Larsen-Freeman's view, the process of L2 learning is a non-linear and complex activity.

3.5.2 Directed Motivational Currents

From this complex dynamic view of second language acquisition, Dörnyei explored L2 motivation further and formulated another theory. Directed Motivational Currents (DMCs) in L2 motivation is defined as 'a unique period of heightened motivation' propelled by different factors in order to fulfil a certain goal (Dörnyei, Ibrahim, and Muir, 2015, p. 97). This means that it is temporary and individualistic. An example of a DMC is a student's burst of motivation because there is an exam looming in the near future, so they are working very hard and enthusiastically. As soon as the exam ends, so does their motivation. It is similar to a current that sets the individual in motion at a high speed. According to Henry, Davydenko, and Dörnyei (2015), this can exist on both an individual level as well as the group level if there is a common goal like an end-of-term project. They further state that this structure consists of three components: a) there is a routine behaviour towards achieving this goal, b) the learner regularly checks the progress of their work towards achieving this goal, and c) there are clear start and end points for this goal. For instance, someone who will travel to Japan for three months for a trip decides to learn Japanese to know how to speak with the native speakers there. This student will learn Japanese, will keep milestones for their progress before their journey starts, and their learning will stop before they depart for Japan. Such a clear-cut plan is linked with a 'robust Ideal L2 Self' (Henry, Davydenko, and Dörnyei, 2015, p. 333).

Like the L2MSS, a DMC cannot work without a highly motivated learner. In order for it to work, there has to be a positive emotional state inside the learner:

> DMCs may be consciously generated to align diverse factors along a directional pathway, and therefore they can be seen as an intense motivational strategy to combat apathy and demotivation. (Dörnyei, Muir, Ibrahim, 2014, p. 27)

Although it is an encouraging learning and teaching experience, it is hard to predict when students are at such a heightened state. It is challenging to research because it requires constant observation for the whole duration of the Learning Experience in order to detect such a change and investigate it. Given the scope of my study, I opted not to investigate L2 motivation from this angle. I was more interested to see the general drivers rather than focus on a specific point in the students' learning journey. In addition, DMCs are more individualistic than the Motivational Self System. It does not include the involvement of the curriculum or the learning situation and this is something I wanted to investigate in relation to student motivation.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the theoretical and empirical literature related to the current study. Motivation has been the subject of interest in the field of education before there was a focus on L2 motivation. Theories from mainstream psychology still have an influence on the field. With the work of Gardner and Lambert (1959), L2 motivation took shape and diverged into different theories and models. Influenced by their theory as well as the work of Higgins (1987) and

Markus and Nurius (1986), the L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009a) was developed to encompass the dynamic nature of L2 motivation. The model consists of two self-guides (Ideal L2 Self and Ought-to Self) mainly addressing the learner's perceived future selves from promotional (Ideal) and prevention (Ought-to) angles. The model also includes the Learning Experience which relates to the situational aspects of L2 learning. Recent developments in the model from other prominent researchers suggest the need for a revision of the self-guides as well as a more concrete definition of the Learning Experience. Dörnyei's model has been used extensively in L2 motivation research in different contexts around the world. Nevertheless, there are no published studies using the model in the Egyptian context. As far as I can ascertain, this study is the first Egyptian qualitative study using the L2MSS as the theoretical framework. Outside the Egyptian context, my work supports the view that the L2 Learning Experience is as important as the Ideal and the Ought-to Selves in enhancing L2 motivation. In fact, my study shows that it can be the common factor in fostering L2 motivation even if the starting point is the Ideal or the Ought-to Self. The following chapter outlines the methodology and methods employed to conduct the study.

Chapter 4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

In this study I aim to gain a deeper understanding of the factors affecting L2 motivation in a higher education context in Egypt. For this purpose, I used the theoretical lens of Dörnyei's (2005, 2009a) L2MSS. The model proposes three levels of L2 motivation: Ideal L2 Self, Ought-to Self, and L2 Learning Experience. The Ideal L2 Self is the learner's vision of their future self as a language speaker. It is the promotional aspect of the future self as a language speaker. The Ought-to Self, on the other hand, is the future self of the learner based on perceived others' views and recommendations, or expectations about the learner. Thus, it is a prevention aspect of the future self, where the learner is trying to prevent unpleasant consequences. The L2 Learning Experience is concerned with the situational aspects of L2 motivation such as the teacher, the curriculum, the classmates, etc. The choice of this model arose from my desire to understand L2 motivation from the perspective of the students, taking their individual experience from the inside (the self) and out (the learning situation). Analysing the participants' perceptions guided me to understand how students are motivated or demotivated by the interplay of these internal and external drivers.

Understanding motivation can aid me as a practitioner and a researcher. In my practice as an EFL university instructor and curriculum developer, gaining a better understanding of L2 motivation can improve my instruction and the selection of material for my classes. As a researcher, I can help shed light on how motivation in the higher education context in Egypt can fill the gap and contribute to the existing research on motivation using the L2MSS as the theoretical framework. This study is considered an academic contribution to the field of L2 motivation, especially in the Egyptian higher education context, placing L2 motivation in this theoretical framework to help the wider research community in Egypt as well as for Egyptian EFL practitioners who might be interested in this area of practice.

This chapter explains my worldview and justifies the choices I made in preparing and carrying out my research. I start with the research paradigm (**4.2**). Next, I deal with the research questions (**4.3**), methods (**4.4**), ethical considerations (**4.5**), quality (reliability and trustworthiness) (**4.6**), and reflexivity (**4.7**). The last part of the chapter deals with data management (**4.8**) and data analysis (**4.9**), followed by the conclusion (**4.10**).

4.2 Research Paradigm

My research is founded upon the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm. I am here aligning myself to Mackenzie and Knipe's (2006) classification of both interpretivism and constructivism as one and the same. According to Hurworth (2005), interpretivism is defined as a 'philosophical framework that promotes plural perspectives in evaluations relying on qualitative approaches and natural settings' (p. 210). Interpretivist/constructivist research does not aim to reach any generalisations, rather, it is more about understanding a particular context (Willis, 2007). Consequently, it is a non-foundationalist approach which does not espouse the existence of a single unified truth (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). In this case, reality is constructed by both the researcher and the participants (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

A research paradigm is chosen based on the answer to four basic principles: ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology. Based on these principles, Lincoln and Guba (2013) explain the four pillars of the constructivist paradigm. The first principle is regarding the ontology or the nature of reality. The ontology of constructivism/interpretivism is relativist, meaning there is no fixed reality, rather it is a construction. Reality only exists in the mind of the people. It is the people who shape reality as they perceive it. Reality in the interpretivist/constructivist becomes 'subjective and contextual' (Spencer, Pryce, and Walsh, 2014).

Epistemology is the relationship between the knower and the known (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Since the ontology of this paradigm is relativist, the epistemology is transactional subjectivism, making it context-based rather than universal. According to Lincoln and Guba (2013), there is a transaction between the researcher and the participants in a particular context and a particular time. In this type of research, the researcher is influenced by their own context, their gender, their race, their nationality, and their cultural and personal values.

Knowledge in this situation is not '"discovered" but rather created; it exists only in the time/space framework in which it is generated' (p. 40).

The third principle of the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm according to Lincoln and Guba (2013) is methodology. Methodology is the way we know the world (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). In this paradigm it is dialectical/hermeneutical; 'must be one that delves into the minds and meaning-making, sense-making activities of the several knowers involved' (p. 40). There are two steps involved. First, it is important to disclose the different constructs held by the knowers by engaging all parties in meaning-making and interpretation. The second step is comparing all the constructs together through opening a dialogue between the knowers.

Finally, the fourth principle is axiology. Axiology is concerned with the values the researcher brings into the research: 'What place do the emotions, expectations, and values of the researcher have in the research process?' (Spencer, Pryce, and Walsh, 2014). Researcher objectivity is rejected and is considered a 'chimera' (Lincoln and Guba, 2013, p. 42). In this paradigm, the researcher and the participants are acting together to co-create reality. The axiology of this paradigm entails that the values of both the researcher and the participants are made transparent.

Thus, my study is a construction based on the accounts of the participants regarding their perceptions of L2 motivation in their institution. This construction is context-based, and the results of the study cannot be generalised. However, as Lincoln and Guba (2013) note, such a construction may be of relevance in other contexts if there is a resemblance to these contexts.

In line with the interpretivist approach, I used qualitative methods to achieve the aim of the study. Qualitative research, in Denzin and Lincoln's (2005) view,

> implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. (p. 10)

The methods I used to collect data in the study were interviews and open-ended questionnaires to help me obtain an in-depth understanding of the students' perceptions of L2 motivation in their context.

4.3 Research Questions

The aim of the research is to understand the factors affecting L2 motivation in a HEI in Egypt. I posed the following research questions to reach this aim:

RQ1. What enhances students' L2 motivation from their own perspective in this particular context?

RQ2. What are the effects of their previous language learning experiences before college?

RQ3. What are the constraints affecting their L2 motivation?

To answer these research questions, I chose the methods outlined below.

4.4 Methods

In this section I explain the methods I chose for the study and justify those choices. Since my research is based on the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm, I chose qualitative methods that offered me an insight into student perceptions from the students themselves. In addition, since the paradigm is based on constructions built in one local context (Lincoln and Guba, 2013), I opted to conduct my research in one institution, as this would allow me to understand L2 motivation in one context, especially since each university has its own English courses and teachers. In the trial study I had conducted for Open Studies 2 in the EdD, I used semi-structured interviews as the only data collection method. Yet, upon reflection and discussion with my supervisor, I decided to add another method in this study to supplement the interviews. Having multiple methods enables triangulation, which is commonly used in qualitative research when the researcher is the main instrument, to search for common themes (Creswell and Miller, 2000). Furthermore, triangulation offers a more 'in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p. 5). In fact, Lincoln and Guba (1985) go as far as considering triangulation as ‘crucially important in naturalistic studies’ (p. 283), since it entails getting the information from more than one source.

The viable option for me was to add one of the following methods in addition to the interviews: class observations, student diaries, focus groups, and open-ended questionnaires. Class observations would only give me a glimpse into the participants’ L2 Learning Experience, but not their Ideal or Ought-to Self as these are perceived future selves and only the participants can reveal them to me. In addition, it is not easy to obtain permission to get into classes if I am not a member of the institution. Student diaries could have given me access to student perceptions, but it would require a lot of writing and people generally are more reluctant to write (Gillham, 2000), so I was hesitant to use this method, in case the diaries were not detailed. I also decided against focus groups because the students have different schedules and finding one time slot that suited everyone would have been almost impossible. Moreover, I wanted to listen to each participant individually, so I could get an in-depth insight into their perceptions. Thus, I decided to add a qualitative questionnaire as another method for collecting data. In the subsequent sub-sections, I explain the choice of these methods in more detail.

4.4.1 Qualitative questionnaire

Qualitative questionnaires, like any method of data collection, have both merits and demerits. Braun, Tricklebank, and Clarke (2013) note that qualitative questionnaires lack the depth provided by more interactive qualitative methods. Gillham (2000) suggests that interviews are preferable for more elaboration since people prefer to talk rather than write. Moreover, Dörnyei (2003b) states that open-ended questionnaires tend to lack any ‘soul-searching self-disclosure’ (p. 47). Nevertheless, he also reiterates that open-ended questionnaires ‘offer graphic examples, illustrative quotes, and can also lead us to identify issues not previously anticipated’ (p. 47). Similarly, Brown (2009) considers the open-ended questions as a chance for people to express their views in an unstructured way and consequently can be a step for further inquiry.

I decided to use the qualitative questionnaire as a preliminary data collection instrument preceding the interviews. This was useful on more than one level.

First, it gave me the chance to get a general idea about the perceptions of the participants. Secondly, it was a chance for the participants to decide whether they wanted to have the interview with me. Out of the twenty questionnaire responses I received, only fourteen expressed an interest in the interview. Finally, the responses were helpful as an icebreaker for the interview as a subject of discussion and a lead for more elaborate answers in some cases. To encourage the participants to write more, I followed Dörnyei's (2003b) advice to add some guiding questions and not to leave them completely open. One of the ways to ensure the clarity of the questions is to arrange them in sections or divide them into different headings (Rowley, 2014). Accordingly, I divided the questions into four main sections. The first section was intended to obtain some basic information about the participants. The second section aimed at gaining their perceptions regarding their experience in the course(s). The third section targeted their experience with the language outside the class. Finally, the last section was for their experience with English inside the class. Throughout the questionnaire, I was concerned with their perceptions on issues related to L2 motivation in terms of the L2MSS (Ideal, Ought-to L2 Selves, and the L2 Learning Experience). The questionnaire is available in Appendix 3.

The questionnaire was in an electronic Google Form and the link was sent to the students who had expressed their interest to participate in the study. The questions were written in basic English. All participants were above B1 level (CEFR), and it was written so that it would be understandable for them. I invited the participants to answer in either Arabic or English. All participants except two answered in English. I translated the responses of the two participants who chose to answer in Arabic. I explain more on my positionality in relation to translation in section 4.8.3. Some responses were very brief, and in some cases, there was no chance to ask for elaboration as not all questionnaire respondents agreed to the interview with me. For those who did choose to have the interview, I was able to ask for elaboration when needed.

4.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

The primary data collection instrument in my study is semi-structured interviews. The purpose of the semi-structured interview in qualitative research is to 'gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words so that the researcher can develop insights' on how participants perceive a certain phenomenon (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007, p. 103). This kind of interview is based on open-ended questions, which aim to 'reconstruct his or her [the participant's] experience within the topic under study' (Seidman, 2006, p. 14).

In Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle's (2006) view, this kind of interview is preferable for qualitative research. Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to have a set of prepared questions, and yet be able to probe into the answers of the participants. At the same time, the participants are able to give account of their perceptions from their own perspective, rather than be influenced by the perspective of the researcher. Roulston (2010) adds that the set of prepared questions in the interview guide may not be followed to the letter, as it will differ from one interviewee to the next, and the interviewer may interrupt to get the most information out of the interviewee. The length of the interviews with the participants in my study ranged from 20 to 39 minutes, depending on how far each participant was willing to elaborate on their answers.

My aim thus was to get the participants to reveal their experience with the English courses at their institution to achieve some understanding of the different drivers of L2 motivation. My questions first sought to break the ice with the interviewees, and to obtain some background information about them. After that, I asked about different aspects of their Learning Experience, and questions aimed at revealing their Ideal and Ought-to selves and their own perceptions of motivation in general. The interview questions are available in Appendix 4. I generally followed the basic procedures of qualitative interviews suggested by Brinkmann (2013): asking a question; negotiating meaning, and in some cases asking for clarification; a concrete description by the participant, usually in the form of narration or giving an example; my interpretation of the answer; and finally, the participant's validation of this interpretation.

One of the most important aspects of semi-structured interviews is to have a rapport with the participants. Establishing rapport, in Fontana and Frey's (2005) view, is the surest way to get the participants to talk, since the aim of the interview is to understand the perceptions of the participants. I was able to establish this rapport during different stages of the interview. Prior to the interview, I introduced myself and showed my familiarity with the university, since I used to work there previously. Then, during the interview itself, I showed my familiarity with the courses and the student experience, in order to encourage the participants to discuss their ideas in more detail with me. More details about the interviews are mentioned in section **4.8**.

4.4.3 Sampling

In choosing my study sample, I did not aim for a sample that would lend generalisation, since the purpose of sampling in qualitative research is based on getting as much information as possible (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). I found that the most appropriate method of sampling is the purposive one. Purposive sampling is based on the characteristics of the sample, and one type of purposive sampling is the homogenous group in which all members share certain characteristics (Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle, 2006). Mackey and Gass (2005) also define purposive sampling as that based on people having common features that can help answer the research question and who are chosen by the researcher. I wanted to pinpoint the perceptions of students regarding their L2 motivation at this institution, so I narrowed down the sample population to the students who were still taking the Remedial English courses or who had just finished them, since my data collection was done in the summer semester. This means that those who studied ENGL003 or ENGL004 during the Fall or Spring Semester of this year were eligible to participate. This also narrowed down the population into first-year students. I did not want older students who were still taking these courses because that would mean that they repeated at least one of the two courses multiple times, and this would put their Learning Experience in a different category than the ‘average’ student. Thus, the target population was first-year students who took ENGL003 and ENGL004 during that academic year. I was aiming for at least 20 participants for the questionnaire and at least 10 for the interview.

4.4.4 Recruitment and participants

As mentioned previously, I collected my data during the summer semester, after obtaining the ethical approval from University of Glasgow and the permission of the institution to conduct my research. I first started by posting on the students’ Facebook group, asking for volunteers who matched the research criteria. I gave my email address and asked those who were interested to contact me. A few students approached me, and to those I explained briefly what their participation entailed and attached the plain language statement. When the number did not increase, I obtained the emails of all first-year students and sent them all a direct email informing them of my intentions for the research and asking for expressions of interest in participating in the study. After that, I posted another advertisement on the Facebook group. More people became interested but still only eight participants went ahead and completed the questionnaire. The problem with getting participants to participate in a study is a common one. According to Rowley (2012), getting people to participate is one of the most challenging aspects of qualitative research, with theoretical and pragmatic issues the researcher needs to consider when recruiting participants and deciding on the number or participants and the length of interviews. The theoretical angle depends on the nature of the research topic and framework. For instance, ethnographic research regarding narrative histories would require a longer time than a topic about the impact of technology on work practice. The pragmatic perspective would look at the time the participants are willing to spare for the interview and their availability. Some participants said that their colleagues thought the questionnaire was too long and they did not wish to spend such time answering the questions. Another pragmatic aspect to consider is the ability to sustain long interviews. Rowley (2012) recommends as a basic start for new researchers to conduct 30-minute interviews with twelve participants, which I followed.

When ten days to two weeks had passed without any new participants, I asked the supervisor's permission to widen the sample population into those who started their English courses with either ENGL003 or ENGL004, instead of those who started at ENGL003 only. This is in accordance with MacDougall and Fudge's (2001) advice to look for alternatives if there is a difficulty in getting participants after attempting to get them, because more negotiations may compromise the integrity of the researcher and will not be conductive to the study as this is not 'not a powerful force demanding compliance in research' (p. 123). After posting a reminder with the new criteria on Facebook and sending an email to those who started at ENGL004, I was able to reach the required number. Participants were self-selected. That was both an advantage and a disadvantage. The advantage was that no one was forced to volunteer in any way, and only those who were genuinely interested participated. The disadvantage is, as Dörnyei (2003b) states, that the sample is not necessarily representative of the target population. It could be that only students who were motivated to learn English participated, whereas those who had lower levels of motivation did not. However, in Robinson's (2014) view, it is better to get participants who are more open and more patient to have the interview to get in-depth information from them, which is not offered in the more general or random sample. Hence, I went with the decision of getting self-selected participants for the study.

A total of 38 students expressed interest in the study. 21 of them filled in the questionnaire, and 14 expressed their willingness to be interviewed. 13 out of the 14 students responded to arrangements for the interviews. One of the participants was not eligible because she started her English courses at an advanced course, so I deleted all her data. Thus, 20 participants completed the questionnaires. Subsequently, 12 of them took part in an interview. The questionnaires were all completed online on Google Forms. 11 interviews took place at the university campus in vacant offices or classrooms. One interview was conducted at a chain coffee shop. The coffee shop was chosen based on the participant's preference and its location in the neighbourhood where he lives. As mentioned previously, all questionnaires except two were answered in English. All interviewees were asked whether they preferred the interviews to be conducted in English or Arabic. All participants preferred to have it in Arabic. All interviews were recorded using both the sound recording application in my laptop as well as a separate voice recorder to make sure the data was not lost due to any error in the recording in either device. More details regarding recording, transcription and translation are mentioned in section **4.8**.

The 20 participants consisted of 8 females and 12 males. This seemed to me to be a good ratio because the number of males is higher than the females at this institution. It is normally the case in STEM institutions in Egypt, since only 29.1% of STEM workers are women (Alam, 2020). In the interviews, only 2 females participated, and the rest were males. This was not a good ratio, but since the participants were volunteers, there was nothing I could do to change the number. All the participants were in their first year, over 18 years old, and had started their English courses at the university at either ENGL003 or ENGL004. All of them were Egyptians and received their education in Egypt, except one student who had lived in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for a while and spent his primary school days there.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

Human subjects must be protected in qualitative research and ethical considerations should be observed. This study was considered a low-risk one. All participants were over 18. Participation was voluntary. The study had the approval of the university under study and ethical approval was obtained from the College of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the University of Glasgow. The ethical guidelines provided by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2018) were followed. The guidelines stress how to 'balance maximising the benefits and minimising any risk or harm to participants, sponsors, the community of educational researchers and…professionals' (p. 8). Though I used to work at this institution where the research was conducted, I had left 18 months prior to the study, and none of the participants had been one of my students since they were all freshman students and hence started their education after I had left. All participants received a copy of the Plain Language Statement (Appendix 1). All interview participants signed the Consent Form (Appendix 2) and were aware that they could withdraw from the study at any moment; they were also assured that no grades were involved in their participation or lack thereof.

In its *Recommendations for Good Practice in Applied Linguistics* (2021), the British Association for Applied Linguistics (BAAL) states that

> The researcher must attempt to anticipate potential threats to both anonymity (for example, by removing names, locations and information contained in the data that might render informants identifiable) and confidentiality (for example, by making data secure). (p. 6)

At the beginning of the interviews, I reassured the participants that I would attempt as much as possible to keep their identities anonymised. This was also mentioned in the Consent Form. I made a list of the participants' names and gave each participant a code (PT) in addition to a number, (e.g., PT12). This code was used for saving the recordings, transcripts, and translated transcripts and no one had access to the identities except me. These codes were also used in the data analysis. Furthermore, I strove to keep the names of any instructors mentioned anonymised by providing fake initials instead of their real names.

4.6 Quality

The criteria for quality in qualitative research differ from that required from quantitative studies. Quantitative research is judged by its reliability (the stability of the instrument and the its ability to render similar results when the research is replicated) and validity (whether the research instrument is actually measuring what should be measured) (Golafshani, 2003), whereas the criteria of quality in qualitative research are defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as Credibility (achieved through means such as triangulation and member checks) , Confirmability, Dependability (through audit trails) and Transferability (through thick description). Lincoln and Guba (2013) later modified and renamed the criteria into five criteria of constructivist inquiry, which they call authenticity criteria: fairness, ontological, educative, catalytic, and tactical authenticity, which I will discuss in detail. In this section, I discuss how I adhered to the criteria of quality for qualitative research in the constructivist paradigm.

Each authenticity criterion is identified by Lincoln and Guba (2013) along with how it can be achieved. First, fairness aims to ensure the ‘extent to which all competing constructions have been accessed, exposed, deconstructed, and taken into account in shaping the inquiry product’ (p. 70). The methods for achieving it in my case were through following the informed consent procedures prior to data collection. I also resorted to the help of a professional translator in reviewing my translation of the transcripts after removing any identification of the participants. Secondly, ontological authenticity refers to the extent to which the researchers have become ‘aware of constructions that they did not realize they held until the inquiry brought them from the tacit to the propositional level’ (p. 70). This can be achieved through the inquirer’s openness of purpose, explaining the inquirer’s etic position, and a comparison between the initial and final personal constructions. I openly stated my purpose for the research to the participants both before and during the data collection (in the statement of purpose, the introduction of the questionnaire, and verbally at the beginning of the interviews). Moreover, I clarified my previous emic position as a former instructor at the institution and my etic position as a researcher visiting the institution for my study.

Third, educative authenticity refers to the degree in which the individual has become more understanding and shows tolerance towards the constructions of others. Peer debriefings and introspective statements about the growth of the inquirer and participants can help achieve this criterion. Knowing that the interview context may make participants feel it is a situation of power, and the one who has the power is the interviewer, I strove to make the participants feel empowered and as comfortable as I could. According to Mischler (1986), it is important to give the participants the chance to make comments about their responses after the interview is over. I offered all participants access to review the interview transcript at any time.

The fourth criterion is catalytic authenticity, which aims to determine

> the extent to which action (clarifying the focus at issue, moving to eliminate or ameliorate the problem, sharpening values) is stimulated and facilitated by the inquiry. (p. 70)

The production of a joint construction of understanding is the means of achieving this criterion, and the dissertation is the product of such a construction in which I analysed the different versions of reality presented by the participants and created my own construction accordingly. I offered to send my analysis (construction) to the participants, but I have not received any answer regarding this issue till the moment of writing the dissertation.

Finally, tactical authenticity, the 'extent to which individuals are empowered to take the action that the inquiry implies or proposes' (p. 70), is determined by several methods such as discussing the issues of power and confidentiality with the individuals in advance, and using consent forms, both of which I did as part of the requirements of the College Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects at the university of Glasgow.

4.7 Reflexivity

One method of ensuring quality or trustworthiness in qualitative research is transparency. Indeed, the axiology of constructivist research involves a direct explanation of how the construction was shaped (Lincoln and Guba, 2013). Moreover, the quality criteria mentioned above (**4.6**) by Lincoln and Guba (1985) can all be achieved by maintaining a reflexive journal. Reflexivity is defined as 'qualitative researchers' engagement of continuous examination and explanation of how they have influenced a research project' (Dowling, 2008, p. 748). In Gibbs' (2007) view, reflexivity is essential because the researcher in qualitative research is the instrument, is not objective, and does not have neutral standpoints. Another perspective is held by Palaganas et al. (2017), where they claim that the researcher is neither subjective nor objective, rather the research becomes a dialogue between the social world and the researcher herself, and hence the need for reflexivity.

I was keen on defining my research process within the framework of reflexivity, aligning with May and Perry's (2014) view that reflexivity is a practice in which qualitative researchers can engage to examine the claims upon which the social world is based to explore both the points of strengths and weaknesses in the forms of knowledge. This puts reflexivity as a way of thinking rather than a method. In addition to displaying how I thought and justifying my choices, I kept an electronic reflexive journal, especially during the data collection and data analysis phases of the research. During the recruitment phase, I wrote about the responses and the options I had when I did not get the number of responses I needed quickly. Then I wrote about my impressions of the interviews when I felt there was something I wanted to write about (Figure 4.1). After the interviews, I created a folder for participant profiles, in which I wrote details about each participant, their background, and my initial analysis regarding how that participant's answers could fit inside the theoretical framework (Figure 4.2). Moreover, during the data analysis, I kept an analytic memo to reflect on the coding process and data analysis. I will discuss this point further in section **4.9**. Such notes helped me maintain awareness of my thought process in each step of the research and showed me how my thinking evolved as this process developed.

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I got approval to expand the criteria to include those who started from 004 and I got a surge in responses. I now have 16 responses. 10of them are interested in interviews. I also arranged two interviews so far for next week. Hope to get more soon. I am very happy now I feel I am on the right track, although changing the criteria will make some changes in the research questions. Who knows maybe this will enrich the thesis. I will keep an open mind.

I have just started reading the responses of the questionnaire. I am intrigued by PT1. The main obstacle, almost appearing in all his responses, is language anxiety, especially when it comes to speaking. When it comes to the learning experience the one thing that featured strongly is feeling comfortable when working in groups.

Both PT1 and PT2 showed that having a native speaker friend would be beneficial for them. I felt that PT2 is just writing cliches in his responses. PT1-5 have no problems with the instructors. They find them all supportive.

Figure 4-1 An Excerpt of my Field Notes

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Education	Public Azhari
Courses taken	003- 004
Duration of interview	22:16
Word count	3529
Ideal Self	It is not clear with this participant at all. He just sees himself as better but there are no clear goals.
Ought-to-Self	I think this one is the strongest. He explicitly stated that English to him is a tool that will open for him the path to knowledge in science. There is a strong instrumental motivation at work here.
Learning Experience	Unlike many other participants, this one does not talk much about a positive learning experience. I can almost detect an indifference here. The teachers do not have any impact on him. He enjoys his time with his colleagues. They joke around a lot so this could be the most detected element of his learning experience
Language anxiety	Not detected here. He does not mind making mistakes because this ia a learning opportunity for him
Willingness to communicate	Not clear
Integrativenss	Barely detected. It is all about instrumental motivation for this participant
International posture	Yes. I can say this is the most dominant aspect when it comes to motivation in this study. This is where the participant finds the best content. He also made a comment that if China was the superpower everyone would be learning Chinese, not English.

Figure 4-2 An Excerpt of a Participant Profile

4.8 Data Management

4.8.1 Collecting and recording data

Fearing the loss of data due to technical failure for any reason, I chose to record the interviews in two different devices, since data loss by equipment failure is one of the pitfalls that a qualitative researcher can fall into (Easton, Fry, and Greenberg, 2000). I used a Zoom H1n voice recorder, and the Microsoft voice recorder built-in application on my laptop. This was helpful in keeping a backup and helped when the Zoom recorder ran out of battery during one interview, and I did not have to stop the interviewee because there was another device recording the interview.

4.8.2 Transcription

The interview recordings comprised about five and a half hours. As mentioned previously, all interviews were in Arabic, in the Egyptian Arabic dialect. According to Kowal and O'Connell (2014) the process of transcription in qualitative research entails a number of decisions that require 'a very critical eye (and ear)' (p. 66). I had some decisions to make. First, I decided to transcribe the interviews myself, rather than seek the help of a professional agency, despite the time and effort it takes to transcribe in Arabic without the aid of transcribing applications, since dialectical Arabic does not have orthographic rules and there is not enough transcribed data to create a reliable model (Khurana, Glass, and Ali, 2019). With the added hindrance of transcribing without the aid of a transcribing application, the average time taken in transcription is five to six times longer than it takes to collect the data (Gibbs, 2007). In my case, it took even longer, with each interview taking around 8 hours to transcribe. The reason I invested this amount of time transcribing was to immerse myself in the data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), the first phase of thematic analysis, my chosen method of data analysis (discussed in detail in section **4.9**), is to get acquainted as much as possible with the data, and transcription is one method to thoroughly get involved in the data analysis process. Since I was listening very carefully and writing exactly what the participants were saying, this gave me a chance to familiarize myself with the data.

The second decision I had to make was regarding the amount of transcription I needed for the data analysis. The choice of transcription mainly depends on the purpose of investigation (Hammersley, 2012). Bailey (2008) asserts that deciding on the amount of data to be transcribed reflects 'underlying assumptions about what counts as data' (p. 128). I wanted to give myself the option of analysing the whole interview so as not to miss anything. Thus, I opted for transcribing all the interviews from start to finish in case something became useful in my analysis. It was also a further opportunity to immerse myself in the data. Braun and Clarke (2006) note that even though thematic analysis does not require the same detail as conversation analysis, it does require a thorough transcription so that the transcript remains true to the recordings, bearing in mind any utterances or punctuation that can change the meaning. As for the type of transcription, Kowal and O'Connell (2014) specify four methods of transcription: 1) standard orthography, which does not mention deviations from the standard spelling and pronunciation, 2) literary transcription, which takes account of the deviations in pronunciation, 3) eye dialect, which takes account of the exact pronunciation of the speaker, regardless of any rules, and 4) a phonetic transcription of all the words spoken by the interviewee. For the purposes of my study, the standard orthography method was the most suitable. I also employed the same method when I translated the text, since some participants used some English words and phrases while speaking during the interview. When transcribing, I paid special attention to the pauses and when the participants were joking or laughing because these can be influential in the data analysis (Bailey, 2008), although as Mischler (1986) warns, these can be merely interpretations, and a return to the original recordings multiple times may be necessary. I tried to transcribe as soon as possible after each interview while the whole experience was fresh in my mind.

4.8.3 Translation

In order not to lose focus of the original interview text, I translated each interview after transcribing it. Once again, I did not make use of a professional translator, having studied translation in college and worked as a freelance translator from English to Arabic and vice versa. The time spent in translation was worth the time and effort because it gave me another opportunity to immerse myself in the data. Translating the transcripts can be considered as a very close reading, a step in the total immersion of data, which in Seidman's (2006) view, is a process that cannot be substituted. I translated the whole transcript for the same reason, and to also make sure I was not neglecting any important utterance which could be important in the data analysis.

An issue I faced in translation is accuracy and staying true to the original transcript. The main problem with translation is that it is basically an interpretation (Temple and Young, 2004; Van Nes et. al, 2010). Like the reader of a text, the translator approaches the text based on their own understanding and experiences, which makes 'no neutral position from which to translate and the power relationships within research need to be acknowledged' (Temple and Young, 2004, p. 164). To overcome this issue, I sought the help of a colleague who works as a full-time professional translator. Though I did not ask her to translate, I gave her the transcripts and translated texts (after anonymising the participants) and asked her to select random excerpts and check their translation. This way, incidents of misinterpretation could be detected and revised.

Being the researcher as well as the primary translator bear on my positionality in this qualitative study. Positionality focuses on 'the position that the researcher has chosen to adopt within a given research study' (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013 p. 71). Qualitative research requires that I both acknowledge my positionality and accordingly plan and make decisions in my research. According to Holmes (2020), it 'acknowledges and recognizes that researchers are part of the social world they are researching' (p. 3). In translating the transcripts, I was aware of my etic and emic positions. Since interpretivist/constructivist research acknowledges subjectivity, being a researcher and translator provided a better chance for a comprehensive, in-depth analysis, similar to Turhan and Bernard's (2022) experience as qualitative researchers translating from Turkish to English. However, I made sure when I was interpreting the participants' emotions (e.g., in Chapter 8), I was interpreting based on literature on theory and emotions experienced as a result of self-discrepancy (Higgins, 1987).

4.9 Data Analysis

After translating the interviews, it was time for data analysis. My chosen method was Thematic Analysis (TA), using Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach. TA is defined as a method for 'identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail' (p. 79). Thus, its main feature is data reduction through finding patterns (Roulston, 2010; Ayres, 2008). I chose this method for several reasons. First, it is recommended for new researchers. As Braun and Clarke (2006) state, it embodies the core skills of qualitative analysis. Second, it is useful for research that aims to identify and understand patterns in relation to people's experiences, views, and perspectives (Clarke and Braun, 2017). Third, TA allows for both latent and semantic interpretation of data, or as Willig (2014) names them: suspicious and empathic interpretation. Suspicious interpretation aims at finding implicit meaning in the data, whereas empathic interpretation highlights what is presented in the data explicitly. My research questions were posed to understand what affects student L2 motivation, and these factors may not have been explicitly stated by the participants but can be gleaned from the patterns in their responses.

TA is not linear, but recursive. Though it involves five phases, analysis is done throughout (Vasimoradi, Trunen, and Boondas, 2013; Braun and Clarke, 2006; Saldaña, 2013). I here explain how I went through the five stages:

1- Familiarising myself with the data

As mentioned previously, I immersed myself in the data through transcribing and translating the interviews myself, and by writing my reflections in my reflexive journal. I did not start coding until I had finished transcribing and translating all the interviews and the two questionnaires answered in Arabic. This is contrary to Saldaña's (2013) advice to start coding while doing field research and not to wait until it is over. However, I preferred to code the English texts rather than the Arabic ones. I did write initial comments in my reflexive journal during the interview phase and throughout the transcription and translation phases.

2- Generating initial codes

In this phase, Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasise the importance of coding as much as possible. This is an ‘initial’ phase because it is not the only phase of coding. Saldaña (2013) recommends at least two cycles of coding since no one gets it right in the first round. It is worth noting that I was doing both deductive and inductive analysis. According to Reichertz (2014), ‘deduction interprets the world “from above”, from within a system of rules. Induction interprets the world “from below”’ (p. 130). Thus, while I was searching for the three levels of the L2MSS (looking from above), I was also looking for other factors (looking from below), beyond or perhaps along with the Ideal, Ought-to Selves and the L2 Learning Experience. My analysis is therefore both theory-driven and data-driven.

For the first cycle, I performed a provisional coding to see how the data related to the theory. Provisional coding is done using a pre-determined set of codes Saldaña (2013). At the same time, I did a descriptive coding, catching all possible items that might be related to the research question. I also did in-vivo coding to capture some significant phrases in the participants’ own words. These methods were among those recommended by Saldaña (2013) for the first cycle of coding. This cycle was done manually. I printed out the transcripts and questionnaire responses and used coloured pens. I had around 60000 words worth of data. The second cycle was also manual, I made a new copy of all the data and started the coding afresh, and this time I added affective coding when I started to notice various emotions expressed by the participants throughout. Affective coding focuses on the ‘subjective qualities of human experience (e.g., emotions, values, conflicts, judgments) by directly acknowledging and naming those experiences’ (Saldaña, 2013, p. 105). Throughout the data analysis, I kept both a codebook and an analytic memo as sections in my reflexive journal. The codebook, according to Gibbs (2007) is a list of all codes and their definitions, whereas the analytic memo kept all my thoughts regarding these codes and their relationships.

I added a third cycle of coding just to make sure I was immersing myself in the data properly and that I was not neglecting or misinterpreting any of the participants’ responses. For this cycle, I used Atlas.ti. Using computer software for data analysis (CAQDAS) after manual coding was useful on more than one level. Although it can never replace the researcher, its various options enable the researcher to work on different levels of visibility (Konopasek, 2008). It shows the frequency of codes and can easily create maps. It can also easily retrieve all the quotations under each code and sort out code trees. The program also enables comments and analysis, yet its effectiveness depends on the ability of the researcher (Brito et al., 2017). It will not create an analysis for the researcher, it just makes the process more accessible.

3- Searching for themes

This phase moves from coding to sorting out the codes into themes. I strove to create code groups that answered my research questions, so I did not deviate from the purpose of the study. I referred to my codebook and analytic memos and started collating the codes together into groups and the groups into potential themes. Appendix 5 shows the initial grouping of themes. I started with six potential themes: school experience, ought-to drivers, internal drivers, motivational constraints, socio-educational benefits, and student-instructor relationship.

4- Reviewing themes

The next step is to make sure whether these themes really address the research questions and check whether they can be reformulated to form new themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) assert that some themes are not elaborate enough to be themes, and others can be combined to form a new one. After carefully reviewing the initial themes (Appendix 5), I added the previous school experience to contrast with the present one, which in turn includes the socio-educational benefits. Moreover, I added the ought-to drivers with the internal drivers. I kept the student-teacher relationship as a separate theme, as well as the motivational constraints. Appendix 6 shows the coding map I made to reach these four themes and shows the coding categories included in each one.

5- Refining and naming themes

This phase comes after the coding map. Here, each theme was defined and refined. Sub-themes were also considered. The final four themes, discussed in the coming four chapters are: 1- The Self: “I love English anyway” vs “I am learning it for other reasons”; 2- The Learning Situation: Past vs Present

Learning Experience; 3- The Instructor: “The instructors are the best thing”; and 4- The Obstacles: Motivational Constraints.

6- Producing the report

The final phase was writing up the themes in a manner that displays the reliability of my analysis. Writing the four themes required careful reading of the extracts and choosing the ones that stood out as clear and relevant examples of the theme. Since the analysis in TA is non-linear, the writing up revealed the interconnection between the themes and the complexity of L2 motivation as a construct in this study. The findings revealed that all aspects of L2 motivation are interrelated as indicated in Figure. 4.3. For instance, the Ideal L2 Self and Ought-to Self often overlap. Emotions, as the study demonstrates, have a strong role, and can affect and be affected by the three levels of the L2MSS. The teacher can affect the Learning Experience and is related to both the Ideal and L2 Self, depending on their impact on the student.

Figure 4-3 The Complexity of the L2 Motivation Construct

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodology, methods, and research design for this research. Starting with an interpretivist/constructivist paradigm in mind, I built up my research design accordingly. The interviews and qualitative questionnaires provided me with rich data from which emerged an elaborate outlook on student perceptions regarding L2 motivation. I was able to gain a deeper insight into L2 motivation as a complex construct with various elements at play, sometimes overlapping, sometimes in a causational relationship, and sometimes separate. The following four chapters discuss the four themes arising from the data. Chapter 5 starts with the first theme which is the internal drivers of L2 motivation in the participants, paying close attention to the participants’ L2 Ideal and Ought-to selves.

Chapter 5 The Self

“I love English anyway” vs “I am learning it for other reasons”

5.1 Introduction

This study aimed to understand the different factors affecting students’ motivation to learn English at the university under study. Such understanding can establish an awareness of how students in a certain context are affected negatively or positively by motivational factors both on the cognitive and the socio-cultural level. This can in turn help in designing and/or developing a curriculum that can address their different motivational levels. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to understand the effect of the instructor and the learning situation in general on the students. From the participants’ answers to both the questionnaire and the follow-up interviews, I was able to link their perceptions to Dörnyei’s L2MSS. Other concepts and theories are also found to be relevant to the data and will be discussed in this chapter and the subsequent chapters devoted to the findings (Chapters 5 till 8). The research questions of the study are:

RQ1. What enhances students’ L2 motivation from their own perspective in this particular context?
RQ2. What are the effects of their previous language learning experiences before college?
RQ3. What are the constraints affecting their L2 motivation?

In chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8 I examine the themes emerging from the data. I identified four themes that together could be said to answer these research questions. Each chapter discusses one of the themes due to the extensive amount of data rendered by both the interviews and the questionnaires. The four themes are:

- “I love English anyway” vs “I am learning it for other reasons”;
- Past vs Present Learning Experience;

- "The instructors are the best thing"; and
- Motivational Constraints.

In each chapter devoted to the data analysis, I present the findings and discuss them, as well as explain how each theme addresses one or more of the research questions.

The three research questions will not be addressed in a linear fashion, i.e., each chapter does not attempt to answer only one question. The questions are tackled across the four chapters for various reasons. Firstly, understanding motivation in terms of the three components of the L2MSS (Ideal L2 Self, Ought-to Self, and the Learning Experience) means that there is an amount of overlap, as the results demonstrate across the sections. Secondly, L2 motivation is a complex construct and is interrelated with other concepts such as affect, self-regulation, and International Posture. These are all discussed in this chapter as well as the coming ones. The diagram in Chapter 4 (Figure 4.3) demonstrates how the themes are all interrelated, and hence references and links across themes will be explicitly made throughout my analysis. Finally, the amount of data concerning the L2 Learning Experience is of such density that it seemed appropriate to separate it into the different themes in different chapters (see Appendix 7 showing the code density).

This chapter offers an insight into the participants' perceptions of their motivation to learn English and how this influences their Ideal and Ought-to Self. As the data reveal, there is a wide range of perceptions. Students' desire to learn English either stemmed from internal drivers like interest and love for the language (Ideal Self), or it leaned more towards instrumental reasons (Ought-to Self). The chapter is divided into three sections: After this introductory section, section **5.2** deals with the perceptions of the participants regarding their internal drivers to learn English. Section **5.3** discusses purely instrumental drivers. Section **5.4** moves from the internal drivers into drivers that can be considered as both Ideal and Ought-to Selves. Finally, section **5.5** sums up the findings which make up this theme and links back to the research question(s) of the dissertation.

5.2 “I love English anyway”

This section explores the various aspects of the participants’ perceptions of their Ideal L2 Self (Figure 5.1). As mentioned in Chapter 3 where the relevant theoretical and empirical literature is discussed, various theories attribute students’ desire to learn an L2 to a positive attitude towards language learning (Gardner,1985; Williams and Burden, 1997; and Dörnyei, 2005, 2009a). Only two participants expressed love for the language for its own sake. For example, PT3 stated: ‘I love English anyway’, and ‘I rarely find difficulties studying in English, but it may be because I have a passion for doing so’. PT5 also expressed the same sentiment: ‘I love English in the first place’ and stated that he generally prefers to express himself in English, which appeared to make the Learning Experience for him a positive one, regardless of his level of proficiency. However, there are indications throughout both the questionnaires and the interviews that suggest positive attitudes to learning English, as will be discussed below. Several studies link interest in the language, mainly considered as an intrinsic motivator, to be a determining factor in L2 motivation (Ramage, 1990; Tahaineh and Daana, 2013). Positive attitudes to the English language were also found in Lewko’s (2017) study in the Egyptian higher education context. In the following section, I explore these positive attitudes in various forms as expressed by the participants. All participants in this section were not learning English because they saw it as an obligation, but they all had an intrinsic motivation to learn the language.

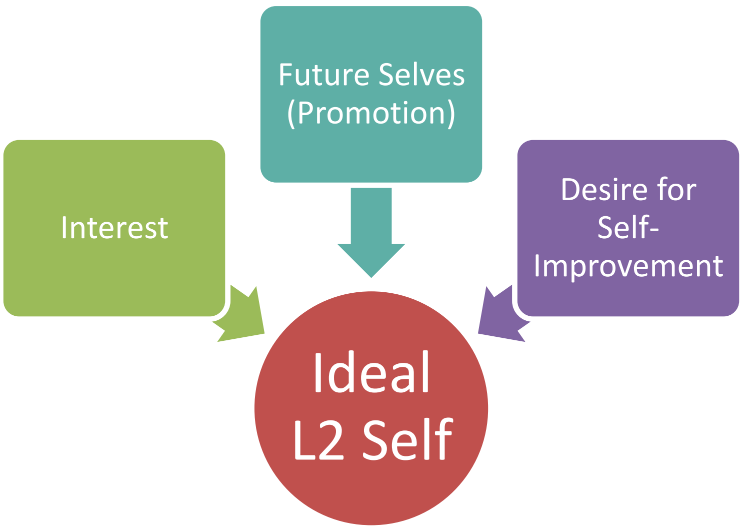


Figure 5-1 The Aspects of the Ideal L2 Self in the Study

5.2.1 Interest in the English Language

Educators as early as Dewey (1913) recognized the importance of interest in the subject matter in facilitating knowledge and understanding. Hidi (2006) defines interest as a psychological state which occurs during ‘interactions between persons and their objects of interest, and is characterized by increased attention, concentration and affect’ (p. 70). When students are interested in a topic or a subject, they are more likely to use higher order thinking skills, which helps in adding to their knowledge (Murphy and Alexander, 2002), and create a link between interest in L2 and the Ideal L2 Self. Hidi (1990) makes a distinction between individual and situational interest. Individual interest refers to a stable interest that has been developed over time (Hidi, 2000). Situational interest, on the other hand, is triggered by an action or a situation and is not a lasting one. Interest in this section refers to individual interest in the language acquired by the participants before joining the university. Situational interest will be discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

In relation to learning English for the love of the language, participants expressed interest in the language or the culture of the language as it is available to them through books, entertainment, and the media. PT13 expressed his view on entertainment in English:

> I watch movies, TV shows, YouTube videos and listen to music all in English. I am a rap fan so the only challenge I face is that they talk too fast, that's it nothing more. And no, I prefer English entertainment over Arabic. (PT13)

PT20 preferred movies and songs in English:

> I still watch English movies with Arabic subtitles. I don’t understand every word when I listen to a song, sometimes I predict the word that I listen to in a song then I discover it is different. I prefer English movies to Arabic ones, because of the story of the movie itself. (PT20)

His aim was to be able to watch and understand without resorting to subtitles, similar to PT1’s goals as he stated that he wanted to improve his English so as not to depend on subtitles when watching movies and the news:

> I want to improve my level a bit so that instead of watching with English subtitles, I don’t use subtitles, Ok? To be able to listen to the news without

> having to pay attention to the subtitles. This is something I want to be able to do. (PT1)

From such an interest (intrinsic motivation) arises a desire to work on their English.

Entertainment in English is very popular in Egypt. According to Rachty and Sabat (1986), ever since Egypt started making its own movies in Arabic in the early 20th century, it still relies heavily on acquiring foreign films from abroad, mainly from the United States. With availability through the traditional media (TV and radio, etc.) as well as through the various sources of the internet and live streaming, it may be considered only natural to want to understand them without the use of Arabic subtitles which are, in any case, not always available, especially for the news. According to Crystal (2003), English language movies dominate the international cinemas despite there being movies in other languages. Thus, entertainment can be considered as an incentive to improve English. This view was shared by PT8:

> I watch all movies in English since preparatory school. At first, I needed Arabic subtitles to understand but after getting into high school I could follow what was said during the movies without looking and sometimes even detecting errors in translation. I can now watch English series without the need of subtitles. Yes, I prefer English songs, movies, and series more than Arabic ones for the plain reason of just loving the English language and also because most of them have a deeper meaning and heart-warming stories. They change the way you view the world. (PT8)

The participant linked his interest in the language to his preference for entertainment in English and ascribed this preference to the superiority of the English content to the Arabic one in his opinion. His cultural perception of entertainment in English may indicate a respect for the English culture as a whole. This is relevant to what Kormos and Csizér (2008) found in their study in the Hungarian context, where interest in English for adolescents was linked to the cultural products of the language. It is also relevant to Rasool and Winke's (2019) study where they found that Pakistani university students showed an appreciation for L2 culture.

Interest in the language for the purpose of entertainment can be considered from different perspectives. Firstly, it can be a sign that the participant is learning out of a positive attitude to the language (an internal driver). Secondly, it can be a desire to integrate oneself to the L2 community in the future (integrative motivation). Finally, it can be considered a sign of the International Posture of the English language (Yashima, 2009) as mentioned previously. This aspect will be examined in further detail with reference to upcoming results in section **5.4.1** in this chapter. It is also possible to look at it as an indication of a personal enjoyment at the varied forms of media presented in the English language in comparison to its Arabic counterpart. According to Waterman and Jayakar (2000), Hollywood movies attract global audiences through different means, one of which is the element of awe that is ‘primarily instilled by high production values that present majestic vistas, lavish sets, and lush costuming’ (p. 12).

Moving on to reading, PT2 would like to read books in English without difficulty:

> I have to learn it and to be fluent in it for my own good. I will not restrict myself to the few translated novels. Or to read in Arabic… I want to see the other points of view. So, I have to be fluent in the cultural side [for cultural pursuits]. (PT2)

This time the desire is to have more exposure to ideas from other cultures, not just the available ones that are presented in or translated into Arabic. For PT2, this interest turned his Learning Experience into personal enjoyment. For instance, he checked *Nature* journal online ‘not for any reason, not for the topic, I just want to see how they wrote this paper’. However, as will be shown in subsequent sections, PT2 learned English for both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. In the quote above, it is apparent that he was deriving personal pleasure at improving his English. In class, however, in the non-credit courses, he stated that he was ‘literally learning English now because all the courses are obligatory at the university right now’, an indication that his Ought-to Self was also driving his motivation. PT5, who prefered to write in English, explained that he is not doing that ‘to be classy…But I find that a lot of words are more powerful in English.’

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) associate L2 learning with the value domains proposed by Eccles and Wigfield (1995). The three levels of L2 learning value domains proposed are: intrinsic, intercultural, and instrumental, of which the first two are evident in the participants’ responses. The instrumental values appear in the next section (**5.3**). The intrinsic value is associated with interest in the language and enjoyment in learning it. The intercultural value includes positive attitudes to the culture of the L2 language. Finally, instrumental value refers to the positive results obtained from learning the language. The participants mentioned in this section reflect both intrinsic and intercultural values of learning English, exemplified by their interest in the language and their enjoyment/preference to have their entertainment in English. This section explored one aspect of the students' Ideal L2 Self as cultured human beings. The following section will tackle their Ideal L2 selves from another angle.

5.2.2 Future selves

As mentioned in Chapter 3, Dörnyei borrowed the concept of the Ideal and Ought-to L2 Self from the theory of possible selves (Markus and Nurius, 1986) and self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987). The theory of possible selves postulates that there is an area in self-knowledge that encompasses a desirable image of one's future self as well as an undesirable one. The ideal self, in Markus and Nurius's view, provides the 'essential link between the self-concept and motivation' (p. 945). In language learning, Ryan and Dörnyei (2013) add that the Ideal L2 Self acts as a future self-representation of the learner as a proficient language speaker and accordingly has the potential to 'both initiate and sustain' L2 motivation (p. 91). In both the interview and the questionnaire, I asked participants about how they viewed their future and almost all the participants displayed a clear vision of a future self as a confident, fluent communicator. Whether this image adheres to the criteria of the Ideal L2 Self that Dörnyei mentions (2009a; 2009b; Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2012) and that I discussed in the literature review (**3.4.3**) remained different from one participant to another. I asked in the questionnaire and in the interview: 'After graduation, how do you see yourself as an English speaker?'. The answers varied from very vague images to very elaborate ones. Some images were gleaned from answers to other questions along the interview and were not the direct answer to my original question.

The vague future images ranged from 'I think it will be better than now' (PT15), 'I hope I will speak English fluently' (PT10), 'good speaker but still have a lot to practise and learn about' (PT13), to 'I hope to be able to give speeches like TedEx after finishing all English courses' (PT8). There were no further explanations or roadmaps to how these images might be achieved in the future. It is worth noting that, like Takahashi's (2013) study, it was difficult for most of these participants to imagine themselves as someone who speaks English in terms of goals in the future. Takahashi regards this as an Ideal Self that is not vivid and hence is not effective.

On the one hand, this lack of elaboration could be an indication of the existence of an Ideal L2 Self, as long as 'the person we would like to become speaks an L2' (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2012, p. 86). On the other hand, for the Ideal L2 Self to work as a strong motivator, it needs to be 'elaborate and vivid' (Dörnyei, 2009b), which is not the case as far as the quotes imply. Nevertheless, having an unclear Ideal L2 Self, or not having one at all, is not out of the ordinary. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2012) suggest a 'motivational intervention' from the teacher to help the students' 'mindfulness about the significance of the ideal self' (p. 131). I explore the students' views on the role of the teacher in full detail in Chapter 7. Another possibility is that the participants needed more probing questions in the interview to get them to reveal their future selves. For instance, PT19's answer to the question about their future self in the interview could be considered vague:

> As an English speaker? I think I will be good. My level will be very high, and I will speak freely in English with no fear, and I think I will be good in speaking, listening, and writing. (PT19)

But in other instances, his answers indicate a vivid and elaborate Ideal L2 Self, as I will explain shortly in the next section (**5.2.3**).

Other participants had clearer visions of themselves as future English speakers. Their plans were more elaborate and more plausible, another of the criteria of the Ideal L2 Self. PT3 envisaged herself after finishing all the English and humanities courses, which are also in English and depend on good writing and speaking skills:

> I think that English is all about practice, so if we take more courses, the rest of the humanities courses, like World Literature, we will keep on practising and the English language will improve… I gained confidence from the courses.

> That was the one thing I was missing so I can communicate now in English with no problem. So, I won't have a problem in the future. (PT3)

On more than one occasion, she praised the fact that she was given the chance to practise English in the courses offered by the university. It is logical that by the end of the English and Humanities courses, she would expect to be able to communicate in English without many difficulties. It is also a plausible ambition. However, her vision was limited to just communicating in English without giving any details. All of these students had clear visions of themselves as confident, competent English speakers, but there was still a lack of clarity regarding just what they would be doing. It is possible that the vision of themselves as fluent English speakers was enough for their Ideal Selves.

To elaborate further, PT1 had a clearer vision of a future professional self in his field, as a person who will pursue graduate studies abroad and will present in conferences:

> I have to, not be like a native, but to [improve] as much as I can. I have a vision yes that I will reach a good level so as not to make the same mistakes I am making in spelling or stuff like that. (PT1)

For others, it was more of a desire to be able to 'speak with a native speaker without him suffering when I am speaking with him' (PT2). Their plan to achieve that is to have a friend from abroad to practise with in return for teaching him Arabic. These results are contrary to some studies conducted on first year and senior year university students (Far, Rajabb, and Etemadzadehc, 2012) which revealed that students in the first year had no clear sense of an Ideal L2 Self as opposed to senior ones. Course (2018), however, found that the Ideal L2 Self was stronger than the Ought-to Self in her first-year research participants. To conclude this section, although there is a clear indication of an Ideal L2 Self as someone who speaks fluently and confidently, the participants did not explicitly state how they envisage themselves as language speakers in the future. These participants appeared to have a vision, but the vision was not vivid enough to be an effective Ideal L2 Self.

5.2.3 The resulting desire for self-improvement

As a result of the intrinsic interest in the language as well as a vision of a fluent future self, many of the participants attempted to improve their language outside the classroom. They recounted strategies they had employed for self-improvement outside the classroom. Some of these endeavours required the help of other students, or friends from outside the university. Before joining the university, PT4 used to gather with his friends (who were also learning English in their own schools/universities) at a co-working space to practise English in his hometown. PT2 did the same, sometimes with his friends from outside the university. Despite some resistance, his friends were cooperative: 'At first, they made fun of me, but I explained to them and …they were very helpful'. Some made individual efforts that ranged from reading books (PT5, PT2, PT12, PT20) to increase their vocabulary, to working on their own to explore additional information on topics they were studying in class. One participant in particular, PT12, felt a gap in the English level between himself and the rest of the class, so in order to catch up with them he started to 'skim the materials and search for online content until I was able to understand what I was supposed to do'. PT22 found a Youtube language channel to supplement what he was taking in class. He found it 'more useful than what I am learning now'. Similarly, PT19 made use of online educational technology using an online native speaking tutoring service to improve his speaking, as well as a writing application to provide feedback on his writing.

These actions can be linked to the concept of self-directed learning or autonomy, which is closely related to motivation. Pintrich (2000) defines self-directed learning as an 'active, constructed process' (p. 453) through which learners endeavour to control their behaviour, motivation, and cognition by making use of their goals as well as their environment. The participants mentioned above had all decided to take control of their learning outside the classroom as an additional source to increase their proficiency. This corresponds to Lamb's (2011) research comparing highly motivated Indonesian students and less motivated ones. His study indicated that highly motivated students are more likely to be autonomous learners outside the classroom and also have more vivid future selves. Linking this to the L2MSS, Dörnyei's (2009b) criteria for the Ideal Self as an effective motivator include being regularly activated and frequently checked by workable goals as a roadmap for the learner. Since these participants displayed an interest in the language, they were also making sure they were on course to achieve their vision by practising the language in their own free time as self-regulated learners.

5.3 "I am learning it for other reasons"

I now move from one end of the spectrum (Ideal L2 Self) to the other end in what might be described as purely extrinsic (Ought-to Self) motives to learn English. These motives include studying and grades, and the role of the family in encouraging their children to learn English (Figure 5.2).

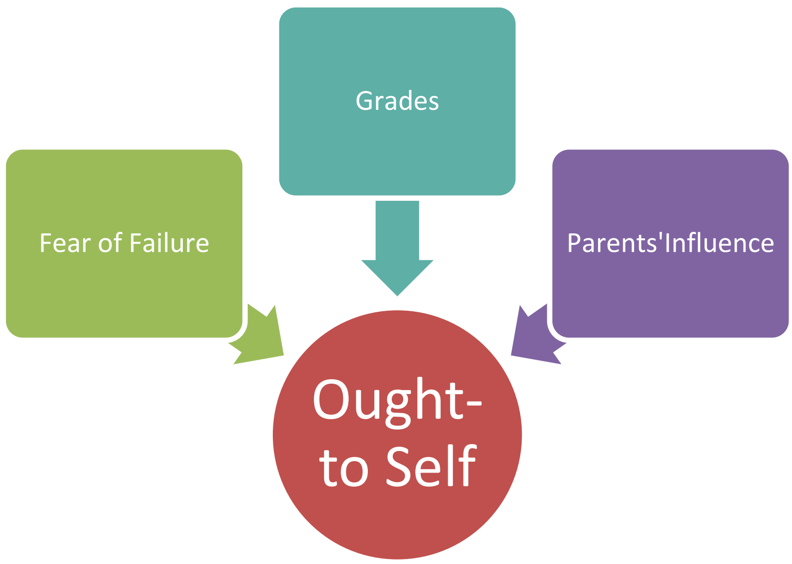


Figure 5-2 The Aspects of the Participants' Ought-to Self

5.3.1 "I did not want to fail"

One driver for learning, especially in the academic context, is the fear of failure. That is why PT19 was learning English 'for studying and only studying'; just to pass the course and move on to the next, or to maintain the GPA. PT4 considered writing to be the most important skill in English and the one he wanted to improve the most because 'I will write for research or if we are going to write a thesis' before graduation. Finally, PT1 did not think beyond the English courses at the university. After the Remedial Courses, 'I have to take 152 and 151 [Advanced, credit courses]. They are in the [study] plan, so I have to take them'.

This can be considered a near future goal for the students: to pass the course and improve language for the immediate purposes of learning at the university:

> To be honest, our aim is now for the grades more than anything else. Ok? After that I am supposed to learn it because as I said this is the means of communication and will help me travel and so forth. (PT15)

The pressure of grades was evident in many instances during the interviews with the participants. PT2 complained that his grades were generally low, so his 'motivation decreased'. PT1's strategy was to make sure he did not lose more than 1 or 2% in each assignment to ensure passing the course. When PT13 knew he had scored 70% (the passing score), he opted not to write the final essay in the course. PT19 thought the course was too easy for him because he had already studied similar material before he transferred to his current university; what primarily motivated him to attend was: 'I did not want to fail. It would have been bad if I had failed'. Grades also featured in Pawlak's (2016) study as a powerful motivator to study hard, even when the participants were aware that these grades did not reflect their true proficiency levels. In addition, grades, exams, and competition inside the class were among the features of the Ought-to Self displayed by university students studying English as L2 in Malaysia (Siridetkoon and Dewaele, 2018). Extrinsic motivation in the form of fear of failure and exams were also found in a study in Chinese higher education (Jiang and Dewaele, 2015).

5.3.2 The role of the family

Empirical literature as well as theory indicate that families may have a role in motivating their children to learn L2 which could be linked to fear of failure mentioned in the previous section. Parents' expectations are considered one of the representatives of the Ought-to Self, especially in younger learners (Dörnyei, 2018). Thus, in the interview the role of the participants' family was explored. Five out of the twelve interview participants mentioned their parents' various degrees of influence; for the rest, the parents appeared to have no influence. It could be argued that parents want their children to learn English to be able to meet the demands of the job market because of the role of English as a lingua franca. PT13 attributed his proficiency in English to his mother, who enrolled him in English-speaking schools from the first stages of education, 'so when I was immersed in the language, it was no longer a burden on me'. PT5's father rose through the ranks in his career due to his language and computer skills, so he wanted the same for his children. Both parents encouraged him to work on his language.

PT2's mother tried to enrol him in English courses as a child, and his father urged him to take English in addition to soft skills courses before joining the university because English is 'the most important thing for your studies'. When PT1's sister immigrated to Canada with her husband, she discovered the significance of English to be able to find a job and to communicate. As a result, his mother used to repeatedly stress the importance of the language to him. Moreover, his two elder brothers did not have a 'proper' language education and they struggled to make up for it after their graduation, so 'their most repeated advice is to pay attention to English'.

This is different from the results of Siridetkoon and Dewaele's (2018) study at a university in Thailand where only one participant mentioned the role of his family in learning English. However, it is similar to one of the findings of Chalak and Kassaian's (2010) study in an Iranian HE institution where 78.47% of the respondents confirmed that their parents encouraged them to practise and continue learning English. Pawlak (2016) found a similar influence that ranged from moral support to direct encouragement to learn English as a major in a Polish university. Parents' influence is found to be linked to the awareness of the significant place of English as a global language. Huang (2017) interviewed both parents and their high school adolescent children and found that even though English was not used much in Taiwan, parents were aware of the importance of the language in getting a job and achieving a good social status.

5.4 Internalised Extrinsic Motives?

This section includes viewpoints expressed by the participants that can be identified as both internal and external drivers. It includes the motivation to learn English for career or study aspirations either in general or abroad and the notion of English as a lingua franca or the concept of International Posture. These drivers can be considered as part of the learner's Ought-to Self. Ryan and Dörnyei (2013, p. 17) mention:

> In one respect, it may be possible to simply substitute educational demands on the self with those of the workplace. For many learners, externally imposed factors connecting to career development and opportunities may form a significant part of the ought-to L2 self. People may feel a requirement relating to their professional lives to learn a language.

Thus, parents' pressure or the fear of failure in the course, the typical representations of the Ought-to Self, can be supplemented with career or study-abroad aspirations for university students. On the other hand, Ushioda (2012, p. 65) comments that the Ideal L2 Self incorporates internalised forms of instrumental motivation, depending on whether our ideal L2 self is associated with social, personal, or professional contexts of L2 use. Hence, I add here the drivers that neither belong purely to promotional (Ideal L2 Self) nor prevention-oriented motivation (Ought-to Self) for language learning.

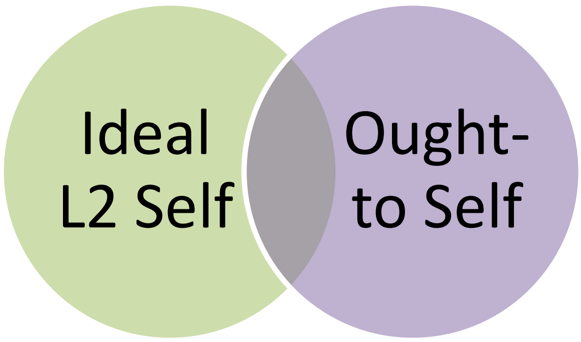


Figure 5-3 The Ideal and the Ought-to Selves can Overlap Together

5.4.1 "It is surely the first language in the whole world now"

English currently occupies a very important role in all fields, hence Yashima's (2009) concept of the International Posture. This is because the desire to learn English may stem not from integrating oneself to the L2 community, but from belonging to the international community. English 'connects us to foreign countries, and people with whom we can communicate in English, including Asians and Africans' (p. 145). It is linked to the desire to study, live or work abroad (**5.4.2**), 'readiness to interact with intercultural partners, and, one hopes, openness or a non-ethnocentric attitude toward different cultures, among others' (Yashima, 2002, p. 57). Yashima's (2002) study on Japanese students considers international posture to include both integrativeness and instrumentality. In this case, it is possible to link it to both the Ideal and the

Ought-to Selves. For instance, PT19 wanted to move to Germany, which is not an English-speaking country, but he was aware that English is the language of communication in the academic field and the workplace. Graddol (2006) asserts that English is now the working language in many European governments and companies. The question remains as to how the participants view International Posture. Is it a desire to learn the language because they want to participate in the international community (promotion)? Or is it because they will not be able to make a niche for themselves in the world without it (prevention)? The data reveal that it depends on how the participants view the importance of learning English to belong in the international community, that is, if one wants to learn English, or if one is obliged to do that so as not to be left out.

The institution where this research took place is a STEM institution. The participants seemed aware that English is the recognized language of science and technology when they were asked how they saw the importance of learning English. PT12 admitted:

> Mostly, science is in English. English now is its official language and if someone wants to go to a conference abroad or publish a paper there *has to be* a good background in English. Generally, now the first language in the world is English so people *have to have* good English. (my emphasis) (PT12)

I am emphasising his phrases 'has to be' and 'have to have' because, apparently for PT12, this is a case of prevention of negative consequences. In order to build a reputation in science and participate in the scientific community, an aspiring scientist needs to be proficient in English, to publish and communicate. PT3's words echo the same sentiment. Language

> opens doors and allows you to see things not offered otherwise. Without the language, without English now many vistas will be closed for you, and you will feel that your horizon is very narrow. (PT3)

Although PT3 showed a passion for the language itself regardless of its value (**5.2.1**), her words above indicate that for her, learning English was a necessity, without which there would be negative consequences. Kormos and Cizér's (2014) study found a significant link between International Posture and instrumentality, which suggests that both have a role in shaping the students' Ideal Self. International Posture denotes a desire to use English to be able to communicate on the international level and be up to date. Otherwise, this will be difficult without a language proficiency.

In addition, science publications are mostly in English. A study aiming to estimate the number of articles written in 2014 about scientific documents that were published in the major world languages, Amano, González-Varo, and Sutherland (2016) found that out of 75,513 manuscripts on Google Scholar, 64.4% were published in the English language, followed by Spanish (12.6%). Going back as far as the early years of the millennium, it is found that 98% of the publications in the natural sciences were in English (Hamel, 2007). This is reiterated by PT18: ‘I think as we are a scientific university, English is very important’. For PT21, English opens up a lot of chances to ‘make my research and ideas spread faster because English is the language of science nowadays’. PT17 agreed that English is an ‘essential language for communication with most of the known countries all over the world as the language of all sciences’.

The first part of this section mentioned the desire to belong to the international community as an obligation (Ought-to Self). This part, however, shows the desire to belong to the international community in the promotional sense (Ideal Self). This aligns with the results of Yashima’s (2009) study, which displayed a high correlation between international posture and the Ideal L2 Self. It is also relevant to Nishida’s (2013) results, correlating International Posture with both the Ideal L2 Self and intrinsic motivation. This does not imply that English is superior to the Arabic language or that the Arabic culture is inferior to the English one. It is, though, an admission that access to the most up to date scientific information or belonging to the scientific community requires a certain proficiency in English. As PT4 stated: it ‘is not the matter of language… you want this culture, you want that science, so you have to translate it’.

5.4.2 Living/ working/ studying abroad

As a result of the admitted importance of the English language internationally, it is perhaps not surprising that many Egyptians aspire to work and live abroad. Nevertheless, it is another grey area in the Ideal/Ought-to Self. There is evidence for both selves in the participants’ responses. PT5 wanted to live and work abroad in the future:

> Sooner or later, I am planning to leave the country. Not only because of education, but I am generally not comfortable in Egypt. So, I need to be fluent [in English] to be able to communicate with the people abroad. I will need to be fluent so I can communicate in the university when I become a college professor in my field, and when I want to write a book in English, I have to be fluent. It will turn into the practical aspect of language more than being a hobby, really. (PT5)

This quote shows the blurred lines between the Ideal and the Ought-to Self. Here the participant, who displayed a vivid Ideal Self in sections **5.2** and **5.2.2,** is now mentioning a more 'practical aspect' in his motivation to study English as well as an integrative one. On the one hand, there is the desire to belong to another community because he does not feel comfortable in Egypt. Hence, English will be an important language to learn in addition to his enjoyment in writing and communicating in English (integrative/intrinsic/Ideal Self). On the other hand, there is the desire to be fluent to do well at work (extrinsic/Ought-to Self).

PT10 shows that working and living abroad can be an Ought-to Self:

> I do not want to stay in Egypt. Basically, I will need English whether in Germany or in any European country, and I have to be fluent in it. Whenever I apply now for an internship or any cultural exchange program, the first requirement is very good English. My English is not yet as good as they want. This wastes opportunities while I am still a student. I need these opportunities and wish to seize them, so why put myself behind? (PT10)

This is another student who does not wish to live in Egypt. There is no apparent desire to belong to the L2 community or to identify with it since he did not specify an English-speaking country but Germany or another European country, there is just the desire to be able to communicate at the international level. Like PT15, there is also an obligation to learn English so as not to miss any opportunities. This quote is yet another instance of the vague boundary between the Ideal and Ought-to Selves. This quote can be understood as a desire to learn the language to integrate with the European community, or as an Ought-to Self as a person who is not content to stay in his country and wants to immigrate, so the language will be a means to an end.

Wasting opportunities is a sentiment also expressed by PT19, but in his case, he wanted to pursue his PhD abroad. The motivation to learn English to pursue studies abroad was mentioned by more than one participant in the study. PT1 considered it essential to be proficient in English to study abroad: 'You will not be able to continue abroad without it' because 'in order to go abroad, language is a must'. PT2 tried to find scholarships abroad but he discovered that he had to have a good score in IELTS or TOEFL, even if he had fulfilled requirements for the rest of the qualifications. Finally, for PT20, 'I speak Arabic, but in another stage it will all be in English' so there is a perceived necessity to work on his English. This aligns with Rasool and Winke's (2019) regression analysis which indicated that the Ought-to Self emerged as a strong motivational factor superseded only by attitudes to L2.

5.4.3 Work

Learning English to improve career prospects is another example of the Ought-to Self. According to Schaub (2000), one of the motivations to learn English in Egypt is 'the promise of more money or better jobs that many Egyptians associate with the "commodity" of English' (p. 228). Going through the job advertisements will demonstrate that proficiency in English is a major requirement from administrative jobs to engineering and medical ones. PT16 summed it up: 'the English language has become essential for any student planning for his\her career'. PT8's answer to the question whether English should be an obligatory course at the university is: 'It would tremendously help later on in our careers, so I would support it' since this will increase the 'chances of leading a successful life'. PT6 put it more dramatically: 'Everything, my studies, and in the long term and in my work. Everything will depend on it'. PT4 wanted to become a university professor, so he needed to 'speak properly' in English. All these participants found their work ambitions to be a strong motivator to learn and persist in learning English. This is similar to the results of a study conducted in a STEM university in Bangladesh (Al Mamun, Rahman, and Rahman, 2012), where the participants indicated that English proficiency provided a better chance of getting a good job, and hence a better social position. Hayes (2016) also found that the majority of his participants believed that proficiency in English would help Thai students get a well-paying job.

However, despite a clear focus on future career aspirations, there is not a clear picture of the students having a strictly delineated Ideal or an Ought-to Self, as it could be argued that images of future career success using English could be classified as an Ideal Self. Nonetheless, it could also be argued that this is an indication of an Ought-to Self, because without a clear understanding of the requirements of any imagined career in terms of proficiency in English, there is no reason to study the language. To put it in the words of one participant:

> I have to reach a certain level in English whether I like it or not. I have to reach it, so it is a matter of obligation. (PT15)

Describing it as an 'obligation' indicates more of 'the attributes that one believes one ought to possess to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes' (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 80) which is linked to the Ought-to Self. Ross (2015) also noted in his study the 'interconnected nature of instrumentality and the Ideal L2 Self' (p.192) when he found that his participants' Ideal L2 Self overlapped with extrinsic factors, leading him to conclude that the Ideal L2 Self can be displayed in various forms, ranging from desired proficiency to future career aspirations.

Therefore, as seen in this study, the boundaries between the Ideal and Ought-to Selves are not clear-cut and may overlap. It depends on how the person views the purpose of learning the L2. This can be in accordance with the subjective nature of motivation in general and the possible selves in particular. In other words, motivation can be interpreted differently from one person to the other, and from one period of time to another. Markus and Nurius (1986) in their seminal work about possible selves state that possible selves 'provide for a complex and variable self-concept' (p. 965). They also add that positive and negative possible selves are alike 'in that they often make it difficult for an observer to fully understand another person's behavior' (p. 963), meaning that possible selves are subjective. This is highlighted in the findings of my study in the participants' perceptions as what can be considered an Ideal Self and what can be considered an Ought-to Self.

The findings in this section emphasise the need for a theoretical modification as suggested by Teimouri (2017) and Al-Hoorie (2018) mentioned in Chapter 3 (**3.4.4**) regarding the Ought-to Self. Although some participants' perceptions indicate clearly that they are driven by an Ideal Self or an Ought-to Self, some responses indicate a blurred boundary between the two selves. Both Teimouri (2017) and Al-Hoorie (2018) suggest splitting the Ought-to Self into two: one to indicate obligations arising from one's own self (Ought-to Self/own) and one to indicate obligations coming from others (Ought-to Self/other). In this case, the responses indicating an International Posture (**5.4.1**), working/studying abroad ambitions (**5.4.2**) and improving work prospects (**5.4.3**) can all belong to the Ought-to Self/own, or in other words, to internalised extrinsic motivation.

5.5 Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, it is important to consider how the findings addressed my research questions:

RQ1. What enhances students' L2 motivation from their perspective in this particular context?

This question is partially answered by the findings discussed in this chapter. Chapters 6 and 7 will add to the evidence presented here. So far, using the L2MSS as a theoretical framework indicates that both the Ideal and the Ought-to Self are motivating drivers for the participants of the study. There is a clear interest in the language and the culture of the English language and community for many participants. The Ideal Self may not be as vivid as delineated in Dörnyei's (2009a; 2009b) criteria, but it still had an influence on the participants' motivation. In addition, there were various instrumental factors affecting the participants' motivation to learn English. Participants were aware of the significant role of English as a global language and the importance of its prevalence in the scientific field in particular. In order to get what they saw as a 'decent' job, obtain a scholarship, live, study or work abroad, one has to be proficient in English. This correlates to the preventive nature of the Ought-to Self and overlaps with the promotional nature of the Ideal Self. Finally, fear of failure, losing grades, and the role of parents in encouraging some of the participants to learn English are clear indicators of the preventive orientation of the Ought-to Self.

This study sheds light on the overlap between the Ideal and the Ought-to Self. It is hard to define the criteria regarding what should be included under each without focusing on every individual participant's perception. What might have been an Ideal Self such as career ambitions, the International Posture, and living/studying abroad, could also be said to be indicators of an Ought-to Self. Such an overlap may be considered as an emphasis to the need to redefine how to measure the Ideal/Ought to self. This may also denote that an interpretivist study, such as this one, might be a better way of looking at L2 motivation since it offers a deeper angle of analysis and allows for nuances of meaning to be identified.

Thus, the L2MSS helps explain why students want to learn and persist in learning English in this study. An observation by Lewko (2017) after his study involving college students at an Egyptian university is that there is 'no monolithic type of student entering the university' (p. 78). Each student comes with their own perceptions, background, and experience, and this is indicated in their use and their perception of the value of the English language itself. The same could be said to apply in this current study. It is impossible to generalise their perceptions or limit them into percentages of Ideal Self or Ought-to Self. When digging deep into what English represents to their future in terms of studying or career, each participant revealed that these entities can be ascribed to both an Ideal and an Ought-to Self. The next two chapters will demonstrate how the third part of the L2MSS has an impact on the participants' motivation.

Chapter 6 The Learning Situation

Past vs Present Learning Experience

6.1 Introduction

The study investigated the drivers of L2 motivation in a higher education institution in Egypt using Dörnyei's Motivational Self System (2005, 2009a) as a theoretical framework. The L2MSS comprises three components: the Ideal Self which focuses on the future image of the learner as a proficient L2 speaker; the Ought-to Self which focuses on the obligations that may drive people to learn the L2; and the L2 Learning Experience which is concerned with the situational aspect of L2 learning. The previous chapter discussed the first theme, the Ideal and the Ought-to Selves arising from the participants' perceptions, and it showed some blurred boundaries in what could be considered as Ideal or Ought-to Self, partially answering RQ 1. This chapter will discuss the third element in the L2MSS which is the L2 Learning Experience, tackling mainly the positive aspects of the participants' Learning Experience. The negative aspects will be discussed among the motivational constraints in Chapter 8. I will explain the analysis of the theme and relate the findings to the literature, then will demonstrate how this theme adds to the answers to RQ1 and RQ2:

RQ1. What enhances students' L2 motivation from their perspective in this particular context?

RQ2. What are the effects of their previous language learning experiences before college?

The chapter is divided into four parts. Section **6.2** analyses how the participants perceived their previous Learning Experience, mainly their high school experience, **6.3** moves into their present Learning Experience at the university, which appears to be vastly different from their previous one. This section discusses the positive Learning Experience in terms of benefit (**6.3.1**), fun and games (**6.3.2**), group and individual activities (**6.3.3**), and the participants' perceptions of achievement/improvement (**6.3.4**). Finally, **6.4** sums up the chapter, drawing all these threads to conclusions which address RQ1 and RQ2.

The instructor, who is part of the Learning Experience, is not mentioned in this chapter. I discuss the role of the instructor in detail in the following chapter due to the amount of data related to that topic. The participants had a lot to say about the role of the instructor. In this context, more than one instructor is mentioned. For them, the instructor is a major element in the Learning Experience. The amount of data on the instructor therefore justifies the decision to devote a separate chapter for this aspect of the Learning Experience.

6.2 School L2 Experience

A better understanding of the students' current L2 Learning Experience at the university level requires going back to their previous experience in school to see how it shaped and impacted their current one at the university. With reference to the importance of the previous Learning Experience, Rayan and Dörnyei (2013) proclaim that the L2 Learning Experience arises from both the current and the previous perceptions of the learners in terms of their successes or failures in past learning situations. Thus, I was keen to know if there was a difference between their previous Learning Experience at school and their current experience at their university. When asked about their previous experience in the interview, all twelve participants recounted negative L2 Learning Experiences, both regarding the Egyptian L2 national curriculum and methods of instruction, although they came from different schools in different regions in Egypt. The participants' comments mostly revolved around three areas: the grammar-based syllabus, lack of speaking and pronunciation activities, and the exam-based curriculum.

6.2.1 The syllabus

Apparently one aspect of the negative L2 Learning Experience encountered by the participants was the realization that the focus of the syllabus was on grammar and vocabulary at the expense of the other skills (i.e., writing, listening, and speaking). PT15 exclaimed that

> I am used to taking grammar and vocabulary. Grammar and vocabulary. That was the syllabus till I graduated [from school]. Grammar and vocabulary. Now when I came to the university, there are other things to take, like listening and writing and speaking. I was weak in all that. (PT15)

Not only that, but in PT20's view, the syllabus in high school was repetitive. It was all about 'certain rules and they would repeat them… we would take them in three years and then they would be repeated' in a different way. PT1 was very emphatic about the same issue:

> English was all about memorising vocabulary and knowledge of grammar. Memorising vocabulary and knowledge of grammar. I did not know anything about [language] skills till I came to the university. (PT1)

Although PT4 mentioned in the interview that he used to study some novels in school and answer questions about them in addition to studying grammar 'and that's it', he mentioned in the questionnaire that in high school 'you just memorise new vocabulary and even memorise grammar'. Only two participants, PT8 and PT13, mentioned in the questionnaire that they used to write essays to address a topic at their schools. However, their view was that it was not a good thing because it was 'without digging deep in its details'. PT13 considered these essays to be the most creative part of the English course at school that was otherwise all about grammar and vocabulary. From the description of the participants, it can be deduced that the learning methodology was not communicative but rather a grammar-translation one.

There is also an indication that the grammar-translation approach to learning English had a negative effect on their Learning Experience. In a study conducted to understand the demotivating factors in the Japanese high school English education, Kikuchi (2009) found that the grammar-translation approach, also popular in Japan, is among the demotivating factors of learning English according to the participants, preceded only by the individual teacher behaviour in the classroom. This approach does not 'generally allow students any chance to engage in genuine communication in the target language' (p. 466). Focusing on grammar and vocabulary at the expense of the other skills then was a characteristic of English learning in most of the participants' school experience.

6.2.2 Lack of speaking and pronunciation activities

As a result of the syllabus that focused only on grammar and vocabulary, there appeared to be a lack of opportunity to communicate in English orally in the classroom. PT2 recalled:

> Even when the teacher would try to correct our pronunciation, no one would even listen to him. It was not important. It was more important to memorise vocabulary because this vocabulary will come in the exam. (PT2)

In this case the students did not pay close attention to the instructor trying to teach them something aside from what would come in the exam. They only cared about the exam and exam grades. However, in PT20's case it was slightly different:

> [T]he teacher did not actually speak English. He would just say the words in English and maybe even the word would be mispronounced, or we would just know how to write it, it is not important to know how to say it …If you went and asked…I never tried, but I don't think it ever occurred to any student to ask an English teacher how to improve his English because if he knew, he would have helped himself. (PT20)

This time it was the teacher who apparently did not care about explaining or using the correct pronunciation. This could be seen as a direct criticism against the teacher who is not an influential figure in that participant's L2 Learning Experience, contrary to the instructor's figure analysed in Chapter 7. In this participant's view, the teacher was a weak figure who only cared about helping students get grades in the final exam. It also suggests that there was little or no rapport between him and the students inside the class. The role of the instructor will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7, but it is important to note students' concerns here because PT2 also expressed the same negative sentiment: 'at school there was no teaching… I really did not feel I was learning anything'. Finally, PT12 complained of not having the chance to speak in English in class: 'I did not know how to speak or do anything… the teacher did not care whether I spoke or not'. It could also appear that the participants are being unfair to their teachers, since they were just making sure the students are prepared for the exam, since this was an exam-based curriculum.

6.2.3 The exam-based curriculum

The participants complained that their previous L2 Learning Experience was exam-based. The focus was on training the students how to answer the final exam. As mentioned in Chapter 2 (**2.3**), the *Thanwya Ama* final exam is a high-stakes one and has the whole weight of assessment (i.e., 100% of the course grade is dedicated to the final exam), which is why there was so much attention to it from both the students and the instructors. Some participants did not regard this in a positive light. PT3 commented that the instructors 'really taught English in a very bad way. Curricula in Egypt are well-known, so they were not good at all'. It is well-known that the standard of education in Egypt needs major improvement. According to the *Global Competitiveness Index 2016-2017*, Egypt ranked 89 out of 138 in Health and Primary Education, and 112 in Higher Education and Training (World Economic Forum, 2017). PT3 used to take courses online to try to make up for the lack of progress he was encountering at school. Moreover, PT10 summed up his L2 school experience as

> horrible. A big difference. A very big difference. Very big. We were not learning English in *Thanwya Ama*, speaking or otherwise. We would only learn the things that we would use later in the exam. Just to know some information to get it over with. (PT10)

High-stakes exams do not address some basic skills needed later for college. According to Solórzano (2008), standardised tests, among which is the *Thanwya Ama* exam, do not pay attention to some certain skills that may be needed in order to pass these tests. These higher-thinking skills include debate, discussion, and clarification. Furthermore, Au and Gourd (2013) state that high stakes standardised English language tests control how and what to include and teach in the curriculum. Accordingly, since listening and speaking for instance are not included in the *Thanwya Ama* exam, the two skills are not taught in class, so these skills remain undeveloped.

PT19's experience was also negative. He lived in Saudi Arabia (KSA) for parental work reasons. In KSA, he was home schooled in English because in public schools there, students start learning English in the sixth year of the primary stage, six years later than students in Egypt. So, he had a private tutor to keep him up to the level of the Egyptian syllabus. When his family returned to Egypt and he was enrolled in an Egyptian school, he discovered that learning English was just to prepare students for the final exam:

> All they wanted, all what the governmental education was about was to get a grade in the exam and that's it. So, I no longer dealt with it as a language I wanted to know or anything like that. It was just a subject in which I wanted to get grades. This went on from fifth primary to third secondary. Nothing. Just a subject. (PT19)

He expressed bitterness because he had enjoyed good progress in English until the negative experience he had in the language classes in Egypt. When he joined the university, he claimed that he 'really wasted years off my life going in the wrong direction' because he had just treated English as an abstract subject, not a language to be practised and improved. For PT13, it was the same: 'it was not English…it was just all about memorising then pouring the information from your head [into the exam paper]'. This is similar for students coming out of education systems that lay great emphasis on the final assessment in secondary education. Sawir's (2005) study on Asian students studying at an Australian university found that among the difficulties encountered in their L2 experience there was that they were mostly used to the exam-based, grammar-translation approach which neglected their communication in English with other people inside or outside the class.

One participant had the chance to study an international curriculum before shifting to the national curriculum in the secondary stage in a public school. He compared between the two curricula:

> Here [the IGCSE system] I was learning for the sake of learning, and here [the national system] I was learning to get a grade. (PT5)

He explained that the IGCSE system taught him how to understand English and use it to communicate, whereas the national curriculum only taught him how to know English as an abstract system of symbols, by rote learning without understanding. He concluded that 'the three years in *Thanwya Ama* were enough to destroy any English I had before that'.

The English language in Egyptian government schools is taught through the traditional focus on grammar, vocabulary, and translation (Ibrahim and Ibrahim, 2017) disregarding the importance of communication. Despite the efforts of the Ministry of Education to implement communicative methods in the language classrooms, and despite stating one of the aims of EFL as to 'to help students develop the ability to use English effectively for the purpose of communication in a variety of situations' (Ministry of Education, 1994, pp. 19-20), the traditional grammar-translation method still prevails (Ibrahim and Ibrahim, 2017). Exam-based education does not help the teachers create a motivational atmosphere in the class. According to Dörnyei (2001), this system compels the teacher to focus on preparing the students for the exam most of all. He emphasises that most of these types of exams do not work on measuring the communicative skills of the learner, so the communicative elements are not addressed. Thus, it can be deduced that the participants' previous L2 Learning Experience was mainly a negative one, and the difference between that experience and their current one could have influenced their motivation to learn English at the university.

6.3 "Generally, it was a pleasant experience"

The participants' L2 Learning Experience in school, based on their views, was vastly different from their experience at the university level. According to PT15, there is a 'huge difference. A real huge difference'. PT1 reiterated: 'here it is better. I started to understand what English is all about'. Because the English Language Program at the university under study follows a communicative approach and focuses on skill-based learning, the participants could feel the difference and compare it to the national curriculum and teacher-centred approach. In this section, I highlight the aspects of the participants' positive learning at the university in terms of their perceived academic benefit, fun and games, group and individual activities, and their resulting sense of achievement/improvement. That does not mean that their whole L2 Learning Experience was positive. Indeed, there were negative comments about it, which I discuss in Chapter 8 as part of the motivational constraints.

6.3.1 Benefit

One aspect of the L2 Learning Experience which had a positive impact on the participants was the different activities and assignments that enhanced their language skills. There were many remarks about the general benefit of the courses, on the writing tasks, on the listening skills, and most of all, on the speaking tasks and assignments. Generally, the Learning Experience has proved to be a strong motivator in many studies. Islam, Lamb, and Chambers (2013) found that the Learning Experience played a major role in Pakistani university students' L2 motivation. The same thing is found in a study on Saudi Arabian male university students, where the Ideal L2 Self and the L2 Learning Experience were set as higher motivators than the Ought-to Self (Alshahrani, 2016), and similarly in a study in Japanese higher education (Ueki and Takeuchi, 2013). In an Iranian study, Roshandel, Ghonsooly, and Ghanizadeh (2018) found that a positive L2 Learning Experience led to increased self-efficiency and confidence.

The participants had specific positive comments about the Remedial English course(s). PT18 mentioned the clarity of the objectives: 'I think the syllabus was clear when it comes to what the student will learn in this course', whereas in school he would not know which skills the unit was supposed to cover as: 'It is a very good thing to know what you are doing, ok?'(PT1). Specifically, ENGL004 was perceived to be 'more organised and honestly it met my requirements. I learned a lot' (PT7); 'I think that the content of 004 is good. I will benefit from the things I learn' (PT1). Another participant considered ENGL003 specifically to be very good because 'it added to my knowledge' (PT2). Thus, for these participants, among others (PT5, PT9, and PT6), the English course provided an overall beneficial academic and language Learning Experience.

Both the writing and listening components were deemed useful by the participants. PT19 mentioned that 'my listening skills improved, and I now understand more clearly anything I listen to'. PT2 expressed similar views, because he stated that he used to be confused when he heard a native speaker speaking in English. PT1 stated 'If there is one thing I got out of 003, it would be how to write an essay'. This could be a response to the comment mentioned earlier that they were not taught how to develop their writing in school. PT2, PT8, and PT22 also mentioned the development of skills to write and cite sources. PT6 stated he was happy to learn how to write a paper and use references. Finally, PT15 enjoyed being able to 'write a lot in English'.

Most importantly and perhaps because of the negative experience mentioned in the previous section regarding the lack of oral communication in English in school, the majority of the comments regarding the perceived benefit taken from the courses were about the speaking skills and tasks. PT1 wrote in the questionnaire that the speaking activities were 'enjoyable and helped me to try speaking English in public without being afraid of making mistakes and to feel normal'. PT12 mentioned the debates and praised them for being 'enjoyable and helped significantly improve my communication skills'. In general, Zeljezic (2017) recommends adding debates in the EFL classroom from B2 level and above as a method that addresses the students' communicative competence and interactional competence.

PT9 thought that the digital story 'enhanced my confidence to talk in English in front of others'. The digital story was an assignment in which the students were required to prepare a script, act it, and record it on video. The impromptu speech, which required the students to speak about a topic after only being given a few minutes to prepare, was mentioned by many participants as a significant speaking task. PT20 'liked the idea of taking an idea and thinking about it quickly'. PT15 was impressed with his experience with this task. According to him, it

> was a step to put me where I am as a start in studying language. It was really important, to be honest, because it made me give my first speech, only five minutes, but was hard for me because it was the first time. (PT15)

PT13 'loved' it, PT12 claimed it 'builds on our skills in a great way', and PT6 found that it taught them 'how to stand up and deliver a speech in front of everyone without being afraid, or hesitant'. Similar results are found in Girardelli's (2017) study using an impromptu speech activity with Chinese university students. According to the responses to his survey, students found that the activity gave them more confidence in their speaking abilities, and overall rated the activity as very beneficial.

PT8 summed up the benefits of the speaking activities:

> Many activities helped me improve my speaking skills… all contributed to the learning process. For ENGL003, the digital story telling was most enjoyable, in which you would tell a story about yourself then documenting it in video. In addition to encouraging [us] to share stories with classmates, I learned new stuff about video making. For ENGL004, the impromptu speech was fun and exciting, pushing my limits further to discuss any topic, even if I did not know anything about it. (PT8)

I am quoting significantly in this section to highlight the importance of speaking as a skill for these participants as language learners. For students who were not encouraged to speak in English in school, and were about to graduate in a few years, enhancing their speaking skills became a momentous Learning Experience:

'before I joined the university, I had never used to speak English' (PT12). This corroborates Liu et al.'s (2011) findings where university students in Taiwan rated speaking as the most important skill they needed to improve in the General English courses as opposed to the three other skills. They are, however, in contradiction with Rao's (2002) study. Despite the similarities between the Egyptian and Chinese traditional approach to English instruction, where the participants in Rao's study showed favour for a combination of communicative and non-communicative activities in the classroom, it is clear that the participants in this study favoured the communicative ones.

One of the primary elements of a successful course is to find an academic and practical benefit in the curriculum. In a study aiming to evaluate the wants and needs of 972 non-English major EFL university students in Taiwan, it was found that their perceived necessity from learning the course was to benefit from the course either for academic or future career opportunities (Liu et al., 2011). In this study academic and practical benefits, especially those which filled the gap in their previous Learning Experience, were one of the positive features of the L2 Learning Experience in the perceptions of the participants. It can be concluded from all the views expressed above that a positive learning situation may enhance the student's Learning Experience and hence increase their motivation.

6.3.2 Fun and games

Eight out of the twenty participants mentioned fun and games in class as one of the positive aspects of their Learning Experience. Elements of fun in the classroom included jokes and games. PT8 did not mention details and merely said that 'all classes were fun' as a general statement. PT22 reminisced that they 'used to joke all the time' in class. Humour in the language classroom has proved to be conducive to a positive Learning Experience in different educational contexts. The use of humour in the form of jokes, according to Ivy (2013), can enhance the students' level of attentiveness and help them learn the material of the course in a better way. This is confirmed by Aboudan's (2009) study on female Emirati university students which revealed that 71% of the participants found that humour helped them to understand difficult material and that 99% felt that jokes helped them to pay more attention in class. In the Japanese higher education context, Neff and Rucynski's (2017) research confirmed the significance of encouraging humour in the language classroom, albeit with some restrictions adhering to the Japanese culture.

PT19 stated that he attended the English class 'to pass [the course] and to have fun'. The class was considered a break from the Physics and Maths classes: 'ENGL004 was like a break in the middle before I got back' (PT13) to other courses, specially where they enjoyed a positive relationship with their classmates: 'since I loved my classmates in the first semester so much. We would often attend the English class to have fun' (PT19). Bell and Pomerantz (2014) highlight the importance of humour in the classroom both from the teacher and through the inter-group communication among students. Furthermore, humour in the classroom helps to build the spirit of collegiality in the classroom and creates a more relaxed atmosphere (Ivy, 2013). This positive relationship between the students is also helpful in participating in group activities as will be shown in the next section. Peer interaction and humour in the L2 classroom are another indication of the importance of the positive Learning Experience in enhancing motivation.

As for games, PT10 mentioned more than once in the interview that the best memory in the two English courses and the best thing about the ENGL003 course was the Human Bingo game that was played in class as an ice breaker at the beginning of the semester. She stated: 'I was very happy then and it made me love the university more. I thought, Wow! Life here is cool'. Dörnyei and Murphey (2003) state that icebreakers, such as Human Bingo, help set learners at ease, and facilitate getting to know each other in an informal manner. This atmosphere of fun and collegiality enhances the L2 Learning Experience.

In addition, PT4 considered games to be very beneficial. He confirmed:

> They may be considered useless but actually they teach you stuff. I am playing a certain game and I am filling in letters like Sudoku so at the end I see a new word, so I am learning something new. (PT4)

One of the ways of creating a positive group dynamic is to get the students to participate in an activity inside the class where they need to gather information about each other (Senior, 2002). The Human Bingo is an example of such activities. In it, the students are required to move around to converse with other students who fit the description in the Bingo table. This way they get to know each other and move around the class. Studies have shown that introducing games into the EFL classroom has a positive impact on students' motivation. It has been emphasised that including interactive games in the language classroom may be beneficial for the social and educational processes inside the class. For instance, Kumar and Lightner (2007) conducted a study on higher education students and corporate employees which revealed that students preferred to have parts of the lectures turned into interactive games. Moreover, Silsüpür (2017) conducted a study on Turkish university students using a vocabulary bingo game. The data demonstrated that the participants regarded the game as a positive Learning Experience in addition to adding a light-hearted atmosphere to the class.

Hence, having an element of interactive fun and collegial friendly atmosphere in the English class was considered conducive to the participants' motivation in their English courses. This occurred in the forms of jokes, games, and a positive overall social dynamic inside the class. This is emphasised by Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural learning theory which stresses that learning is enhanced by social interaction with peers. For these participants, such elements added to a positive Learning Experience and in consequence, added to their L2 motivation.

6.3.3 Individual and group activities

In addition to the benefit, fun and games in the L2 Learning Experience, the participants also talked about individual and group activities in the classroom. The majority leaned more towards group activities than individual ones. According to Igoudin (2013), 'motivation initiates the student's actions in the class and is influenced by the feedback and behaviours of others in the classroom' (p. 194). Thus, it can be deduced that motivation can arise or be enhanced in a social setting. When students work together the task becomes easier and the psychological burden, if any, is distributed among them. Only two participants expressed their preference for individual activities, and only in certain conditions:

> It depends. For example, in writing, I do not like it, it will be very hard to write with someone, specially that everyone has his own methodology. (PT5)

For PT1, 'both actually were good' but he preferred to prepare for the presentations and deliver them alone: 'when a presentation is done on one's own, then one can do it based on one's mind exactly'. Only one participant preferred to work alone: 'I would feel more comfortable when I work alone'(PT10). She appeared to be a shy person in general and she mentioned that she had trouble communicating with people in English as will be explained more in Chapter 8 (**8.2.1**).

When students feel they belong in a cohesive group inside the class, they help each other get a better experience inside the class. Dörnyei and Murphey (2003) clarify that a positive cohesive group will have some features such as feeling comfortable participating in group activities, paying attention to other group members, making other members feel welcome inside the group, and participating with each other outside the class. Concerning group activities in my research context, group activities had more than one positive function. I found that participants mentioned positive experiences from social, psychological, and academic perspectives. Firstly, group activities were a chance for the students to get to know one another in class since they were all Freshman students and were still unfamiliar with the university, according to PT12. For instance, PT10, the same shy participant mentioned above, felt that the sitcom activity, where students were divided into groups to write a script for a scene in a sitcom and act it out, was a chance for her to get to know her colleagues, for the 'instructor chose the team members, not us. This was an opportunity to get to know the people in my class'. PT2 considered the sitcom to be a memorable activity because he enjoyed doing it with his team:

> We were about 6. Yes, 6. We wrote a script. We learned how to write a script and we actually wrote the script, and we did, and it was so much fun. It was one of the best things that happened to me at the university. (PT2)

Again, the element of fun mixed with teamwork appears to be one of the significant aspects of the Learning Experience in these participants' perception. The sitcom was also a good group activity for PT5, who took it seriously because he worked in script writing as a freelancer:

> As for another task, like the movie, no, I need another opinion. What will we do, shall we add a catchphrase or not? How will we add a catchphrase in English? Shall we make it like Friends? If we translate it, will it still be funny? (PT5)

Working in a group was a chance for him to seek other people's opinion to make the sitcom into a successful product, especially since his instructor made a competition in the class for the best script.

Secondly, group activities proved to be helpful to the participants from a psychological perspective since working in teams gave them some kind of team support. PT1 considered the group activity in ENGL003 to be the best thing about the course because there was a sense that they were all on an equal level so if 'you make a mistake, no one will bother anyone. It is cool'. The same view was repeated by PT21: 'group assignments encouraged me to speak because I found out that we are all in the same boat'. It was a chance to see that the other students were working on their proficiency level and were maybe struggling with it, just like the participant. Perhaps more drastically, PT4 considered the group activities to be a 'relief because there is no stress as I'm not under the spot', so there was not much attention on him alone as when he was speaking in public. Dörnyei (2001) draws attention to the importance of the psychological environment in the classroom, which can be enhanced by the teacher as well as by the relationship between students inside the class: 'in a safe and supportive classroom the norm of tolerance prevails' (p. 41) and the students do not feel ashamed of making mistakes. Chang (2010) found a strong correlation between group dynamics and L2 motivation in a Taiwanese university, as the participants commented that other students could help them work on their L2. There is also a similarity between the findings in this research and a study conducted in Syria (Wazzan, 2015), where the participants felt that their classmates in the EFL classroom were like family members to them, emphasising the importance of group cohesiveness inside the class.

Thirdly, there is an academic as well as a social benefit for group activities according to the participants' views. They were a 'good experience that allows me to learn more from others' (PT12), they helped in 'learning from others' mistakes and getting more experienced' (PT7). In the same sense, PT12 considered them a chance for a mutual benefit:

> If I make a small mistake, they will take notice and draw my attention to it and at the same time if they do something I like, I can ask them about it, so we will benefit from each other. (PT17)

Finally, PT15 went as far as to criticize the APA documentation style (documenting sources using the American Psychological Association style) activities that were given in class because they were individual-level activities and not group-oriented:

> It would have been better if we had done it as a class activity. We could have been split into groups, and each group would get a citation from a book or article etc. I would have been forced to pay attention and do it. (PT15)

Group activities can be considered as evidence that motivation is not necessarily an individual, cognitive aspect of learning (Oxford and Nyikos, 1989), but it is also social and is affected by the classroom environment and group interaction (L2 Learning Experience).

The findings regarding the fun atmosphere and the role of the social environment of the class are emphasised by Vygotsky (1997) as he defines the educational process into the student's experience, shaped by the social environment, and the role of the instructor in leading this environment. Moreover, in Dörnyei's (2001) view, peer interaction is a prerequisite for communicative language learning. The findings in this study are in accordance with one of Alshehri and Etherington's (2017) findings in their study about teachers' and students' perceptions of classroom motivational strategies in an HEI in KSA. Contrary to teachers' perceptions, students accorded more weight on the social aspects of motivational strategies which were of even more significance to them than the academic aspects of motivational strategies of language learning. Dörnyei (2001) also postulates that collaborative learning is a feature of learning that combines both academic and social elements. In addition, these findings agree with a study targeting both Russian and Asian university students, which found that there was a general inclination for students in both groups to group activities (Wintergerst, DeCapua, and Ann Verna, 2003). The findings of this study place an emphasis on the significance of group activities and group cohesion on the L2 student motivation. All of these are considered part of the L2 Learning Experience, putting this component as possibly the most significant for most of the participants of this study.

6.3.4 A sense of achievement and improvement

The final section in this theme involves the effects of the positive L2 Learning Experience mentioned above in terms of the participants' sense of achievement and improvement in English. It is here that the Ideal/Ought-to Self and the L2 Learning Experience are intertwined. With the presence of a vivid Ideal L2 Self, or even a preventive Ought-to Self in a positive learning environment, the participants were able to turn their motivation into action. Here also the Learning Experience is enhanced by positive emotions such as pride and achievement. First, the participants expressed on various occasions their improvements in one or more of the four language skills. Second, there were some incidents where the participants felt they were making achievements in the course that they felt proud of, including overcoming obstacles they had been facing before the courses. Since the two can overlap, I will discuss them both based on the area of improvement/achievement.

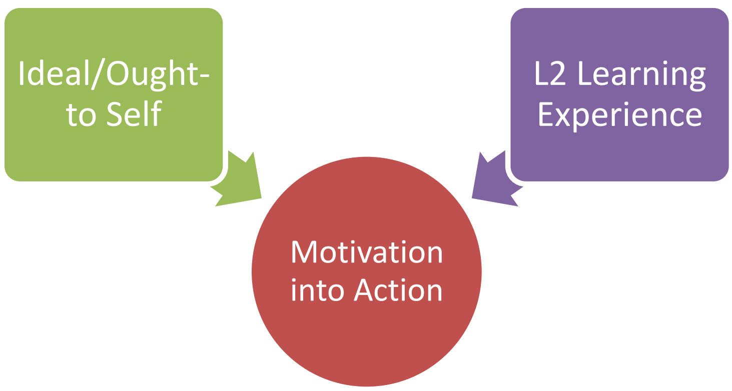


Figure 6-1 The Effect of the L2MSS on the Participants' Performance/Achievement

Many participants expressed that their school experience did not enable them to develop their speaking skills and, in contrast, felt the benefit they received concerning their speaking skills throughout the course. Thus, it could be considered natural that most of the improvements and achievements mentioned by the participants were related to speaking. PT13 was proud of his impromptu speech (speech delivered after only a few-minute preparation) because it was mainly about a topic he was well-versed in: 'It was like I had unlimited power at this point, so I presented in a great manner on this topic'. Another achievement for him was the debate: 'I was very fluent then. My team was silent, and I was doing all the talking'. The best feature in ENGL004 for PT15 was

> that I stood up and spoke. To give a short light speech for 5 minutes was for me something that was both new and scary at the time. (PT15)

Perhaps the best example of the feeling of pride and achievement in speaking in the English course (ENGL004) was expressed by PT19, who was a transfer student from a public university:

> I consider myself to have a phobia of public speaking. That was before. When I was in Mansourah [University], and in *Thanwya Ama*. I did not know how to stand and speak in public and express my ideas and ask the audience and receive their questions. They [these skills] were developed in 003 and 004. We made a lot of presentations and in 004 they would make us deliver a presentation with a short time of prior preparation. In 003 we would prepare and make slides. In 004 we would take the topic, prepare for it on the spot and come out and speak about it. If you asked me to do that before the two courses I would not stand and speak in public for the world. I used to have a phobia of public speaking. (PT19)

The chance to speak in the EFL classroom is significant to Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE), as mentioned by Dewaele et al. (2018) in their study linking positive emotions to motivation in FL learning. Their participants reported a 60% increase in their enjoyment when they were speaking the FL in class.

According to the participants in this research study, the listening and writing skills were also areas of improvement. PT12 commented both in the questionnaire and the interview on how his listening skills improved over time. He could ‘watch a series in English without Arabic subtitles without noticing any difference. I have never had such an experience before’. For PT19, the ability to listen without needing a translation was also an achievement: ‘this is a new feeling for me. Previously, I did not understand at all. I always needed a translation’. As for the writing, only PT10 mentioned a sense of achievement. After writing about a topic or a research paper, ‘I feel very happy. I wrote that by myself’.

This sense of achievement and pride in their work reports a similar response to that encountered by Magid (2014) in his study on his own students when he tried to enhance the Ideal Self in students using special workshops. His participants also felt a sense of pride at their L2 achievements after experiencing his program. He concluded that there is a link between motivation and confidence:

> I found that motivation and confidence mutually affect each other. The findings demonstrated the key role that confidence in the target language plays in the language learning process. It motivates language learners to continue improving their target language and helps to make their vision of their Ideal L2 self more clear, which was also found to be motivating. (p. 235)

This section of the findings of the current study is mainly linked to positive emotions and their relationship with achievement and motivation. In a qualitative study targeting Mexican EFL university students, Méndez and Argelia (2013) found that there are various effects of both positive and negative emotions on motivation in the language classroom. Some positive emotions increased the participants' sense of self-efficacy when they perceived that they were improving their skills and received praise from their instructors. Relating emotions to the point mentioned earlier about the link between the Ideal/ Ought-to Self and the Learning Experience, Pavelescu's (2019) study shows a direct connection between emotions, motivation, and the Learning Experience in two teenage Romanian language students. She found that positive emotions can push the learner forward in language learning, whereas negative emotions can do the opposite. Furthermore, MacIntyre and Vincze (2017)'s study on Italian students studying German revealed a strong correlation between negative and positive emotions and motivational constructs. They also found that positive emotions are more related to the Ideal Self and the integrative motive more than with the Ought-to Self and instrumental motivation.

To sum up, many of the participants felt tangible results regarding their improvement in their major areas of weakness in L2. The main area of improvement was in speaking, which was a cause for their sense of achievement in various speaking tasks and assignments. The second area was listening, and the ability to listen without the need for subtitles or translation was an accomplishment for some participants. The university under study uses the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, which focuses on the four skills while acknowledging the 'interdependence of language and communication' (Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p. 85). Since communication involves both speaking and listening, it may be natural for the participants to mention these two skills at the expense of the reading and writing skills. Another explanation is that listening and speaking skills were not the focus of their school education as I discussed earlier in the chapter, so it would be logical they focused on the two skills that were improved in their university English courses. It can be argued that positive emotions can arise out of a positive Learning Experience which can in turn lead to a higher level of motivation as well as taking this motivation into action.

6.4 Conclusion

The discussion of the theme, The Learning Environment, in this chapter aimed to answer **RQ1** and **RQ2**:

RQ1. What enhances students' L2 motivation from their perspective in this particular context?

In addition to the Ideal and Ought-to Selves discussed in the previous chapter, students who participated in the study showed that the L2 Learning Experience had a positive impact on their motivation and encouraged them to participate in class. The Learning Experience here is represented in the practical, social, and academic benefits from the communicative skill-based curriculum of the Remedial courses, the elements of fun and games experienced by the participants through both the syllabus and from their interaction together, the group and individual activities they participated in, and finally, their sense of achievement and improvement.

RQ2. What are the effects of their previous language learning experiences before college?

This is the only theme that fully addresses this question. Apparently, the previous L2 Learning Experience had had an impact on the students. The participants still remembered their high school L2 experience, and they all argued that there was an advantage to the current experience over their previous one. The results do not show how their previous experience impacted their language skills, but it could be suggested that the participants were ready to embrace their current experience because it offered them a different approach to language learning. Instead of the exam-based grammar-translation method of instruction, the university offered them a more learner-centred approach and gave them the chance to communicate and express themselves in

English. Their accounts show evidence that English in school was taught using a grammar-translation method, focusing mainly on grammar and vocabulary which appeared to deprive them of the opportunity to communicate in English. Moreover, their L2 education was focused on the exam and hence the skills that were not covered in the exam, mainly listening and speaking, did not receive attention. When they joined the university under study, they felt a significant difference.

In conclusion, this chapter was concerned with the data related to the positive features of the participants' L2 Learning Experience, the third element in Dörnyei's L2MSS. I considered it important to explore their previous L2 experience in their school years to see whether there was a difference between their past and present experience. The participants expressed dissatisfaction with the way English was taught in their schools. While it is not clear how their previous experience had an impact on their current one, the difference they felt between the two contexts contributed to their motivation to learn English at the university. The results indicate that the positive Learning Experience led to a perceived academic benefit, enhanced by the positive fun atmosphere in the course, positive individual and group activities, and feelings of achievement and improvement in their language skills.

The findings demonstrate that there appears to be a strong link between the L2 Learning Experience and the other two elements of the L2MSS. An L2 Ideal Self or an L2 Ought-to Self in a positive Learning Experience enhances L2 motivation and encourages the student to put that motivation into action. There is also a link between the positive L2 Learning Experience and positive emotions as shown in the participants' expressions of joy, pride, and achievement. Like the previous theme, this theme also demonstrates that Dörnyei's L2MSS can shed light on students' motivation to learn English in the context under study. The L2 Learning Experience does not only comprise the peers, the material, and the sense of achievement. It also includes the teacher. Vygotsky (1997) considers the teacher to be both a part of and the leader of the learning environment. In addition, in CLT, the teacher assumes different roles: facilitator, monitor, counsellor, needs analyst, and a group process manager (Richards and Rodgers,1986). All these roles signify that the teacher has a major role in providing a positive Learning Experience for the students. The activities and planning that were well-received from the participants all indicate that there were instructors who knew what they were doing. Indeed, the participants had so much to say about the instructors I chose to discuss their role in a separate chapter. The next chapter will continue exploring the L2 Learning Experience with special reference to the role of the instructor.

Chapter 7 The Instructor

‘The instructors are the best thing’

7.1 Introduction

This study aimed to understand the factors affecting L2 motivation for students at a HEI in Egypt using Dörnyei’s (2005, 2009a) L2MSS as a theoretical framework. The themes emerging from the data in the previous two chapters focused on the participants’ perceptions of L2 motivation regarding their Ideal and Ought-to Selves, and their L2 Learning Experience. In Chapter 5 the students’ motivation was examined using the lenses of the Ideal and Ought-to Selves with a view of identifying whether either or both had an influence on the participants’ motivation. Chapter 6 shed light on the positive aspects of their L2 Learning Experience. Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) define the L2 Learning Experience as an element covering situational motives regarding the immediate learning environment: ‘(e.g., the impact of the L2 teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, and the experience of success)’ (p. 88). The aspects of the Learning Experience I dealt with in the previous chapter were the academic benefit, peer interaction, and the positive emotions gained from the learning situation. This chapter will focus on one overwhelming aspect of the participants’ Learning Experience: the instructor. Throughout the interviews, the instructor was the one aspect of the L2 Learning Experience that stood out, which is why I decided to write about it in a separate chapter. According to the code density table in Appendix 7, all other aspects of the L2 Learning Experience were mentioned 107 times, and the instructor was mentioned 79 times. Except for two participants, the instructor was mentioned as a major motivating factor for the students. The overwhelming majority mentioned the teachers of the Remedial courses in their comments about the courses and the curriculum. In some instances, the instructor was mentioned in response to other questions which did not directly refer to teachers or teaching. For example, PT5 focused on the instructor although the question was about the content of the course

> -ER: Ok, do you think that the content of the course, especially in the English course, can play on the level of motivation in the student, or not?

> PT5: Yes, especially when I feel that the instructor…For example, I once discussed my grade with the instructor. She had given me 4 out of 5, and I discussed it with her and got half a mark. This half a mark made me happy, not because of the grade but because I felt she could really change her mind because I was able to convince her. This is a huge motivation. (PT5)

Another example was with PT4 when I was asking about the best thing in the two courses:

> ER: Ok, what was the best thing in ENGL003 and ENGL004? If you can mention one thing from both courses, that would be great
>
> PT4: The instructors are the best thing
>
> ER: Really?
>
> PT4: Honestly, yes
>
> ER: Why?
>
> PT4: The people [instructors] are very nice and they know what they are doing, and their work is accurate. And they don't mind offering help. They are very helpful.

These comments may indicate that the instructors' characters and motivated behaviour had a long-term effect on the students even after the course was finished. This chapter will demonstrate that understanding the role of the teacher in L2 motivation can help EFL policy makers in developing EFL learning and instruction. This theme is a further elaboration on answering the following research question:

RQ1. What enhances students' L2 motivation from their perspective in this particular context?

The findings arising from the data within this theme demonstrate that the instructor plays a pivotal role in L2 motivation. Czisér (2019) points out that the Learning Experience, which includes instructor characteristics, has not received as much attention as the Ideal and Ought-to Selves in research. Furthermore, Lamb (2017) highlights the lack of studies which show the link between the role of the teacher and teaching methodology to the Ideal and Ought-to Self. This theme in this research study contributes to the research on the link between these three elements. The data reveal that the perceptions of the participants of their instructors were directed towards the latter's personality. Hence, it can be argued that the results in this theme are connected to the three-dimensional framework of instructor credibility (McCroskey and Teven, 1999) as well as the L2MSS. I explore in this chapter (**7.2)** the positive traits of the instructor in the perceptions of the students, which forms the majority of the data under this theme and (**7.3)** the negative aspects of the instructor. The conclusion **(7.4)** sums up the theme and links it to the research question.

7.2 'The instructors were the best part of the course'

The college instructor acts as a communicator of knowledge to the students, whether in English or any other course regardless of academic rank. Any communicator is evaluated by the three Aristotelian appeals: pathos, logos, and ethos (Aristotle, *trans*, 1932). Pathos refers to the appeal to emotions; Logos refers to the appeal to the audience's logic; and Ethos refers to the credibility of the communicator or the speaker. From these dimensions, Teven and Katt (2016) discuss the elements of instructional credibility. Among the characteristics of instructor credibility perceived by the participants are affinity seeking and clarity. Affinity here refers to how instructors explicitly show students they care for their wellbeing and attempt to create a positive classroom atmosphere. Moreover, instructors who display clarity are those who competently deliver content to the students in a clear manner. From another perspective, McCroskey and Teven (1999) refine teacher credibility into three categories: competence (expertise and reliability), trustworthiness (character), and perceived caring (including empathy, understanding, and responsiveness). Clune (2009) notes that instructor credibility lies in the perceptions of the students towards their instructor. Thus, although an instructor may attempt to display these features, it all depends on whether the students regard the instructor in this sense or not. The data from the interviews and the questionnaires indicate that the EFL instructors at the university under study had a high level of credibility and hence were able to enhance the L2 Learning Experience for their students. The responses of the participants about their instructors revolved around McCroskey and Teven's three dimensions.

Studies in different contexts show that the teacher can be a strong motivator in L2 learning. For instance, a study conducted in a Croatian university (Martinović and Poljaković, 2010) revealed that the main factor for the students' attitude to L2 was their perception of the teacher and the evaluation method, followed by their attitude towards the English language, and their affective attitudes toward learning English. The study involved 149 first-year university students. 56.4% thought there was a good communication with the teacher, 56.4% liked the way the instructors taught them, and 64.4% believed their teachers were highly motivated. This indicates that the Learning Experience can be a driving motivational element, represented here by the teacher. Moreover, a study in South Korea (Joe, Hiver, and Al-Hoorie, 2017) examined the correlation between the contextual and psychological factors that may influence L2 learners' achievement and willingness to communicate. The study found that the class social climate in the EFL classroom, identified as the teacher's academic support, emotional support, and classroom mutual respect, was vital to the learners' learning outcomes. Again the main factor in the L2 Learning Experience mentioned by the students was the teacher.

The participants in the present study were fulsome in their praise for their English instructors at the university. There were relatively few negative comments about them, which I will discuss in section (**7.3**). Even when one participant felt demotivated by the course, he could not find fault with his instructor: 'I was not motivated to be honest, but the instructor was nice' (PT4). Earlier he stated: 'really, they were awesome, no more to say'. In the question regarding the instructor in the questionnaire, PT7 wrote that 'our English instructors are perfect, they helped us very much to learn'. These positive perceptions towards the instructor can be grouped into four sub-themes: the competent instructor, the caring instructor, the friendly instructor, and the understanding instructor. The coming sections analyse the student perceptions of the teacher from four angles. There were perceptions regarding the instructor's competence and expertise, perceived-caring, friendliness, and encouraging attitude. The four angles correspond to the dimensions of instructor credibility (McCroskey and Teven, 1999) and highlight the features of the motivating teacher as one of the elements of the L2 Learning Experience in the L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009a).

7.2.1 The competent instructor

One of the dimensions of instructor credibility is competence. Students expect to have qualified faculty staff who display professionalism and knowledge, and the English course is no exception. The participants reported that they felt they were able to trust their instructors when they sensed that they knew what they were doing: 'The two instructors were really very qualified' (PT2). This was clear in their comments regarding giving feedback, their organised behaviour in class, and encouraging questions in class.

Firstly, there was the issue of providing thorough feedback on assignments. PT20 considered the instructor who gave more detailed feedback as more motivating than the one(s) who did not focus on that area:

> But maybe the kinds of motivation were in ENGL004 when the instructor always gave us feedback so you would know the things you need to work on to … to.. to practise more in them. In ENGL003 she also gave us feedback, but I do not feel it had a large impact like that in ENGL004. (PT20)

PT12 had the same comment:

> Yes, the instructor would give us long feedback after we write anything. It included all the details. This was one of the things that really helped me. Ms G. would pay more attention to this, even more than Mr. S. (PT12)

It was clearly motivating and helpful for the students to see that the instructor was paying attention to the assignment and was keen on showing the student how to improve the areas of weakness. Klimova (2015) identifies two types of assessment: formal and informal. Formal assessment is conducted to assess the quality of education in an institution. Informal assessment, on the other hand, is conducted to assess students' progress and improvement and collect information on areas that need re-evaluation or development. In a study conducted in an EFL English for Academic Purposes course in a Czech HEI, Klimova (2015) found that constructive feedback was significant for students to foster personal and academic growth. Moreover, Taras (2008) distinguished between summative and formative assessment. Summative assessment is for 'accreditation and validation', while formative assessment, also called Assessment for Learning (Lee, 2007) is 'to support learning' (p. 172). Formative assessments allow the student to track their learning and this in turn enhances their motivation and autonomy (Lee, 2007). Thus, such assessments that allowed for written feedback were beneficial for the participants in this study. They considered the instructor who paid more attention to feedback to be more motivating and worthy of praise than one who did not.

Another indication of competence is organised behaviour. A study conducted by Shea, Pickett and Pelz (2003) at a HEI emphasised the role of curriculum design and organised instruction and delivery as the highest-rated trait of effective instruction. Furthermore, Trammell and Aldrich (2016) emphasise that both the course organisation and how the organisation is maintained are equally important. Some participants commented on the methodical and organised manners of their instructors. For instance, PT5 commented on how the instructor would lay out the class plan on the board:

> She would come in and write the agenda of that class on the board. She was very organised; she knew what she was doing from the moment she came in till the moment she left. Mr M. was the same, but he would not write it. For me, I like to see things with my own eyes. (PT5)

PT2 appreciated the methodical manner of the instructor in making sure everyone understood her explanation:

> She would make sure we were taking notes. I liked the method. She would explain and repeat more than once. It is not about memorising, but in order to make us understand. (PT2)

Thirdly, some participants appreciated the instructors' keenness to make sure everyone understood and encouraged questions. PT1 stated that 'they allowed us to ask questions at any time and stop them to understand slowly, and they mostly explained well'. PT8 liked it when the instructors would repeat their explanation to make sure everyone understood in addition to offering their help during office hours 'if we faced any difficulties'. Webb and Barrett (2014) found that students consider information sharing behaviour such as giving advice, sharing academic knowledge, and clear communication regarding student work were among the most desirable rapport building techniques in college instruction. Deepa and Seth's (2014) study conducted on 250 college students investigating their perceptions of learning effectiveness revealed that the most significant aspect of instructor effectiveness was the style of managing the class. This factor entailed that the instructor made good use of examples, was organised, was concerned about the students, showed them the importance of the subject-matter, allowed the students hands-on experience, and encouraged interaction outside class time. Thus, it is implied from the findings that one of the factors that can increase L2 motivation from the L2 Learning Experience angle is the instructors' knowledge and expertise in the subject, especially if it is mixed with other factors to encourage students' interaction and communication.

7.2.2 The caring instructor

In addition to competence, perceived caring is another valuable element of credibility in the instructor. A student is likely to appreciate an instructor that displays goodwill towards them and shows they care about their students' welfare. As mentioned earlier in section (**7.2**), McCroskey and Teven (1999) explain perceived caring as a three-way construct. It consists of understanding, empathy, and responsiveness. Twelve out of the twenty participants in the current study praised one or both instructors as being helpful. PT21 mentioned that the teacher helped him to work on one of his language skills: 'one of them did encourage me to speak without fear'. Referring to the Impromptu Speech (one of the assignments which requires students to give a short talk after being given only five minutes to prepare for the topic), PT5 further explained how the instructor helped him turn a topic he did not like in the same assignment into an angle that interested him:

> She was understanding. For instance, I did not like the speech topic I got, so we both tried to reach an angle I would like. For example, something in literature can be tackled from the angle of mathematics because I love maths so that was a solution to reach a compromise and that was really beautiful. (PT5)

In this instance, the time the instructor took demonstrates that she was aware of the student's interest and that she took the time to help him reach an angle he could talk about. This could be perceived as empathy as well as being understanding and responsive.

Instructors also offered help outside the class. PT5 explained how the instructor arranged group activities so that the group members mingled together well. Although this may seem as instructors doing their job in helping their students in the course, the participants were grateful for this display of perceived caring and empathy. This can be an indication of the difference they felt in comparison with their previous learning experience in school as mentioned in Chapter 6, (**6.2**). Whereas the previous Learning Experience at school was deemed impersonal and the students claimed they did not enjoy a good atmosphere nor appeared to have interacted well with their teachers, the current Learning Experience provided them with the attention and interaction they felt they needed.

Instructors were also responsive to their students. McCroskey and Teven (1999) define responsiveness as

> one person acknowledging another person's communicative attempts. Responsiveness is judged by how quickly one person reacts to the communication of another, how attentive they are to the other, and the degree to which they appear to listen to the other. (p. 92)

PT1 affirmed that the faculty staff in the institution in general were helpful: 'most of the faculty staff here are available to help outside the lecture'. Furthermore, he was able to remember a specific instance when he accidentally missed an English class and 'she told me to come anytime and she will explain it all to me' outside the lecture time. PT3 reported an incident when she and a group of other students were absent due to some issues in their scholarships, and the instructor was 'understanding and would tell us what we missed. We went to her at any time and she would help'. PT2 recounted an incident when one of the instructors postponed the deadline of an assignment because the students were in the middle of exams. In these instances, the instructors went out of their way to help the students, displaying perceived caring. There were other instances of instructors showing support for requests not related to the course. PT20 discussed an English novel he was reading in his spare time with his ENGL004 instructor. The instructors were also providing extra reading material for the summer:

> Ms G. had sent us two books for those who want to read in the summer about how to make a reference and things like that away from what we had taken in the course. Mr M. also had sent us a book he had bought from Amazon for the class. (PT5)

In general, it appears that the instructors were perceived as offering help, caring, and empathy both for academic and non-academic purposes:

> They are very helpful; they offer help to any student who asks them about anything in English in the course or out the course. - yes, they did - yes, they were, via mail and in their free time and they always respond. (PT2)

One of the motivational strategies offered by Dörnyei (2001) is for the teacher to offer assistance to the students, because knowing their instructor is ready to help when needed enhances their expectations for success. Moreover, offering help is an indication of goodwill. The findings of the current study are similar to studies exploring instructor credibility. Attitudes to the instructor’s caring and goodwill are found in Myers’ (2004) study with 158 students in an introductory communication course in an American university where it was found that instructors who displayed both character and caring inspired both in-class and out-of-class communication with the students. Furthermore, in a study involving 170 undergraduates in a Midwestern university, Teven (2007) found that student perceptions of trustworthiness and competence of their instructor is derived from the instructor’s display of caring behaviour towards their students. The current study’s results are in line with the above-mentioned studies reinforcing the importance of perceived caring as a motivational driver for L2 learners.

7.2.3 The friendly instructor

Building on perceived caring discussed in the previous section, the third trait that was repeated across the interviews and questionnaires was the friendliness of the instructors. The course instructors in the HEI under study were perceived to go beyond their teaching duties in giving feedback, providing support, and organising the course content. These instructors also had a positive rapport with the students outside the class. The first piece of advice given by Gilbert (2002) for teachers to establish rapport with their students is to take the time to build relationships with them. According to Dörnyei (2001), teachers who share a personal interaction with their students, and who display empathy to their concerns are more likely to motivate the students academically than those who do not. Just as some participants commented positively on good social interaction with their classmates, it seems that there was also a friendly relationship with their instructors. As well as the views expressed above, there was further evidence of the students' understanding of the teachers' empathy and approachability; the student-teacher relationship appeared to be a motivating factor for most of the participants. PT19 mentioned this issue as a determining factor for his enjoyment of the course:

> Most of them were young, so they were very close to us. They were really our friends. They were with us in many events, in the activities we make down the hall, they were there, so I feel they are my friends. In talking and joking and everything. This managed to bridge the gap between the instructor and the student and has a positive influence on the performance of the student. At least if I like you I will, I will like attending your class, because in ENGL003 and ENGL004 most students did not want to attend the class, but I can attend because I like to talk with them. It is better than hating them and not to attend at all. (PT19)

He attributed this closeness to their age, so it was easy to have a rapport with them. Another way the instructors were able to get close to the students was by taking part in social activities on campus. PT19 even considered this kind of relationship as an incentive for attending the course. Likewise, PT1 considered the English instructors as 'older friends or older siblings.' Like PT19, he also had a good relationship with them outside the class: 'they were cool either inside or outside the class, maybe more outside the class' (PT19). Similarly, PT3 felt her ENGL004 instructor was helpful and friendly:

> she was very friendly, and she would help us if we got stuck with anything and she would help us outside the class. I used to visit her in her office with my friend. (PT3)

Her statement indicates that helpfulness and friendliness are important aspects in the EFL instructor.

Instructor-student relationship appears to be significant for some of the participants. PT5 stated: 'I do not like my relationship with the instructor to be restricted to the class'. His relationship with his intructor went beyond the class. He recounted an incident when he was sick and his instructor made contact with him to ask about his condition: 'Mr M. knew about my case, and knew that I was ill, would ask after me and I appreciated this'. PT4 commented about his relationship with the English instructors: 'It is an amicable relationship. We cannot call it otherwise. Really, they are super nice'. In his case, the English instructor would gather the students to watch movies in English, and he even arranged an outing with the students to a local restaurant in Cairo, marking this as a 'a good memory' for the participant. The instructors of the participants in this study appear to have established and were able to maintain a good relationship with their students both inside and outside the class. The advice given by Dörnyei (2001) for the teacher to build a good relationship with their students includes 'acceptance of the students', the 'ability to listen and pay attention to them', and the 'availability for personal contact' (pp. 36-37). The instructors in the current study seem to have fulfilled these criteria. This resulted in an increased desire to attend the class and participate in the course.

Although Webb and Barett's (2014) study in an American university found that common grounding behaviours like speaking on the student's level and finding similarities with students was the least mentioned category in rapport building behaviours in the college classroom, in this study it is mentioned as one of the most favourable elements. The majority of participants in this study liked that their instructors were down to earth and approachable. The current findings show similarity to Gerhardt's (2016) study in a university in Midwestern USA demonstrating the importance of the instructor's sociability as an element of credibility. In the EFL context, an Iranian study (Amiryousefi, 2018) conducted with EFL learners of an average age of 19.88, found that learners' communicative behaviour was greatly influenced by the learning situation including the classmates as mentioned in the previous chapter, as well as the teacher. Among its results was that learners were more willing to communicate with their instructors both for academic and non-academic purposes if the instructor was friendly and caring. Friendliness and caring reflect a desire to know the students as people rather than just learners. This complements what the participants perceived regarding another element in the L2 Learning Experience mentioned in the previous chapter, which was the element of fun and games inside the class (**6.3.2**) and group interaction (**6.3.3**).

7.2.4 The encouraging instructor

In addition to being a professional, friendly and helpful instructor as discussed in (**7.2**), there are other characteristics that arose from the data to describe how an instructor can have a positive impact on their students. One example that arose twice in the interviews when I asked about how the instructor can motivate students, was the mention of a popular non-EFL instructor. Apparently, he is a very motivating figure and he was mentioned as a role model. Dörnyei (2001) defines encouragement as a positive expression of faith that someone is able to do something. He advises the instructor that a 'show of faith can have a powerful effect on them [the students], and can keep them going, even against the odds' (p. 91). It is worth mentioning this non-EFL instructor here because this reflects how students may perceive the figure of a motivating instructor in general. One participant commented:

> He would really send emails and always reminded us of assignments and would send us [messages] during the lecture itself. He would tell us not to worry but you need to start. He would always smile even if things are too serious and the exams are near and things like that. He would really give us motivation. He was very good. (PT2)

The features of an encouraging instructor according to this participant is someone who cares about the welfare of the students, someone who always has a good word of encouragement, and someone who follows up with the students to make sure they are doing their work.

PT3 had a similar opinion about the power of an encouraging word from the instructor:

> Literally, a simple encouraging word during the course can make a difference. When it is not said and you feel marginalised by the instructor, or you feel that he wants to end the discussion with you quickly, you feel like, what did I do wrong? What is the problem? And you never figure it out. So, you feel bad. (PT3)

This participant echoed what Dörneyi (2001) states about the role of encouragement in the language classroom: 'a small personal word of encouragement can do the trick' (p. 91). Student-teacher interaction almost takes a personal tone according to these two participants. The role of the instructor is not knowledge transfer as much as it is a personal relationship with the students as was shown in the previous sections (**7.2.2** and **7.2.3**). According to Teven and Katt (2016), the instructor is a central figure in the learning process. If the student is unable to trust that person, they may not invest in the learning process. Part of this trust comes from the instructor's perceived empathy and understanding. This is reflected in one participants' comment about the importance of the instructor in a course :

> When I find that the instructor himself/herself is a nice person and the relationship is not that of a teacher-student, I start to be encouraged to like the subject itself because of the instructor. (PT4)

The encouraging instructor can create a positive impact on the students and this can be seen in the case of the Biology instructor mentioned above, PT1 explained how he was motivated to study and pass the subject he dreaded to study, because he was in the Mathematics Section in Secondary school and he hated Biology. He was forced to study it for two semesters in the Foundation year in college. His dread was turned into love thanks to this instructor:

> Dr M. H. was very encouraging…So you would study so that you might say something while he asks questions in the lecture, and there would be a gift, like a small chocolate or something, so that was very encouraging, and makes you love the lecturer. This is the most important thing in my opinion... Another thing is that he used to let us participate. We would make a poster or come out and do the explanation, if someone had taken this material before. He would be there to support that student or correct the information. That was a very good thing because it broke the fear or the worry and allowed us to participate. (PT1)

More features of the perceived model instructor appear in this quote. Dr. M. H. gave students a voice in the lecture. His method of correcting the information appears to have been encouraging instead of destructive to the extent that he was able to give the students more confidence. Prince (2004) defines active learning as learning that engages the student in the educational process. This implies that students are generally engaged in learning activities. Linton, Farmer, and Peterson (2014) found that active learning in Biology courses in HEI render better results when corroborated by cooperative learning and interaction inside the class rather than just lecturing. Peer interaction provided students with better understanding of concepts and a better ability to explain what they learned.

Moreover, the aforementioned instructor used to offer small rewards as a form of incentive. Incentives were also mentioned as a positive feature in PT8's EFL experience at the university: 'Participation in class was much appreciated and encouraged; they sometimes even offered candies or bonus if we participated' (PT8). This brings about a controversial issue in motivation studies regarding the effect of rewards on intrinsic motivation. On the one hand, Ryan and Deci (2009) consider rewards to undermine intrinsic motivation since they affect their autonomy to undertake this action on their own. This view is supported by Dörnyei (2014a) as he warns instructors to avoid the carrot and stick policy with students and focus more on engaging activities in class. Nevertheless, contrary to these views, Cameron, Banko, and Peirce (2001) attempted to resolve this conflict revolving around the impact of reward on motivation by conducting a meta-anlysis and their results indicate that rewards do not have a detrimental effect on intrinsic motivation as long as the activity is of low-interest to the students. In cases of high-interest activities, verbal rewards render better results on achievements than the tangible ones. The findings of my study regarding rewards and their effect on motivation suggest that such incentives can have a positive impact on motivation when the overall class environment is positive and class interaction is prevalent.

To conclude this part of the chapter, the participants' perceptions of the instructor together have drawn a vivid picture of how the instructor can be a motivating figure. This image is not universal but is merely gleaned from the participants of this study; other studies may provide a different picture. This image includes the academic knowledge of the subject and the ability to teach it well. Second, the motivating instructor is someone who is caring, empathic, and willing to offer help on the academic level, preferably both inside and outside the class. Thirdly, the friendly instructor is a motivating factor because the student will feel positive about attending the course. Finally, the instructor needs to adopt an encouraging stance to boost the students' confidence and motivate them to learn the subject.

Other studies show that a positive student-teacher relationship can have an influence on motivation. In a study conducted in Sweden to evaluate this relationship in the language learning setting through classroom observations and interviews, Henry and Thorsen (2018) found that positive contact with the teacher can have both an influence on immediate student motivation and engagement and in mature relationships it can lead to unconscious motivational processes. Another study aimed at finding the common qualities of the language instructor in China and Indonesia (Lamb and Wedell, 2013) concluded that the dominant theme arising from the participants' responses was the 'the human connection that was made by the teacher' (p. 16). Inspiring instructors were those who were able to leave a lasting impression whether by their professionalism or by their care for their students, causing the researchers to emphasise the importance of motivation as a social construct. Furthermore, Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) conducted a large-scale study in South Korea that included both observations and questionnaires and found there is a strong correlation between the teacher's motivational practices and student L2 motivation. Based on that study, Lamb and Abdollahzadeh (2011) conducted another study on Iranian language learning high school students and found that the teachers' motivational practices went hand in hand with the learners' L2 motivation, putting the L2 Learning Experience higher in importance to the Ideal Self, which was not reflected in classroom motivated behaviour.

7.3 Negative Traits of the Instructor

Despite the overwhelming positive experience with the instructor, there were some areas that some participants felt needed some attention related to the English instructor. All the issues reported here can come under the umbrella of a higher expectation from the side of the students towards their instructors. The points of criticism directed against the instructors were mainly connected to perceived leniency, and the desire for more individual attention. It is noteworthy that these were the views of a minority of the participants. The majority mainly focused on the positive traits of their instructors.

7.3.1 The lenient instructor

The first issue is leniency. Two participants commented that the instructor was somewhat lax in class. PT19 mentioned this issue three times in both the interview and the questionnaire:

> The instructor spoke in Arabic and she was too lenient. She allowed us all to pass, although there were a lot who should not have passed. I don't mean she should have failed them but, not to be that lenient…this way, you [she] deceived them. (PT19)

There are two perceived problems here related to the instructor's leniency. Firstly, she spoke Arabic in class when she should have been speaking English throughout since English is the medium of instruction and more specifically, the instructor is obliged to speak English during the English class. One participant explained that the instructor started off speaking in English, but because the students kept speaking in Arabic, the instructor gradually started to speak Arabic in class as well: 'We spoke Arabic together no matter what the instructors did or tried to push us to speak in English' (PT19). He was not laying the blame entirely on the instructor, but he argued there was something the instructor should have done. The same issue was raised by PT20:

> It was in the fact that I went to the English class to speak in English and nothing else, so I found a lot of people talking in Arabic and sometimes the instructor was unable to control this so he would reply to them in Arabic and I would start speaking in Arabic as well. (PT20)

Although studies have shown that using L1 in the L2 classroom is beneficial and may be conducive to learning (Zulfikar, 2018; Carson and Kashihara, 2012), having the instructor speak L1 in class appears to be one of the negative remarks on the teacher and can be considered as a demotivating factor. A study conducted on the issue of demotivation among Finnish unversity students studying English (Amemori, 2012) revealed that students find that only English should be spoken in class, and that there was no room for the L1 in the L2 classroom.

7.3.2 Desire for more individual attention

Although most of the participants felt close to their instructors and felt that they were friends with them, three participants expressed the desire for more personal attention from the instructor. For instance, PT1 was looking forward to having more turns in the pronunciation lessons:

> If we were working on a sound, the instructor would pronounce it more than once or get some words and explain the correct stress. These were good things. But it would have been better if you had allowed me to do something like that. You can get me a sentence and let me say it over and over. That did not happen often, but when it happened, it was a good thing. (PT1)

Here he wanted more time allotted to him personally to practise. He desired more attention from the instructor to check his progress in pronunciation as he was practising it in class. Another example for the desire for special attention came from PT3:

> I definitely want to improve, but I see that the challenge here, especially in English, is that the instructor should pay more attention to us individually, to see what each one of us is doing, or to focus with each one as if we were kids.

> This is because most of us are coming out of *Thanwya Ama* and most of us come from Arabic schools. (PT3)

This participant wanted more individual attention as if the class were not college students but school children. The college instructor in this case would be required to give extra attention to the students than is required from them. This view can be interpreted in different ways. My own interpretation based on all the interviews and my experience of instruction, is that the participants' negative L2 Learning Experience at school deprived them of a healthy learning environment and instead of picking up where they left off, they expected to start from the beginning, meaning they wanted someone to show them individual support to make-up for what they felt they had been deprived of. Another plausible explanation is that some students were not used to independent learning and hence required constant attention. There is also the influence of private tutoring that is prevailing among Egyptian students across the different levels of education and social levels (Sieverding, Krafft, and Elbadawy, 2017) which can be the cause of wanting individual attention just as in the private lesson. In all cases, this comes as a contrast to the views mentioned in the previous sections about the efforts of the instructor to conduct an interactive class and a positive atmosphere.

For PT12, however, the desire for individual attention stems from another issue. He felt in the first English course at the university that the other students had a better background in English than him, so he felt he was lagging behind in understanding some concepts which were easy for his classmates. He stated:

> I did not know what was required from me… Everyone was writing an outline and I had no idea what an outline was. When I asked the instructor, she replied…She replied but I did not feel it was sufficient. It did not help me much. (PT12)

This participant stated that he needed more individual attention from the instructor but this stemmed from the gap he felt between him and his classmates. He mentioned earlier in the interview that he struggled for a while in the course: 'there were things that were new for me but familiar to the other students'. This participant felt that his classmates were more proficient than him and so he felt left out. These comments regarding the need for extra attention from the teacher is found in Lee's (2017) study on the evaluation of teachers' motivational strategies from the students' perspectives. The study was conducted in a University in Hong Kong and used journals and interviews and involved 26 students from years 1 and 2. Many of the participants reported that their Learning Experience could be enhanced by more input from the teachers. Around one-third of the participants suggested several extra interventions from the teacher including offering extra support in group tasks and imparting more knowledge.

The findings in this section combine the influence of the instructor as both a facilitator of knowledge and a provider of assistance. There is a similarity between these findings and a study (Keblowska, 2002) conducted in Polish high schools to compare both student and teacher expectations on the role of the L2 instructor. Whereas the teachers regarded competence as the primary role, the students considered the role of the teacher as a counsellor as very high on their list, where counselling was taken to refer to the teachers' willingness to provide support and extra practice for the students to make sure they understand the language. In this study, the participants' perceptions of their instructors overall appear to be positive, but there were some participants who criticised some teachers' behaviour in class. The points of criticism are speaking Arabic in class and expectations of more individual attention from their instructors than they received. Such negative traits of the instructors can be considered as a link between this chapter about the role of the instructor and the next one, which will tackle the motivational constraints according to the participants' perception, moving on to the negative aspects of L2 learning that they felt can hinder their motivation.

7.4 Conclusion

Along with the previous two themes in Chapters 5 and 6, this theme attempted to answer RQ1

RQ1. What enhances students' L2 motivation from their perspective in this particular context?

Chapter 5 focused on the Ideal and Ought to L2 Selves in the participants. Chapter 6 dealt with the L2 Learning Experience, excluding the instructor. This chapter continued the analysis of the L2 Learning Experience, this time paying special attention to the instructor due to the amount of data the study rendered about this area. The chapter linked the three dimensions of teacher credibility to the third element of the L2MSS: the L2 Learning Experience. The data overall in this theme suggest that the participants held their L2 instructors in high regard. Based on the participants' responses, the instructor's trustworthiness, competence, and perceived caring which together build up teacher credibility are related to a perceived overall positive L2 Learning Experience. The findings suggest that the EFL teacher should not only be proficient in their career, but also should have a social and psychological rapport with the students. This is similar to the results of Trammell and Aldrich (2016) in the USA where they found that students wanted instructors who were 'approachable, enthusiastic, positive, knowledgeable (about content and technology), organised, consistent, friendly, quick to respond, and [have] strong teaching skills' (p. 23). Having such a positive experience with instructors of such characteristics fostered the participants' motivation to learn EFL in this HEI.

The amount of data under each category may suggest that the participants of this study seem to endorse the instructor's perceived caring more than both competence and trustworthiness, although they were both significant for the participants on their own. This may not be restricted to the data of this study alone. Finn et al. (2009) conducted a meta-analysis of 51 studies on teacher credibility in a span of thirty years and their study also revealed that the students in these studies valued perceived caring over both trustworthiness and competence. They concluded that

> to the extent that teachers are empathetic, understanding, and responsive to their students, and to the extent that they communicate to their students that they have their best interests in mind, such efforts are likely to enhance their students' interest in the course, their involvement in classroom activities and assignments, and ultimately, their learning. (p. 531)

This suggests that although an instructor should be qualified and competent in their role, being personable with the students is of such value that it resonated with them after the course was finished. Being treated as humans with interests and concerns rather than just students had an impact on the majority of the participants.

The findings of this study and those mentioned in the chapter referring to the instructor's credibility and his/her role in the classroom in general and the L2 classroom in particular all reveal that the instructor is an integral part of L2 motivation. Lamb (2017) in an extensive research study on L2 instructor motivation, pointed out that the figure of the instructor has a prominent role in motivating the language learner. In his conclusion, he stated that what is more important to the learners is the personal aspect of the instructor:

> the teacher has to understand the needs, goals and desires that learners bring to class from their lives outside and from prior experiences of learning; they have to create a group dynamic which accommodates and excites all of them; they need the professional dedication to continually respond to, and sometimes try to change, those needs, goals and desires. (p. 330)

The participants' responses and most of their views on the instructors were on their personality and not on their expertise in the field. This appears to indicate that the student-teacher relationship both inside and outside the classroom can be a strong determiner of L2 motivation. The instructor's credibility has shown that it is a significant aspect of the L2 Learning Experience and it added to the participants' motivation to learn English in this institution. The next chapter gathers the motivational constraints mentioned by the participants and may have affected their motivation negatively.

Chapter 8 The Obstacles

Motivational Constraints

8.1 Introduction

This study sought to understand the factors affecting L2 motivation in a HEI in Egypt, using the L2MSS as a theoretical framework. The previous three chapters analysed three themes based on the findings of both the interviews and questionnaires. Chapter 5 tackled the participants' motivation in terms of their Ideal and Ought-to Selves. Chapter 6 explored the participants' positive attitudes to their current L2 Learning Experience. Chapter 7 continued the exploration of the Learning Experience, with special attention to the instructor as a motivational figure in the language classroom. This chapter is the final one in my data analysis and discussion, devoted to the motivational constraints perceived by the participants. The findings reveal that the factors hindering L2 motivation in this study are both internal and external. On the interior level there are the negative emotions experienced by the students that may hinder their motivation to learn English. These emotions include anxiety, shame/guilt, and boredom. On the external level there are course-related and institution-related factors. The course-related factors comprise the need for more practice, what are seen as 'useless' activities, unorganised material, and course difficulty, whereas the institution-related factors include the academic overload from other courses and the compulsory nature of the course. Experiencing one or more of these internal or external factors appeared to affect the participants' motivation negatively.

The previous chapters detailing the data analysis showed factors affecting L2 motivation positively, whether through motivation promotion (Ideal Self), motivation prevention (Ought-to Self), or through the L2 Learning Experience. The participants' perceptions were to a great extent positive. However, this chapter addresses their negative perceptions, aiming to answer the following research question:

RQ3. What are the constraints affecting the participants' L2 motivation?

Demotivation is defined by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) as 'specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioural intention or an ongoing action' (p. 139). Nevertheless, Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) suggest that demotivation arises from internal as well as external factors. There are some significant studies conducted on L2 demotivation and which are used as frameworks for subsequent work on this topic. Oxford's (1998) study revealed four major factors contributing to student L2 demotivation: the student-teacher relationship, the teacher's attitude to the course and the material, style conflicts between teachers and students, and the nature of the activities. Dörnyei's (1998) study came up with more factors:

- The teacher (personality, commitment, competence, teaching method)
- Inadequate school facilities (group is too big or not the right level, frequent change of teachers)
- Reduced self-confidence (experience of failure or lack of success)
- Negative attitude towards the L2
- Compulsory nature of L2 study
- Interference of another foreign language being studied
- Negative attitude towards L2 community
- Attitudes of group members
- Coursebook

According to both these studies, the teacher featured either directly or indirectly as the most demotivating factor. Based on the current study, in contrast to previous research, the teachers are a significant motivator, not the other way around. A more recent study by Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) provides five demotivating factors: class content and materials, teachers' competence and teaching styles, inadequate school facilities, lack of intrinsic motivation, and test scores. The findings of the current study share some of these factors, namely: the class content and materials, and the lack of intrinsic motivation.

It is noticeable that the teacher is absent from the demotivating factors mentioned in this chapter, although the teacher is a common factor mentioned in all the major investigations on demotivation mentioned above. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, the previous chapter was devoted in its entirety to the role of the teacher and my aim was to show the magnitude of their role in L2 motivation pertaining to this study and potentially for future research. Hence, it was more appropriate to include both the positive and the negative aspects together in one chapter. Secondly, as the previous chapter showed and contrary to the above-mentioned frameworks, the instructor in this study was more an inspiring than a demotivating factor. My study is not the only one where the teacher was more of a positive aspect than a negative one on the participants' L2 Learning Experience. A study which involved 900 Japanese university students in Tokyo (Falout, Ellwood, and Hood, 2009) found that the teacher was the least mentioned factor for demotivation, rather the participants generally felt their instructors were inspiring, similar to the findings of the current study. It is worth mentioning that neither the interview nor the questionnaire questions had any direct questions on demotivation. The factors discussed below are deduced from the responses of the students regarding their Learning Experience with the Remedial English courses under study. Moreover, the findings demonstrate that emotions play a significant part in inhibiting L2 motivation and arousing demotivation in the participants. The figure below shows the three levels of L2 demotivation in this study.

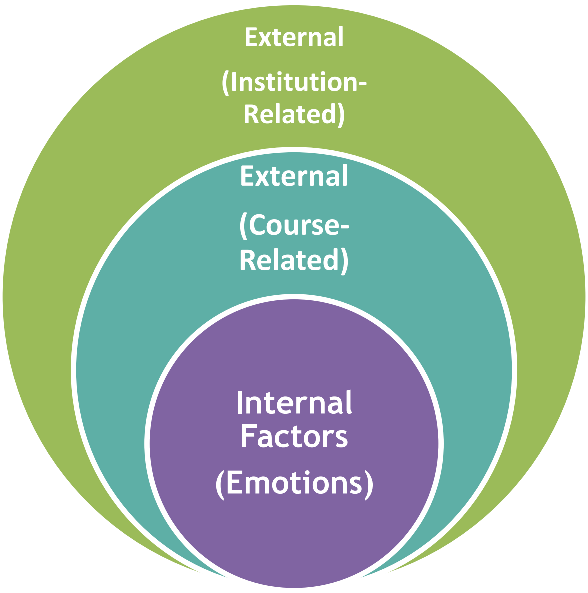


Figure 8-1 Demotivation in the Findings of this Study

Based on the data, I found that there were two main levels of demotivation in the study: internal and external. The external factors are in turn divided into institutions-related and course-related factors. In this chapter, I will start explaining my analysis by exploring the participants' negative emotions (**8.2**) as obstacles to motivation to participate in class. Next, I will move to the course-related demotivators (**8.3**). Then, I examine the institution-related factors represented in the position of the English courses in the academic portfolio of the university, since they are non-credit courses, and how academic pressure can be an inhibiting factor in L2 motivation (**8.4**). Finally, I conclude the chapter (**8.5**).

8.2 Negative Emotions

Emotions play a part in the participants' motivation to learn English. This was emphasised in Chapter 5 when the participants talked about displaying an interest in the language (**5.2.1**) and their fear of failure (**5.3.1**). Pekrun et al. (2002) conducted several studies to see the range of emotions experienced in the academic setting and found all known emotions except disgust were displayed. Negative emotions can be related to the L2MSS in the manner that they could be the result of the discrepancy between the 'real' self and the Ideal L2 self. According to Teimouri (2017), the L2MSS considers the discrepancy between the real and the future Ideal L2 Self to be a cause for L2 motivation, which is possible. Yet, he claims that there is also the possibility that this discrepancy may lead to negative emotions such as shame or guilt, in the manner suggested by the self-discrepancy theory postulated by Higgins (1987), one of the theories in psychology upon which the L2MSS is based, as was discussed in Chapter 3 (**3.4.2**). Some participants made references to their language anxiety when they speak in English in public. Moreover, the participants in the present study also displayed negative emotions of boredom, and shame/guilt. I will discuss each of them in the coming sub-sections.

8.2.1 Language anxiety

Language anxiety is considered the most common emotion discussed in the field of language learning (Pekrun et al., 2002; MacIntyre and Vincze, 2017; and Teimouri, 2017). Gregersen, Macintyre, and Meza (2014) explain that language anxiety can be either positive or negative, depending on the person and the context. They add that the negative attitude of the language learner can be improved by focusing on the positive aspect of anxiety, even with the presence of physiological symptoms like increasing heart beats. Language anxiety features in the data of this study, in both the negative and the positive sense. Like Yan and Horwitz's (2008) study on Chinese Business-major university students, there were students who showed no language anxiety, those who appeared able to overcome their anxiety, and those who did not.

In the current study, there were participants who revealed that language anxiety was not an issue for them, as the following examples demonstrate. PT13 asserted that 'I'm an excellent speaker and presenter. It came from experience. So, I find no difficulties at all'. Moreover, PT15 did not consider it an issue to speak out in public or even to make mistakes:

> I feel that I have enough motivation to say my opinion so I try to speak even if I will make errors, I will not have it in mind that I am doing something that has to be perfect. (PT15)

The experience varied even for those who reported incidents of language anxiety. Whereas some participants were able to improve and conquer their unwillingness to communicate in English, others were hindered by this affect in their experience and felt that the course did not help them overcome it. For PT18, it was a matter of getting used to speaking in English in public, so he was able to overcome his anxiety:

> At first, I was nervous because I didn't use to talk in English, but now I feel good when I am speaking in English in public. (PT18)

PT11 was nervous of making mistakes in public, but his anxiety also lessened with practice in class:

> I used to be nervous when I talked in public in English because definitely, I will make many mistakes, but …. I was able to overcome this problem easily. (PT11)

The same thing happened with PT8:

> At first, I faced some difficulties as I never practised speaking English in front of other people. But it is continuously becoming easier as I participate more in class. Feedback is always very helpful. (PT8)

PT8 regarded feedback as an important factor for him in overcoming his anxiety. Another example of a participant who was able to gradually get over his language anxiety is PT19 who, in his view, had a public speaking anxiety. His full quotation was mentioned previously in Chapter 6 (**6.3.4**):

> It was the presentation skills. We would prepare for presentations in English, and I would stand in front of my class and speak confidently. I mean I was..I consider myself to have a phobia of public speaking. That was before. ... If you asked me to do that before the two courses I would not stand and speak in public for the world. I used to have a phobia of public speaking. (PT19)

This is one major example of how speaking practice had an influence on this student's language anxiety. Such participants may have had language anxiety that did not impact their willingness to communicate in English. This was observed in an Iranian study on EFL students preparing for the IELTS exam (Riasati, 2018), which attempted to understand the factors affecting the students' willingness to communicate in English, among which was the perceived speaking opportunities by the students. The fact that the course provided them with the opportunity to speak the L2 added to their willingness to communicate. The participants here were able to deal with their speaking anxiety when they were given various opportunities to speak in class and break their fear.

On the other hand, there were participants who felt they were not able to overcome their language anxiety, and this hindered their L2 motivation. It is worth noting that the three participants who mentioned a high level of anxiety (PT10, PT1, and PT3) in this section felt there was a need for more speaking practice, as will be discussed in section **8.3.1**. PT10 mentioned repeatedly that she was not comfortable speaking in public. The impromptu speech assignment which received praise from several participants in Chapter 6 (**6.3.1** and **6.3.4**), was the worst memory for her:

> A bad memory…yes, during the impromptu speech. I did not feel I did very well. I was shaking so much in front of the people and did not know how to talk. I felt the words stuck to my throat and did not know how to say it in the first place. (PT10)

She was both physically and psychologically affected by the experience. Noticeably, she stated that she did not have a general fear of public speaking if she were speaking in Arabic:

> But the thing is when I start to speak in public, I don't feel comfortable when I speak English, I feel…I feel better when I speak Arabic…. I do not feel comfortable [speaking in English]. (PT10)

The main reason was that 'I am afraid of making mistakes in front of people'. Fear of making mistakes is, according to Dörnyei (2001), one of the major causes of language anxiety, to the extent that some students prefer to stay silent than to speak and make mistakes in public.

The only other case of debilitating language anxiety in this study is seen in PT1's case. Like PT10, he mentioned this issue more than once during both the interview and the questionnaire. His main problem was fear of making mistakes and that someone would make fun of him:

> I am scared of speaking in English in front of people. I feel I can make an error in a word or a sound, and someone would make fun of me. It would be very hurtful. (PT1)

In the questionnaire, he attributed his negative experience to his own problem: 'The fault was not in the courses, it was in me and my shyness, and great fear of embarrassment'. He claimed to have improved:

> At first, I did not know how to utter a word, I did not even try to utter a word but now I am with Ms G., I speak now, and she made me give a speech…it is… I was nervous at first, but that's ok. I am learning. (PT1)

Nevertheless, his language anxiety appeared to have decreased his enjoyment of the course. Riasati's (2018) study mentioned earlier found that fear of negative evaluation was one of the significant factors affecting students' willingness to communicate and a cause for language anxiety. Indeed, a study in the Egyptian higher education context, on 194 students from the four years of the English major, found that the second cause of language anxiety reported was the fear of negative evaluation, right after communication apprehension. The students did not want to make mistakes in public and thus lose face in front of their teacher and peers.

PT3's case is less severe than that of PT10 and PT1, yet it was also a cause for her to identify the need for more practice, and also to stress the role of the teacher (mentioned in **7.2.3**) to make the students speak out in class. Like PT10, the impromptu speech assignment was not a pleasant experience for her:

> The impromptu speech. I felt it was…I did not like it to be honest because people were not prepared for it, and this really shakes our self-confidence a lot. Instead of having a positive effect, it messes up things more. You did not really prepare for the speech so you would stand up and you would feel you did not deliver it well, so you would feel that you are not good enough. (PT3)

Rather than encourage her to speak out in English in class, it had the opposite effect. PT3’s problem here appeared to be an issue of self-esteem:

> The problem was in self-confidence, the idea of speaking in public. I used to be nervous and would forget what I wanted to say in the first place. (PT3)

Language anxiety can be linked to the feeling of guilt/shame discussed in the coming section, which is caused by a gap felt between the students and their peers if they feel that they have a lower proficiency level. In the coming section (**8.2.2)**, the same participant (PT3) reported that she felt a gap between her and her colleagues, that she was ‘not good enough’. Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) conducted a study on fifteen students in a lower secondary school in Greece and they found that language anxiety was attributed to two causes: fear of negative evaluation from their peers, and the perceived inferiority of their proficiency in comparison with their peers. This is similar to what some participants in the current study conveyed. According to Yan and Horwitz (2008), a cause of language anxiety is the feeling that the other students in the class are better in these language skills. In this area, it was revealed that some participants felt anxious from this comparison, while others were motivated to work harder to bridge the gap, which brought the authors to note that observing the learners’ settings might be crucial in understanding how language anxiety works. Furthermore, Dörnyei (2001) stresses the importance of not putting the students under the spotlight without making sure they are ready and want to do it to avoid such a stressful situation for them.

Whether language anxiety is negatively correlated with motivation is a matter that has differed from one context to another. For instance, Almurshed and Aljuaythin (2019) in their study on 40 female English major university students in KSA found that although most of the participants displayed medium to high anxiety level, it did not affect their motivation to learn English. In the Vietnamese context, Trang, Moni, and Baldauf (2012), using both student self-reports and interviews with 49 non-English university students, also discovered that the varying degrees of language anxiety encountered by the students did not diminish their determination to learn English. According to the researchers, this was due to the students' awareness of the importance of learning English and their own volition control. Nevertheless, Liu's (2012) research on Taiwanese university students found that the students who showed a high level of anxiety tended to show less motivation and display less autonomy in classroom activities as opposed to those who had lower levels of anxiety. These findings are similar to a study conducted in an Iranian HEI, where the 80 participants suffered from a mid- to a high level of language anxiety. The students who had a high level of anxiety showed a lower level of motivation than those with a lower level of anxiety. Moreover, Dewaele and Thirtle's (2009) study on younger FL learners in the UK, aged 12, found that high levels of anxiety correlated with a desire to drop from the FL course, although it is possible that there are other reasons for that. Thus, it remains open to question whether language anxiety can have a negative effect on L2 motivation, and this is what is shown in this study. The participants who reported incidents of language anxiety were either motivated to get over this obstacle in their learning (PT18, PT8, PT11, and PT19), whereas those who were not able to overcome this anxiety and felt frustrated by it were negatively affected and expressed a desire for more practice, perhaps in a bid for a chance to get over this anxiety (PT3, PT10, and PT1).

8.2.2 Shame/guilt

Among the negative feelings encountered by EFL learners are feelings of shame and guilt. Though the study was not initially intended to explore emotions, various positive as well as negative emotions emerged from the data to an extent that puts emotions as a significant factor when considering L2 motivation in the context of this study. There were no quantitative methods to measure specifically the types of negative emotions experienced by the students. Furthermore, there are no explicit utterances by any of the participants regarding feelings of shame or guilt, unlike their reported feelings of anxiety **(8.2.1)** or boredom **(**see next section **8.2.3)**. Nevertheless, some of the emotions conveyed by several participants may be ascribed to feelings of shame and/or guilt. Both shame and guilt are among the self-conscious emotions, along with embarrassment and pride, as opposed to the basic emotions which include anger, enjoyment, disgust, and surprise (Teimouri, 2018). According to Tracy and Robins (2004):

> Shame and guilt are elicited by a common set of cognitive processes. For both emotions, an individual must focus attention on some aspect of the self, activating public and/or private self-representations; appraise the event as relevant to and incongruent with identity goals; and attribute the cause of the event to some internal factor, blaming the self for the situation. (p. 115)

Based on this model, shame will lead to internal and global attributions, such as saying ‘I am dumb’, whereas guilt will lead to internal, specific attributions, such as saying ‘I did not try hard enough’. In the L2 situation, the student may blame themselves for their failings and perhaps see themselves in a negative light as an L2 speaker (Teimouri, 2018), which may later lead to feelings of anxiety and withdrawal from participation in class.

As mentioned previously (**5.2.1**), participants had a positive attitude towards the language or had an Ideal L2 Self and this prompted them to seek improvement on their own. However, such attempts were at times a source of struggle when they were attempting, for instance, to read English books on their own or speak in English outside class. The resulting emotions can be described as an internal form of shame. For example, one participant struggled with the amount of vocabulary in the books he tried to read:

> Once I got an English novel. It was the first time to read it. I spent around fifteen minutes in the first page because I would translate each word. I know the word and there is another meaning for it. So, my vocabulary bank is not rich. Every time I say I have enough, I discover that I don’t. There are synonyms. I discovered that this is the biggest problem I face. (PT20)

Although the English courses helped him to improve his reading skills somewhat, he still struggled with reading:

> I don’t translate every word. I am now better than before. I can read a lot of things without needing to translate. But as I mentioned before, sometimes I find whole paragraphs staring me in the face and I don’t understand anything. (PT20)

Another participant struggled with speaking in English:

> I struggle a lot in speaking because I do not know how to elaborate and I pause between the sentences and if I focus on the pronunciation, I make errors in the grammar and vice versa. (PT19)

In these instances, the participants appear to blame themselves for this failing, which leads to their frustration at their inability to improve their skills. Teimouri (2018) notes that when there is a gap between the L2 learner's proficiency and that of the target community, this may lead to feelings of shame and guilt. Similarly, shame and guilt can be experienced when there is a perceived gap between the learner and their classmates. There is also a perceived gap between the participants of this study's high school L2 experiences and their university one. The various perceived gaps are all present in this study. PT12 recounted his experience with the language course:

> It was not easy to adapt to the courses since the learning methods and content differ remarkably from the governmental schools' English courses. I think this should be taken into consideration as it took me a while to keep up with other classmates as I had no idea of much information that seemed to be fundamental for others. (PT12)

What he said above was his suggestion when I asked if he had anything else to say at the end of the interview. The gap between the L2 experience at school and the university was discussed in detail in Chapter 6. This response shows that the gap between the two experiences can have a negative effect on the students who then may struggle to cope with the transition. PT15 shared the same view:

> They are not the same at all, and I think it is harder. The transition itself was hard, even ENGL004 was harder than…than school …I was in an experimental school so I used to take the books in English but when I came here, I found that the references here are also harder in English. (PT15)

Here is another example of a student struggling with the transition from school to university when it comes to the English language used in both. PT13 suggested that there should be some action taken to ease this transition. He had the same opinion as the two examples mentioned above in this section:

> I guess that in order to increase motivation for the English [course]…well…maybe there are a lot of people, a lot of people in my class come from Arabic schools and they still have the idea of English as that they

> used to take in school. They did not see it in a different light. So, I guess that if there is a way to change the way they view English as not something just to… I guess that people who were in *Thanwya Ama* feel a gap when they take English here and this puts some pressure on them: "This is not the English we are used to study. This is more complicated" … There are people who see English as something very complicated. If you want to bridge the gap between the English they studied in *Thanwya Ama* and what they should actually learn, I guess this will motivate them a lot, and this will make them accept matters more. (PT13)

Instead of a grammar-based curriculum where learning English was limited to the memorisation of grammar and vocabulary, some students were challenged by the communicative approach method of learning that required them to participate and engage with the language. In this participant's view, this gap was experienced by other students, not just him.

From the perspective of a perceived gap between them and their peers, PT3 felt shame/guilt when she joined this university, to the extent that she questioned her own proficiency: 'I felt it was a bit hard. I felt I was supposed to be in the preceding level'. In her view, she should have been placed in a lower-level course. Later, she mentioned that students came from different educational backgrounds, and this caused a negative feeling:

> We find people from different levels. There are those who were IG [IGCSE] and other things so their levels are higher. We get shocked, and we ask ourselves: why aren't we like that? (PT3)

Likewise, PT12 felt it difficult to adapt at the beginning when he found people coming from 'better' English language backgrounds:

> I came here and found it vastly different, and the system is different. Almost all the students in my class came from language [schools] or French [schools] or STEM [schools], so to an extent, they had an advantage over me. (PT12)

The types of schools and education systems mentioned above all focus on English from an early stage, as opposed to the governmental schools, in which a major part of the curriculum is studied in Arabic. It took PT12 time to be able to keep up with the others, but he had to struggle at first because his starting level was different from some other students in his class:

> There were things that were new for me but familiar to the other students. And for the instructor it was too basic to explain, and I had no idea about them. For

> example, I took time to understand (collocations). I did not know what (collocation) meant. With time, I was able to know. (PT12)

Such negative feelings caused him to feel reluctant to ask about things he did not know in class, for 'if it was clarified any more than that [in class], it would have been boring' for the other students. PT3, mentioned earlier in this section, suffered from a similar negative emotion because of this gap:

> Our levels were different. You would see someone in front of you speaking fluently and you can't, so you would be scared of saying something wrong. Because if you said something wrong, you would not feel good about yourself. (PT3)

Thus, some participants experienced the emotion of shame and/or guilt at certain times during their Learning Experience at the university whether because they were struggling to improve their proficiency but did not feel they were reaching the desired level, or due the perceived gap in their proficiency levels as opposed to their classmates.

Although MacIntyre and Vincze (2017) conclude that negative emotions correlate negatively with L2 motivation, Teimouri's (2017) study revealed that shame existed in students who had a strong Ideal L2 Self as well as those who had a strong Ought-to Self, in other words, who were highly motivated. Indeed, McGregor and Elliott (2005) reiterate the fact that shame is a result of fear of failure. The higher the fear of failure, the higher the levels of shame. This in turn may imply that shame and guilt, like language anxiety, can be either an inhibitor or a driver for motivation to get over this emotion and work more, as the participants who worked on themselves in (**8.2.1**). According to Teimouri (2017) if it is a feeling of guilt, there can be an effort towards a reparative action, since the L2 learners will be willing 'to put more effort into learning the L2 in order to compensate for their shortcomings and reduce their self-discrepancies' (p.691). On the other hand, if it is shame, then this might lead students to lean more towards withdrawing or demonstrating avoidance. Whether the participants who expressed emotions of shame/guilt were able to overcome this demotivating emotion is not clear in the scope of the present study. It could mean, however, that these negative feelings can deter L2 motivation in the participants.

8.2.3 Boredom

Another negative emotion felt by three participants was boredom. Boredom is defined by Zawodniak, Kruk, and Chumas (2017) as a 'notion which irrevocably evokes negative connotations referring to an inner sense of emptiness, apathy and lack of purpose' (p. 426). Academic boredom occurs when either there is not much stimulation for the students' attention, or when the stimulation is above their capabilities (Pekrun et al., 2002). In other words, boredom occurs if the material is too easy or too hard for the students. In this study, the reported cases were mainly related to the lack of stimulation, in the form of the activities or tasks themselves, or in the way the teacher presented the material.

There were several aspects of the classes like the content or the instruction methods that some students said they found boring in one way or another. For example, PT1 found the pronunciation classes boring: 'we spent around 2 lectures on the sounds like the vowels and so on. It was boring to be honest'. He did not like spending so much time practising the pronunciation of the English vowels and consonants. One possible explanation is that he did not appreciate the way it was taught. Another explanation is that he may have felt there were more important things to learn other than the exact accurate sounds. PT15 criticised the method of teaching the APA documentation style in research writing indicating an example of boredom with one aspect of the course:

> ER: Ok, what were the teaching methods used in ENGL004, and did you like these methods? I mean when the instructor for example explained APA, how did he/she explain it?
>
> PT15: She, as far as I remember, would give examples, and say this is a book and so on and this is how to do it, and that's all
>
> ER: Ok, was this an effective method for you? Or…?
>
> PT15: No, actually, I would be bored.

Finally, PT4 made more than one reference to the monotony of the course. First, he mentioned that in ENGL003, there was only one essay written throughout the course:

> So, we take the whole semester to write, body paragraph 1, and so on. We do not write it [this way]. We still write it in one hour at the end. (PT4)

In his view, 'the [whole] essay actually takes an hour to write'. When I asked about the worst part of the course for him, he stated: 'the worst thing is monotony. The course is really slow. I felt it was very slow'. It is worth mentioning that this was the only participant to comment on the course in this way, probably because he believed his proficiency was above the course level.

Studies have shown that boredom has a negative effect on student motivation. One notable study was conducted by Macklem (2015) on 30 students in a Polish university majoring in English philology in their final year of a two-year MA program. They were asked to keep a diary and log in all their reflections about feelings of encouragement or discouragement during their classes. The findings revealed that the main source of boredom for the students was when the task proved to be too difficult or too easy for them. Furthermore, a lack of variety in the activities themselves proved to be a source of boredom for them. The least mentioned source was the way the teachers conducted the activities. These results are similar to the findings mentioned in this section. In a qualitative study conducted in a tertiary institution in Hong Kong which involved 26 students, Lee (2017) attempted to find the students' reactions to the teachers' motivational strategies using journals and interviews. Although the strategies used received a general positive feedback, half of them were noted to be ineffective in some features. Among the unfavourable comments was that the students felt bored and unmotivated at times. In the present study, there were few cases of reported boredom, but it was mentioned nonetheless by a small number of participants, and it appeared to have impacted these participants' L2 motivation in a negative manner. Since boredom can be a result of having course material that is not stimulating for the students, this section is hence related to another section in the chapter (**8.3.4**), which deals with course difficulty.

In this section, three negative emotions were discussed that emerged from the data. The findings of the present study suggest that language anxiety featured strongly in varying degrees and affected some of the participants' L2 motivation. Other negative emotions arising were feelings of shame/guilt, which may lead to anxiety and resulted in this study in some students struggling with improving the language or coping with the perceived gap in proficiency between other students. The final negative emotion mentioned was boredom because of the lack of stimulation of the participants' attention. These emotions comprised the internal factors for demotivation. I will now move to the external factors first by discussing course-related factors, then institution-related ones.

8.3 Course-Related Demotivators

Chapter 6 of this dissertation analysed in detail the negative L2 Learning Experience at school and the participants' positive experiences at the university. Overall, most participants had positive attitudes towards their current experience with English courses in terms of the academic benefit (**6.3.1)**, fun and games (**6.3.2)**, and their enjoyment of individual and group activities **(6.3.3)**. In addition, Chapter 7 highlighted the general positive relationship the participants had with their instructors. This section focuses on the external factors of demotivation represented in the negative attitudes towards the course(s). The criticisms directed against the course included the need for more practice (**8.3.1**), that the course was not organised (**8.3.2**), had 'useless' activities (**8.3.3**), and was too easy (**8.3.4**).

8.3.1 Lack of practice

Practising the four skills is a fundamental aspect of any language classroom. In Chapter 6, the participants commented on the lack of practice in their schools, specifically in the secondary stage **(6.2)**. Though there was a reported and significant difference between the school and the university L2 experience, some participants had concerns about the lack of practice of one or more of the four language skills at the university. It is noteworthy that just like their perceived need in their school experience, there was again a demand for more speaking practice at the university level. This was noticed in their comments about their school experience. There was more than one reference that they did not get the chance to speak in class when they were in school. Although there is evidence of a number of opportunities to speak in class at the university level, it appears that this was not considered enough by a sizable minority. Eight out of the twenty participants of both the questionnaires and interviews made comments regarding this issue.

There are various reasons mentioned for this perceived need for more speaking practice. PT19 wanted to increase the speaking and writing activities -not the assignments- in class 'because our environment is all about Arabic, so my English will never improve at this rate'. From another perspective, PT1 (who had a high-level language anxiety mentioned earlier) felt that extra speaking activities would help with his language anxiety, which was discussed earlier in this chapter in section **8.2.1**:

> If the activities increased that would encourage me to speak and express myself without fear, that would be better much better, and I would solve my biggest problem in English in general. (PT1)

PT8 praised the English course for giving him the chance to give a presentation for the first time in his life, but he stated:

> I think if the course could focus more on presentation, it could fill the gap between writing and actually speaking English... if we could practise speaking more through presentations and speeches, it would be very helpful for the upcoming courses. (PT8)

Two participants placed the responsibility on the teacher. PT3 (with a high-level anxiety) wanted the instructor to exert more pressure on the students to speak English in class:

> We sometimes need the instructor to urge us to communicate not just to make it like free for us to talk or to spend sessions and sessions without talking. (PT3)

She seemed to feel that with the help of the instructor, she could be pushed to get over her anxiety. Moreover, PT20 wanted the instructor to make sure the students spoke in English outside the class:

> I think the speaking classes weren't good enough, and the instructor didn't care about making us use the language in the whole week not only twice [there were two classes] per week. (PT20)

He did not, however, have a view on how an instructor might ensure the students are practising English outside class time.

In the questionnaire there were the following comments without elaboration about the need for more speaking practice: 'I think I should self-study speaking and listening as I don't find it enough in English courses till now' (PT9); 'I think that we should have taken a conversation class' (PT10, with a high-level language anxiety); ‘I think that we should talk in English more in this courses’ (PT18); and ‘we need to practise more and talking in English in class should be considered more seriously’ (PT7). There was no chance to know more about this from these participants because they did not participate in the interviews, except for PT10, who was mentioned earlier in **8.2.1**. However, it is clear from their comments that they felt strongly that they needed to practise speaking more than they did in the course. Amemori (2012) studied demotivating factors in English courses in a Finnish University and found that among the external demotivating factors was the lack of practice in oral skills. Amemori added this under ‘Classroom activities’ as part of the demotivating factors related to the teacher. This could be argued to be partly applicable here but there are other comments that showed that students clearly considered this as a defect in the course and not the teacher, for example they wanted to have more sessions where they were required to give presentations. This is more related to the course structure. Hence, all these comments regarding the need for more practice can be grouped under ‘course-related demotivators’.

8.3.2 Unorganised course

Another negative aspect of the L2 Learning Experience in this study was the feeling that the course was not well organised. The negative comments were directed at ENGL003 more than ENGL004. Since the participants came from different classes taught by different instructors, it appears to be a problem with the course rather than the course instructor. PT22 commented on this in both the questionnaire and the interview:

> I think that it was not systematic. For example, in the phonetics part, we would take different things that are not related to one another. There was no educational hierarchy we would follow. We would take something from here and something from there, haphazardly. (PT22)

In the interview, he stated that the writing part was good but in general the course needed some improvement. The speaking part, in his view, needed to be more ‘systematic, something that progresses from one course to the next’. Furthermore, he felt there was no link between the activities:

> I did not know what I was supposed to get out of the course. We used to take expressions randomly. They were not put in contexts I can use. Every time we

> would do a different activity. For example, one time we had a movie. They showed us a silent movie and we would start to… to…act it out. So, this was one time and then another time we would take a whole new activity. So, there wasn't any link between them. I felt things were disorganised I did not know what I was supposed to learn from the course. (PT22)

This view regarding ENGL003 was shared by PT7, who felt it

> didn't meet the requirements I expected as it only focused on certain activities that required too much time with not much gain. (PT7)

It appears that for some participants, the course objectives were not clear, and they did not know why they were doing these activities. This leads to the next section where some participants described the activities as useless.

8.3.3 'Useless' activities

Although in Chapter 6 there were positive remarks about the activities in the two courses (**6.3.3**), this section shows that there were also considerable comments about whether these activities were deemed useful by some participants. There were seven instances in the data to show that some participants did not believe some or all the activities to be beneficial. For instance, the sitcom activity which was described as enjoyable for some (**see 6.3.3**) was considered irrelevant for others. PT1 considered it an example of useless activities:

> There are some activities that I find useless. Making a video story or something like that was not nice. I did not like it, personally. (PT1)

More significantly is the idea that students may enjoy an activity but still do not find it beneficial. This was mentioned, for instance, by PT13: 'I mean they were fun, but I don't think they added much to me', PT14: 'They were good, but did not help me academically', and PT19: 'The activities were weak … and did not add to me anything other than being very ordinary educational activities.' There was no chance to get more elaboration on these views because these respondents did not participate in the interviews. For PT22 mentioned in the previous section, even the writing part of the English courses was time consuming: 'they took a longer time than the Physics assignments, for instance. I feel they were useless.' It was seen as a 'waste of time' and hence was not beneficial. Both the activities and organisation of the course are generally part of an umbrella category in L2 demotivation called Course Content and Materials. Studies have found that items related to this category can be a cause for decreasing L2 motivation, as is the case with the claims made by the students in this section. Amemori's (2012) study showed that boring or irrelevant course material was a cause for demotivation in Finnish university students. Furthermore, the results of a study conducted in the Lao People's Democratic Republic on 158 university students studying EFL (Xaypanya, Ismail, and Low, 2017) found that curriculum issues such as the lack of a sufficient speaking component and the textbook, were a cause for demotivation for the participants. The findings of this section as well as the studies mentioned above demonstrate that what is regarded as irrelevant or useless content material can lead to a decrease in L2 motivation.

8.3.4 Course difficulty

According to the Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), giving students material that is slightly above their level is conducive to their learning. This implies that being taught material that is too easy for the students may decrease their enjoyment of their L2 Learning Experience. One aspect of the L2 learning situation that hindered L2 motivation for three participants in the study was that the course was too easy for them. In one case, it was because the participant was already familiar with the material of the course. As a transfer student from another university, the course for PT19 offered the same material as his previous course in his first university: 'It focused on the same things in writing, the types of sentences and such things. I had already studied that' (PT19). In the two other cases, it was a feeling that the students had a higher proficiency level than the course required. PT13, who was not a transfer from another university, also reported that the course was too easy for him: 'for me it was easy. I did not feel that I benefited from anything other than the citation style', which he said he found useful in the following course. Otherwise, the course was so easy for him he got all the required grades before the final assignment, so he did not submit it:

> We were supposed to submit something related to writing out of 10%, and we knew that the [overall] passing grade is 70%. It was so easy for me that I passed the 70% before we got into the writing part. So, I thought to myself why do it. (PT13)

The same thing applies to PT5. When I asked him about whether the English course was too easy, too difficult, or just right, he replied:

> PT5: No, it was easy. It was easy
>
> ER: Too easy for you?
>
> PT5: Yes, I don't know how I was placed in 003. I was in IGCSE till the third preparatory year (grade 8), so my level was not wow, but it was OK, do you know what I mean?

The fact that the course was not challenging enough may have been a motivational constraint for some of the participants and did not provide an incentive for them to work hard. These findings are concurrent with a quasi-experimental study conducted in Iran (Namaziandost, Esfahani, and Ahmadi, 2019), which found that participants' reading proficiency and reported levels of motivation increased by taking reading texts which were one level above their reading proficiency, implying that studying material that is too easy might be detrimental to L2 motivation. In the case of studying Japanese as L2, Tsang (2012) found that one of the demotivating factors for the participants was that the course was not challenging for them. 75.5% of the participants did not agree with the statement: 'I prefer the materials to be easy than challenging'. There was even a comment by one participant that easy material makes one lose all motivation to study.

This sub-theme discussed the course-related factors reported by the participants which may have led to a decrease in their L2 motivation. Four aspects of the course were mentioned. First, there was a perceived need for more practice, especially in the speaking skill. Second, some participants found the course, especially ENGL003, to be unorganised and did not know the objectives of the activities. This leads to the third factor, which is the activities seen as useless even when they were perceived to be enjoyable. Finally, the course was considered too easy for some participants, which led them to lose their motivation to learn.

8.4 Institution-related Demotivators

The Remedial English courses are offered at the university under study as pass-or-fail non-credit courses if the students' English level is less than C1 in the CEFR. This means that English learners who are below the Advanced stage are forced to take one or two Remedial English Courses in order to start taking the compulsory advanced English courses which are Scientific Writing (ENG151) and Effective Speaking and Composition (ENG152). Thus, not only are the Remedial courses compulsory for those in the B1 and B2 level, but they are also non-credit courses and do not add to the students' GPA.

First year students take an average of 30 credits per semester, so in a busy schedule that includes laboratory work and lectures that are all part of the credit-hour system, some students may feel that the English course is of secondary importance. Six participants made a reference to this issue. PT19 stated that 'the fact that the course is non-credit causes us to neglect it very much'. PT3, who was one of the participants who expressed her passion for English (see **5.2**), had the same opinion: 'Honestly, since it was a non-credit course, I was like, I attended because of the grades of the attendance'. PT22 mentioned that he was distracted by the other courses: 'I was very distracted during the semester, and I would have many assignments and English was not in the GPA'. The fact that it was a non-credit course forced some of the participants to work only as much as would let them pass: 'I was not interested as it was the first year, and this course was non-credit, and the other subjects took more attention' (PT1). The same participant admitted that he did not exert his best effort in his English assignments as

> things were a bit time consuming and would not get a lot of attention and it was done in a sloppy way because we cared more about the other courses. (PT1).

This leads to the identification of a sub-theme related to how the academic pressure of other courses can impact L2 motivation.

Since each semester in the first year has around 15 credit hours, and the Remedial English courses are non-credit, some participants found that they had to give more attention to the other courses. PT5 felt that the English courses created an 'overload sometimes', since 'we were way overloaded and that did have an impact to a good extent'. PT10 opined that the English courses should not be studied with other courses 'as that will be very stressful'. She explained later in the interview that

> the freshman year was very hard, it was very hard for me, so what I think about now is how to improve the GPA, so I don't have time to do anything else. (PT10)

Since the Remedial English courses are not included in the GPA, she did not consider them a priority like the other 'challenging' courses. PT1 mentioned above in (**8.2.1**) found that he lost his enthusiasm due to the pressure from the other courses: 'one becomes lazy … especially in the middle of a heavy semester, so English becomes a burden and does not take much attention'. At another point he stated that 'My attention really dropped. I wanted to pay attention to it, but I could not'. PT2 also mentioned the stress of the other courses and its toll on the English course: 'there was the pressure of the tasks and the first semester for us, so it was hard'. Although the link is not clear here and the scope of the study does not permit getting into this topic in detail, the emotions of shame and guilt (discussed in **8.2.2**) could perhaps also be attributed to the inability of these participants to find a compromise between their academic pressure and the English courses.

The findings in this section indicate that external factors such as the pressure of other courses and the compulsory nature of the English course in higher education can influence L2 motivation even with the presence of an Ideal L2 Self. In their principal axis factor analysis of questionnaire answers from 656 Japanese high school students, Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) came up with five demotivational factors in language learning: class content and materials, teachers' competence and teaching styles, inadequate school facilities, lack of intrinsic motivation, and test scores. The fourth factor, lack of intrinsic motivation, includes learning the language as a compulsory course. Using the same five-factor questionnaire mentioned above, Ghadirzadeh, Hashtroudi, and Omid (2012) conducted a study on 260 Iranian university students to find the demotivating factors. The first factor was the lack of perceived individual competence, followed by the lack of intrinsic motivation, which includes English as a compulsory course.

Moreover, a mixed-method study (Fryer et al., 2014) conducted in a four-year Japanese university using both open-ended and close-ended items in a questionnaire in which 1071 students participated revealed that the compulsory nature of the English course may have a negative effect on student motivation, especially if the students are not originally goal-oriented, that is, are mainly driven by their Ought-to Self or are amotivated. Zhao (2012) comments that one of the reasons Chinese university students have an instrumental motivation to learn English is due to the fact that for non-English majors, English is compulsory, and they have their own subjects that they care about more. Furthermore, a study aiming to find the demotivating factors in English language learning in a vocational university in Turkey revealed that one of the most demotivating factors for the participants was that the courses were compulsory (Çankaya, 2018). These studies from various contexts as well as the present study reveal the impact of the mandatory nature of the English course, regardless of its content, on L2 motivation.

This section focused on the institution-related external factors and their negative effects on L2 motivation as perceived by the participants. The nature of the Remedial English courses in the institution under study is both compulsory and non-credit, which may drive the participants, despite their initial motivation, to neglect the course so they can focus on the other courses that may affect their GPA. In addition, the academic pressure of the other courses may at times force them to lose their focus in the course as a way to escape from the overload.

8.5 Conclusion

The chapter aimed at answering the following research question:

RQ3. What are the constraints affecting the participants' L2 motivation?
This chapter highlighted the complexity of L2 motivation and demotivation. The four chapters that dealt with the data analysis show that both motivation and demotivation are subjective, complex, and dynamic. What is motivating for one student may be demotivating for another. The data indicate that, according to the student perceptions, there are several constraints affecting their motivation to study English. These factors are divided into two main categories: internal and external. The internal factors comprise the negative emotions experienced by the participants in their L2 Learning Experience. First, some participants

reported various levels of language anxiety, especially related to speaking in public. Second, there were also feelings of shame and guilt attributed to their struggle to learn the language and not reaching the level they desired. These negative feelings were also due to a perception of the difference between their negative previous Learning Experience and the current one, or a perceived gap between them and their classmates' higher proficiency level. The third emotion reported was academic boredom either due to the content or teaching methods.

The external factors are divided into course-related factors, and institution-related factors. The course-related factors perceived by the students include the need for more practice, 'useless' activities, unorganised course material, and course difficulty or lack of difficulty. Some participants, especially those who reported a high level of anxiety, felt the course did not enable them to enhance their speaking skills sufficiently. Concerning the activities, comments were made about irrelevance and uselessness. There were also comments about how some activities appeared to have no clear objectives and that the materials of the course were not related to each other. Finally, some participants regarded the course as too easy for them and hence they were not motivated to study and be engaged in it. As for the institution-related factors, some participants neglected the course because it was not a credit-bearing course. What also exacerbated their lack of motivation was the academic overload of the other courses.

Looking at the findings of this chapter may lead to the notion that even with the presence of an Ideal L2 Self, there are myriad factors that can have a negative impact on L2 motivation. The extent of the impact is beyond the scope of this study. For example, the academic pressure from the load of the other courses comprised a form of external source of demotivation for the participants, so that even if a participant has a clear Ideal L2 Self, they may find it hard to give due attention to the course, rendering a discrepancy between their desire to improve their language and what they are actually capable of due to the external academic overload. On the other hand, considering the compulsory nature of the Remedial courses as a form of lack of intrinsic motivation (as suggested by Sakai and Kikuchi, 2009) on the part of the students may imply that the participants' Ideal L2 Self was not strong to begin with, hence dismissing the course as a less important, non-credit course. The findings of this study in this chapter as in other chapters highlight the significance of the various emotions the students feel during their L2 learning experience. In addition, the study demonstrates that L2 motivation is a complex and dynamic structure. In the next chapter, I will be stating my conclusions, recommendations, and the limitations of the study.

Chapter 9 Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

English in Egypt is an influential language. It has a significant place in Egyptian popular culture in advertising, television, and music (Schaub, 2000). There is a long history of learning English in Egypt, with various developments and levels of accessibility. In the universities which adopt the credit-hour system, English is an obligatory subject since English is the medium of instruction and students need to be proficient enough to understand and communicate in this educational setting. In addition, there is a demand for good English proficiency in the job market in the era of globalisation. For educators, curriculum developers, and policy makers, understanding the drivers behind L2 motivation at the higher education level in Egypt becomes a matter of personal, academic, and professional importance.

The purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions of students at one university in Egypt regarding their motivation to learn English, using Zoltan Dörnyei's Motivational Self System (2005, 2009a) as a theoretical framework. The data were collected from student questionnaires and interviews which aimed to evaluate their motivational states with regard to their compulsory English courses. The L2MSS looks at L2 motivation from three angles. The Ideal L2 Self focuses on the desired future image of the learner as a language speaker. The Ought-to Self focuses on learning language for external reasons and obligations like peer pressure or job demands. The third angle, the L2 Learning Experience, looks at the situational aspect of motivation, such as the teacher, the curriculum, the textbooks, etc. The data demonstrated that different participants were motivated by different factors both on the level of promotion (Ideal L2 Self) and prevention-oriented motivation (Ought-to Self and L2 Experience). Nevertheless, the overwhelming factor that enhanced their motivation was the L2 Learning Experience, particularly the influential figure of the instructor.

The study has contributed to the field of L2 motivation on more than one level. First, its research context is unique, since there are no published studies using L2MSS in Egypt. Hence, it can be of use to researchers interested in this region as well as practitioners in Egypt and the Middle East. Second, it reiterates the overlap between the Ideal and the Ought-to Selves in the model, an overlap which was only relatively recently tackled in the literature by researchers such as Teimouri (2017), Al-Hoorie (2018), and Papi et al. (2019). Third, it corroborates the view that the Learning Experience has a critical role in enhancing L2 motivation although it is considered to be the most neglected component in the model (Al-Hoorie, 2018; Dörnyei, 2019). In addition, it suggests that the Learning Experience can enhance both the Ought-to Self and the Ideal Self, and thus can serve as the centre of the L2MSS. Finally, the study pinpoints the impact of the three components on affect, which in turn enhances or decreases motivation. The study serves to highlight the complexity of L2 motivation, with its intertwining threads.

The dissertation was divided into nine chapters. Chapter 1 introduced the study, its purpose, the theoretical framework, and research questions. Moreover, it presented the outline of the dissertation.

Chapter 2 provided a contextual background to education and English language education in both the school and higher education levels in Egypt. It also provided some overview on the research site and the courses under study.

Chapter 3 discussed the major theories in motivation in general and L2 motivation in particular that are influential to the current study. The chapter described in detail the L2MSS and the significant literature pertinent to it. The L2MSS is an influential L2 motivation model that addresses different components of motivation for the learner in a comprehensive manner. Significant studies of the L2MSS addressing the model in the Middle East were mentioned in the chapter. Finally, it demonstrated the gap this study aimed to fill regarding L2 motivation within the Egyptian higher education context. This study is the first to do so and is highly significant in the field because of the compulsory nature of English in so many universities.

Chapter 4 explained the methodology behind the study and the methods used to conduct it. Furthermore, it provides an explanation for the chosen method of data analysis, Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Ethical consideration and data management were also discussed.

The following four chapters were dedicated to the four themes arising out of the data. In Chapter 5 I analysed the perception of the participants regarding the Ideal and Ought-to Selves drivers and their overlapping nature.

Chapter 6 tackled the difference between the participants' L2 Learning Experience prior to joining the university and their current one. The chapter revealed that the L2 Learning Experience played a significant role in the participants' L2 motivation.

Chapter 7 explored the influence of the instructor(s) in the participants' perceptions. The data in this study showed that the instructor had a pivotal role in shaping and enhancing the participants' L2 motivation.

Chapter 8 discussed the motivational constraints that had a negative effect on the participants' motivation to learn English in this institution. Throughout the analysis, Dörnyei's motivational framework was used to unpick the students' accounts of their motivational drivers.

The dissertation ends with Chapter 9, which provides a summary of the research, highlights the significance of the study with regard to the field of study and offers recommendations for enhancing L2 motivation in Egyptian students as well as recommendations for future research. The limitations of the study are also discussed.

9.2 Summary of the Study

As noted in Chapter 4, where the methodological decisions are explained and justified, I based my study on the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006) incorporating elements of Lincoln and Guba's constructivism (1985, 2013). Accordingly, my worldview is subjective and hence I aimed to explore how the participants viewed their reality (in this case L2 motivation) from their own subjective point of view. I aimed to understand how participants perceived L2 motivation in their own context, the context here being two courses within one institution, so I could draw some conclusions about students' motivation within this context. As an approach, interptretivism/constructivism does not espouse a single view of reality. Reality is constructed by people as they see and experience it. The study did not seek to provide any generalisations on either L2 motivation in higher education in Egypt or even inside the institution within which the study was conducted. What the study aimed to achieve was to shed light on the drivers of L2 motivation for these participants. Although the findings are specific to this context, they may be useful to others in similar contexts, where students are obliged to gain an English qualification in order to complete their studies. In addition, the findings may provide a basis for further studies in the Arabic speaking context.

I conducted my study at a university in Greater Cairo during the summer of 2019. I chose open-ended questionnaires to allow the participants to write their views in their own words. Furthermore, I chose to conduct interviews to get the perspectives of the participants regarding their learning and motivation. This allowed me to triangulate the data so that the findings might be considered more trustworthy than if only one method of data collection had been used. In total I had 20 participants, 12 of whom agreed to be interviewed. The questionnaires asked open-ended questions related to their general Learning Experience in the L2 courses at the university, with some questions aiming to address the participants' Ideal and Ought-to selves. The interviews lasted around half an hour each and the questions revolved around their previous and current Learning Experiences with questions addressing the three angles of the L2MSS. All interviews were recorded using two devices. I did all the transcribing and translation of the data. After anonymising the participants, I sent random samples of the translation to a professional translator for validity check.

The data were analysed using Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun and Clarke, 2006). I coded the data both manually and another time using a Qualitative Data Analysis Software (Atlas-ti). Four major themes were identified after re-coding, theming, and refining the themes: 1- The Self: "I love English anyway" vs "I am learning it for other reasons"; 2- The Learning Situation: Past vs Present Learning Experience; 3- The Instructor: "The instructors are the best thing"; and 4- The Obstacles: Motivational Constraints. The four themes answered the three research questions this study aimed to answer.

RQ1. What enhances students' L2 motivation from their perspective in this particular context?

RQ1 was answered thoroughly by the first, second, and third themes in Chapters 5, 6, and 7, respectively. The data revealed that the participants were motivated by different drivers. From the possible selves' perspective, around half of the participants were intrinsically motivated and had an Ideal L2 Self to support this motivation. However, the Ideal Self was not vivid enough to be effective despite their interest in the English language and culture. Nevertheless, there were also external influences on their L2 motivation (Ought-to Self) represented in their recognition of English as the language of communication and scientific publications in the era of globalisation. Fear of failure and the influence of parents were also indicators of a strong Ought-to Self in a few of the participants. However, the Ideal and Ought-to Selves seemed to overlap in some cases since the desire to get a good job and the International Posture of the English language can be indications of both the Ideal and Ought-to Selves. As for the L2 Learning Experience analysed in Chapter 6, the findings demonstrated that it can be a strong motivational driver. The skill-based communicative curriculum of the two courses, fun and games in the classroom derived from the curriculum and the interaction with peers and instructors, the activities they participated in, and their sense of achievement from all that were all positive drivers of L2 motivation. One aspect of the L2 Learning Experience that proved to be of major significance to the participants was the instructor, discussed in Chapter 7. The participants' responses indicated that the instructor's trustworthiness, competence, and perceived caring all contributed to a positive L2 Learning Experience. The study emphasises the role of the L2 Learning Experience and specially the instructor in enhancing L2 motivation as a dominant component of the L2MSS, despite being neglected in literature in favour of the Ideal and Ought-to Selves. This is a significant finding that makes a valuable contribution to the scholarly literature on motivation.

RQ2. What are the effects of their previous language learning experience before college?

RQ2 was addressed in Chapter 6. The participants' previous Learning Experience prior to coming to the university had had an impact on their L2 motivation. It appears that their previous L2 Learning Experience, especially in high school, was not a positive one. The findings suggest that the shift from the grammar-translation method of instruction which they had experienced in school, to a more communicative approach in college increased the participants' motivation to study English. Their university English courses were more learner-centred, and the participants had a chance to communicate in English. Linking this theme to the other two mentioned above indicates that a negative Learning Experience can have an influence on how the participants perceived L2 and L2 motivation.

RQ3. What are the constraints affecting their L2 motivation?

RQ3 was analysed in Chapter 8. The data revealed that there were two kinds of motivational constraints: internal and external factors. Negative emotions played an important role in inhibiting L2 motivation. A major negative emotion mentioned was language anxiety, mostly concerning speaking in English in public. Shame, guilt, and academic boredom were also negative emotions cited by some students as influencing their L2 motivation. The external factors were both course- and institution-related factors. The need for more practice, irrelevant activities, lack of organisation in course material, and course difficulty were all reported as elements of demotivation for some participants. The institution-related factors were the non-credit nature of the courses and the academic overload the participants said they were experiencing from other courses at the university.

9.3 Recommendations for Enhancing L2 Motivation in Egyptian Students

As shown in the figure in Chapter 4 (Figure 4.3), L2 motivation is a highly complex construct and all drivers mentioned in the study are interconnected. The self-situational aspects are interrelated, making it hard to separate the recommendations. Nevertheless, the study presents recommendations for all stakeholders of English learning in higher education in Egypt and possibly in other contexts. Although it cannot be generalised as to how Egyptian students perceive L2 motivation, the findings provide some salient insights into methods of enhancing student motivation in the language classes. These recommendations are directed to the students, instructors, curriculum developers, and policy makers.

9.3.1 For students

From the findings, students are aware that English is an important language for instrumental purposes in modern times. All participants acknowledged this in the interview. As mentioned in chapter 5 (**5.4.1**), it is now a ‘must’ for college graduates to have some sort of English language proficiency to get a job in Egypt, and even more so abroad. Yet, this knowledge does not always provide an incentive to learn and study English at the university. The implications from the findings of the study are manifold. It is beneficial for the English learner to understand the two main sources of L2 motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation stems from within, and for a language learner this can mean an interest in the language itself because of the culture, or interest in learning foreign languages in general. Extrinsic or instrumental motivation to learn the language can be due to parental pressure, job market demands, or the dominance of the English language in the field of scientific publications. In addition, the Learning Experience in the language classroom can be another extrinsic source of motivation. Having one or more of these levels of L2 motivation may render different levels of performance for the students. I believe that an awareness of what drives the student to learn can have a positive impact on their language Learning Experience.

What the findings in this study reveal is that the L2 Learning Experience can be a link between L2 motivation and the other two components in the L2MSS, as was shown in the above-mentioned figure (**4.3**). If the major driver is the Ideal Self, as in a positive attitude to the language or interest in the culture, then the student will likely strive to achieve more in the classroom. However, in order for the Ideal Self to prevail, there should be a positive L2 Learning Experience. If the major driver is the Ought-to Self, as in the fear of losing grades or parental pressure, then a positive L2 Learning Experience can help make learning more enjoyable. If the L2 Learning Experience is the major motivational driver, then the student is bound to exert more effort to increase their enjoyment. The dominant role of the L2 Learning Experience in L2 motivation makes the current study a significant one. In all cases, if students are aware of their L2 motivational drivers, they can capitalise on this driver and get the most out of the language course.

9.3.2 For teachers

The study suggests that the instructor has an integral role in L2 motivation. The instructor was mentioned in most aspects of the Learning Experience. Indeed, it appears that for students, a significant amount of the Learning Experience depends on the instructor. In studies on demotivation, the instructor appears to be one of the main demotivators. Nevertheless, this study implies that the instructor can also be an important motivator. For the instructor to ensure that they are playing a positive role in enhancing their students' motivation, there are a number of issues to consider. Based on the findings of the study, competence, perceived caring, and reliability are among the features of a motivating instructor.

As I explained more fully in Chapter 7, students may care about different aspects in the instructor, not just their competence or knowledge. Competence is only one aspect that is taken into consideration by students. They stressed that it is important for the teacher to know what they are doing and to deliver content and feedback in a professional, organised manner. Nevertheless, from different studies conducted as well as this one, empathy, understanding, and responsiveness are desired qualities (McCroskey and Teven,1999). It is worth noting that these instructor attributes are mainly discussed in the field of communication rather than ELT. The recommendation in this aspect for the instructor is not just to focus on professional development and to ensure that they are delivering content. It is important to focus as well on the human interaction with the students. It is also something to consider for instructors who believe that discipline should come before empathy.

Another positive aspect of instructors mentioned by the students was responsiveness. Participants in the study appreciated the instructors who displayed attentiveness and meaningful communication. Instructors who showed understanding towards students' personal life as well as academic life were appreciated. The friendly instructor who was able to build good relationships with the students inside and outside class was considered a motivating instructor. Interestingly, this was considered a positive aspect of the Learning Experience even when the student was not enjoying the rest of the experience. On another level, the instructor who displays an encouraging attitude can inspire students to perform better and increase their engagement in class. In section **7.2.4**, some participants described the power of a few encouraging words to them. Thus, the instructor becomes a central aspect of the learning process (Teven and Katt, 2016), and maintaining a positive relationship with the students can enhance their Learning Experience.

In addition to these personal attributes, the instructor also plays a significant role in creating a positive experience in class, since the instructor is responsible for designing the lesson plan and class activities. One implication of this study is that the instructor may need to ensure a variety of both collaborative and individual tasks. The instructor can work on creating a rapport among students through in-class activities. Furthermore, they can ensure that these activities suit a variety of interests, so that students with different interests can be engaged. Although it might be believed that higher education students may not need it, an element of fun in the classroom can be motivational to the students, whether through humour (Ivy, 2013; Aboudan, 2009; Neff and Rucynski, 2017), or through games (Bell and Pomerantz, 2014; Kumar and Lightner, 2007; Silsüpür, 2017) as shown in more detail in this study (**6.3.2**).

Furthermore, the instructor can also play an important role in sparking an Ideal L2 Self in the students. According to Gao (2013):

> language teachers can have a pivotal role to play in utilising language learners' visions of 'ideal self' and encouraging them to undertake efforts to construct local social networks in their learning efforts to pursue competence in English (p. 189)

Although the Ideal Self must exist in the student in order to develop, Dörnyei (2009b) asserts that the teachers can help generate and sustain the students' Ideal L2 Self. Teacher can help their students by starting to establish an L2 vision through raising their awareness about the concept of the Ideal Self and walking them through different forms of future selves they may have constructed prior to their Learning Experience. Dörnyei continues by reiterating the role of the teacher in sustaining the vision of the Ideal Self through different teaching methodologies, where 'an effective action plan will contain a goal-setting component…as well as individualised study plans and instructional avenues' (p. 20).

The final recommendation from this study to the instructor is to pay close attention to the students who suffer from language anxiety because this can have a debilitating effect on their L2 motivation. Şimsek and Dörnyei (2017) point out that some students may not be even aware that they suffer from this, and they only made sense of it in their narratives. Language anxiety is defined as ‘an emotional experience evoked by certain L2 learning situations’ (p. 52). Symptoms of this anxiety appear in students’ reluctance to engage in oral activities or showing some physiological symptoms such as shaking or having difficulty breathing, or dizziness.

9.3.3 For curriculum designers

The study provides some useful insights into what curriculum designers can bear in mind when they are designing an EFL course for a similar context. In the interviews, I asked the participants about their previous Learning Experience prior to university to see how it may have impacted their current one. As I discussed in detail in Chapter 7, most of the participants had a negative experience during their secondary education. The main concerns mentioned were the focus on rote learning, lack of speaking and pronunciation activities, and the exam-based curriculum (**6.2**). For curriculum designers to address these concerns or avoid them, it is recommended to adopt a more communicative approach to language teaching (CLT). Instead of memorising and focusing on grammar mastery, the communicative approach focuses on the communicative competence of the learner (Richards, 2006). The principles of the communicative approach, according to Richards (2006) include the primary function of real communication as the focus of language learning, linking the four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) together, and letting students learn grammar inductively rather than deductively.

Looking at the participants’ Learning Experience at their institution reveals that in addition to the benefit they received from the content, they had a positive experience with the content (**6.3.1**), the fun and games in class (**6.3.2**), and individual and group activities (**6.3.3**), all of which adhere to the communicative approach, as the language is used as the means of communication. One of the principles of CLT is to engage learners in ‘interaction and meaningful communication’ (Richards, 2006, p. 22). Indeed, the participants in the study felt they benefitted and enjoyed not only being able to read and write, but also to speak the language to express their own meaning, which enhanced their sense of achievement in the course (**6.3.4**). In addition, including a space for individual as well as group activities in the language curriculum can be beneficial to the students as they will be more motivated to participate than in a teacher-led class, and the classroom itself becomes a 'community where learners learn through collaboration and sharing' (p. 23). Thus, a curriculum that allows for collaboration and communication in the classroom can be more conductive to learning and L2 motivation.

9.3.4 For policy makers and higher administration

Based on all the points mentioned above regarding the methods of enhancing motivation in L2 learners, the study shows that motivation is an interrelated construct where the teacher and the whole Learning Experience are interconnected with the learners' Ideal and Ought-to Selves (Chapter 4, Figure 1). If the L2 Learning Experience consists of the curriculum and the teacher, among other elements, then the higher administration needs to have motivated teachers who are involved in decision making in the EFL curriculum. Consequently, there are two perspectives to consider here: the teachers, and the curriculum. For the teachers to be capable of having a positive influence on students' motivation, the teachers themselves need to be highly motivated: 'we might say that, if a teacher is motivated, his/her class is likely to follow suit' (Dörnyei, 2018, p. 2). Motivating teachers can be achieved through a positive working atmosphere. In addition, since motivational skills can be taught (Dörnyei, 2018), universities can offer professional development opportunities for the EFL teachers through workshops or training sessions.

Furthermore, teachers who are empowered and have a voice in developing the curriculum within their context will likely be more highly motivated since they are in a better position to assess whether the curriculum is working well for them or not. According to Alnefaie (2016), teachers can assess the usefulness of a curriculum because they are the ones in charge of implementing it. According to Bangs and Frost (2012), policy should empower teachers at all levels of policy making including the design and development of the curriculum. In a study conducted in Saudi Arabian higher education, Mullick (2013) found that the lack of voice for EFL teachers and having no say in the curriculum at a university had a negative influence on the teachers' autonomy and resulted in scripted irrelevant lessons. Thus, empowering teachers and enabling them to participate in curriculum design and development can result in a better Learning Experience for the students, which in turn can enhance their L2 motivation.

9.4 Limitations of the Study

The study has several limitations. Firstly, the questionnaire responses were in many cases not detailed. In some cases, the responses comprised a few words. However, the richness of data which resulted from the participants who agreed to be interviewed more than compensated for the brief responses of those students in the questionnaire. For those who declined to be interviewed, I was not able to get an in-depth understanding of their experiences. However, since the questionnaire responses did not indicate any major differences between the students' perceptions, it is possible that interviews with those students would not have revealed any further aspects of their motivation. Secondly, my original intention was to limit my participants to students who were placed in the lower-intermediate level (ENGL003) so that at the time of the interviews, they would have finished the two remedial courses. However, due to the lack of responses to my advertisements and emails, I had to expand the pool of respondents to include the students who were placed in the intermediate level (ENGL004). However, this did not affect the findings of my study, since the two courses are in Remedial English courses. The third limitation is in the ratio of female to male participants. I had 8 female participants in the questionnaire, as opposed to 12 males. However, only two female participants agreed to have an interview with me, as opposed to ten male ones. This may not be an accurate representation of the ratio of first year students at this university.

Furthermore, the number of participants overall may be considered small. Therefore, although readers may recognise a number of similarities, there is no claim to generalisations of the findings. Nevertheless, the small number of participants allowed me to explore their L2 motivation in such depth that would not be offered with a larger number of participants in the same time frame.

One shortcoming that may be general to studies dealing with language learners is that it is difficult to pin down a learning attribute like motivation because, according to Dörnyei (2017), these attributes are

> not stable but showed salient temporal and situational variation, and they were not monolithic but comprised complex constellations made up of different parts that interacted with each other and the environment synchronically and diachronically. It was also gradually recognised that simple cause-effect relationships were unable to do full justice to these multi-level interactions and the temporal changes. (p. 83-84)

This applies to the current study as well. This study captured the perceptions of the participants at a moment in time. They were reviewing their experience in retrospect. It is possible that by the end of their whole language Learning Experience at this university, they would have different perceptions.

9.5 Recommendations for Future Research

There are several threads of research which could be taken further from this study. For instance, it would be worth researching whether the same study at another institution in Egypt would render similar results. A future research interest for me is to see just how the instructor plays a role in student L2 motivation using the three-dimensional framework of instructor credibility (McCroskey and Teven, 1999), since it is not explored in detail in this study.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic situation at the time of writing these lines, the classes are now leaning towards the blended or online format, especially for the language classes. There is a call now to look at L2 from the perspective of online learning and how the three elements of the L2MSS may change with a changing learning format. In a country where the internet connection is not stable, the teachers are usually teaching a synchronous online class without seeing the students. Sometimes, the teachers themselves switch off the cameras to avoid the overload on the internet. This poses many challenges for both the learner and the teacher. Some points of focus to consider are how to work on instructor credibility in an online classroom and its effect on L2 motivation, collaborative activities in the online classroom and how this can affect motivation in remote learning and enhancing the Ideal L2 Self using online activities.

9.6 Conclusion

A doctorate dissertation is one of the longest texts a researcher may ever write. It is a piece of writing that is a product of many days of anxiety, enthusiasm, procrastination, achievement, and frustration. It is a text that witnesses the evolution of the researcher’s personality and intellect as the answers to the research questions slowly take shape. At the end of this journey of inquiry, I am able to sense a tangible difference in my personality. I am more patient, more strategic in my thinking. I listen more attentively and unconsciously analyse everything before acting. One colleague who used to work with me in 2014 up to 2018, and then worked with me again in 2020 till the present, thought I was doing a doctorate in administrative education because she found me conducting my work in a different manner than I used to before. A manner that is better, more mature, and more focused.

While I was bridging the gap in studies about the L2MSS in higher education in the Egyptian context, I was also enhancing my own self-awareness as a teacher, a curriculum developer, and now as a Director of the English Department at a university. As a researcher, the rigorous method of conducting my study and the high standards of the university influenced the way I review published research. When I first started gathering material for the EdD proposal, I used to accept any published research as good research. The last couple of years enabled me to discern good research from a poorly conducted one. My practice is currently heavily influenced by the findings of the study as well as the seemingly never-ending reading from researchers and educators investing their time and effort finding answers to questions raised through their practice. A final major change in my practice is heavily influenced by all the work I read on L2 motivation. I am now more tolerant and more attentive to students. I am eager to listen to them and listen to their needs, whether the one they are communicating directly or indirectly. Although I do not have the panacea of issues of L2 motivation and EFL in general, it is enough to be aware of the different perspectives of the complicated process of learning and instruction.

Appendix 1: Plain Language Statement

University of Glasgow | School of Education

Plain Language Statement

Title of project and researcher details

L2 Motivation in Higher Education: A Qualitative Case Study from Egypt

Researcher: Ranya ElKhayat

Supervisor: Dr Hazel Crichton

Programme: Doctor of Education

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to understand what students think are the factors affecting their motivation to learn English at the university under study. As a result of the study, once more is known about what motivates students in English classes, it may be possible to improve courses to take the findings into account.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen because you fit the criteria of my sample: you have volunteered to participate in the study, you are over 18, you are a freshman student, and you have finished the two remedial English courses (ENGL003-ENGL004).

Do I have to take part?

Your participation is voluntary, and you are free to end this participation and withdraw before, during, or after the questionnaire and interview.

Please note that there will be no effect on your grades arising from your participation or non-participation in this research.

What will happen to me if I take part?

First, you will fill out a questionnaire that will ask you about certain aspects about motivation and learning English at the university. The questionnaire will take around 20-30 minutes of your time. You can answer in English or Arabic.

After that on another day, you will have an interview with me. I will ask you about the same topics in the questionnaire in more detail, in addition to some questions about what motivates you or demotivates you in learning English at the university. The duration of the interview is around 45 minutes and will not exceed an hour. You can answer in English or Arabic.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Your questionnaire answers will be kept on my personal computer and will be password protected. Your interview will be audio recorded and the files kept on my personal computer and will be password protected. Your identity will be kept confidential. I will allocate an ID for you so that you will not be identified. If you want, you can request the transcript of the interview and can delete anything that you feel will identify you.

Please note that assurances on confidentiality will be strictly adhered to unless evidence of wrongdoing or potential harm is uncovered. In such cases the University may be obliged to contact relevant statutory bodies/agencies.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

I will use the data from this interview and questionnaire in my study to show how college students at a certain higher education institution perceive motivation in learning English courses. I will use this data in my dissertation. Subsequently, I may use this data in a research article to be published in an academic journal or a conference.

Who has reviewed the study?

The study has been reviewed by the Ethics Committee of the College of Social Sciences in the University of Glasgow to ensure that it is conducted in an ethical manner.

Contact for Further Information

If you have any questions about this study, you can ask me, Ranya ElKhayat (r.elkhayat.1@research.gla.ac.uk) or my supervisor, Dr Crichton (hazel.crichton@glasgow.ac.uk).

If you have any concerns regarding the conduct of this research project, you can contact the College of Social Sciences Ethics Officer, Dr Muir Houston at muir.houston@glasgow.ac.uk

Appendix 2: Consent Form

University of Glasgow | School of Education

Consent Form

Title of Project: L2 Motivation in Higher Education: A Qualitative Case Study from Egypt

Name of Researcher: Ranya ElKhayat

Name of Supervisor: Dr Hazel Crichton

	Yes	No
I confirm that I have read and understood the Plain Language Statement for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.	☐	☐
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.	☐	☐
I understand that my data will be anonymised.	☐	☐
I agree to waive my copyright to any data collected as part of this project.	☐	☐
I agree to have the interview audio recorded.	☐	☐
I agree to take part in this research study	☐	☐

Name of Participant ....

Signature .... Date ....

Name of Researcher ....

Signature .... Date ....

.... **End of consent form** ....

Appendix 3: Questionnaire Questions

Thank you for volunteering to answer this questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire is to help me understand student perceptions on factors of motivation in English Language Learning at the university. Your name will be anonymized in the research, I just need it now to maintain my records.
Please answer in detail as much as possible. You can answer in Arabic or English. The questionnaire will take around 20 minutes of your time.

- Full Name:
- Gender:
- Date of Birth:
- Year at University:
- What kind of English Education did you receive before the university? (National [Public/ Private]- International [IGCSE, SAT, IB etc])?
- What are the English Courses you have taken or are currently taking at ZC?

1. What was your experience with the two English courses you have studied at the university in terms of:
    a. Syllabus
    b. Activities
    c. Classmates
    d. Instructor
    e. Other

2. How often do you use English outside the classroom in terms of:
    a. Entertainment
    b. With friends/family
    c. Keeping up on news
    d. Studying for other subjects
    e. Other

3. How do you feel about communicating in English inside the class?
    a. In writing assignments
    b. In Speaking assignments (Presentations or speeches)
    c. In group assignments
    d. In pair assignments

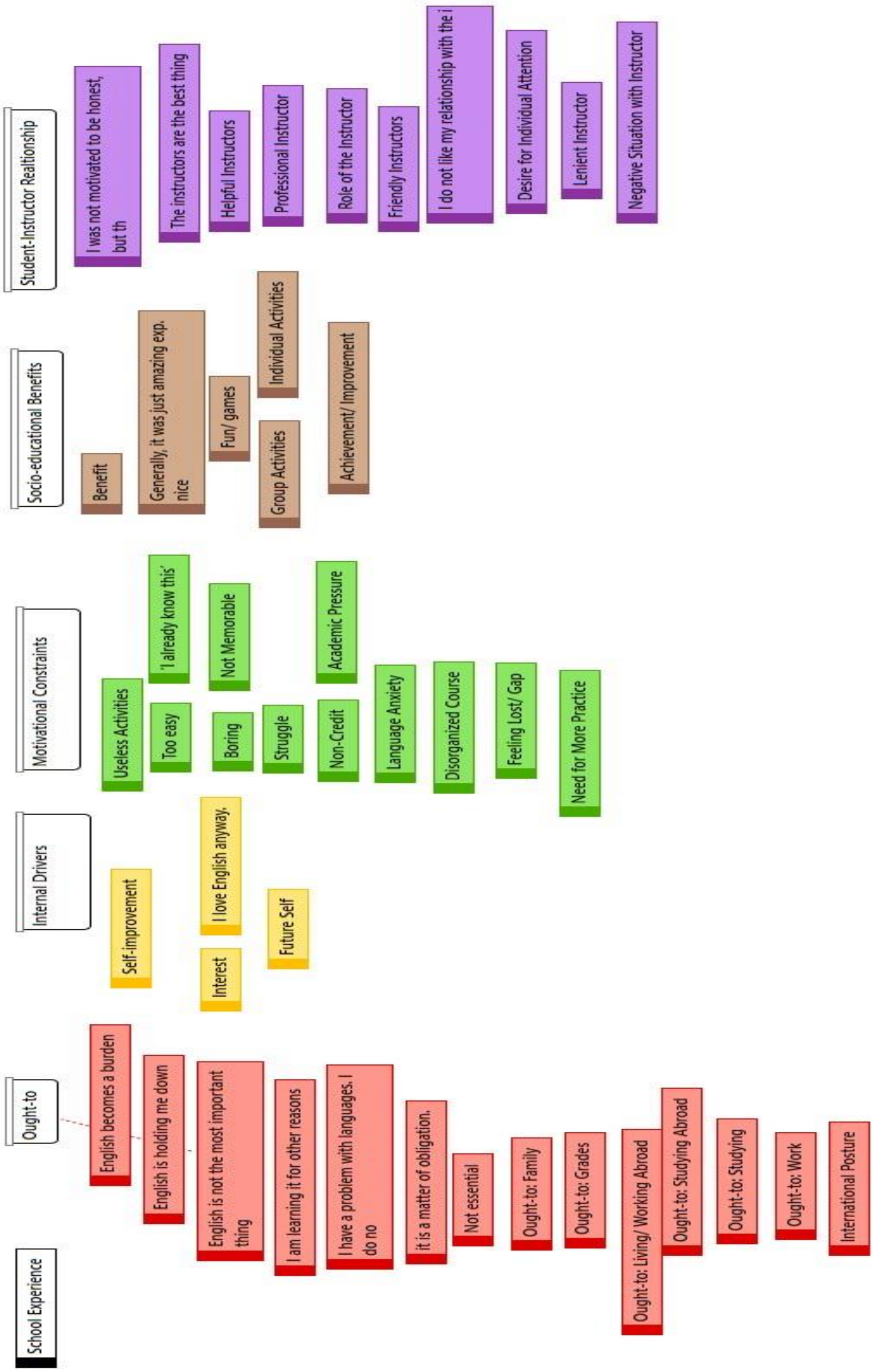
4. After graduation, how do you see yourself as an English Speaker?
5. What is your opinion regarding having English as an obligatory course at the university?

Appendix 4: Interview Questions

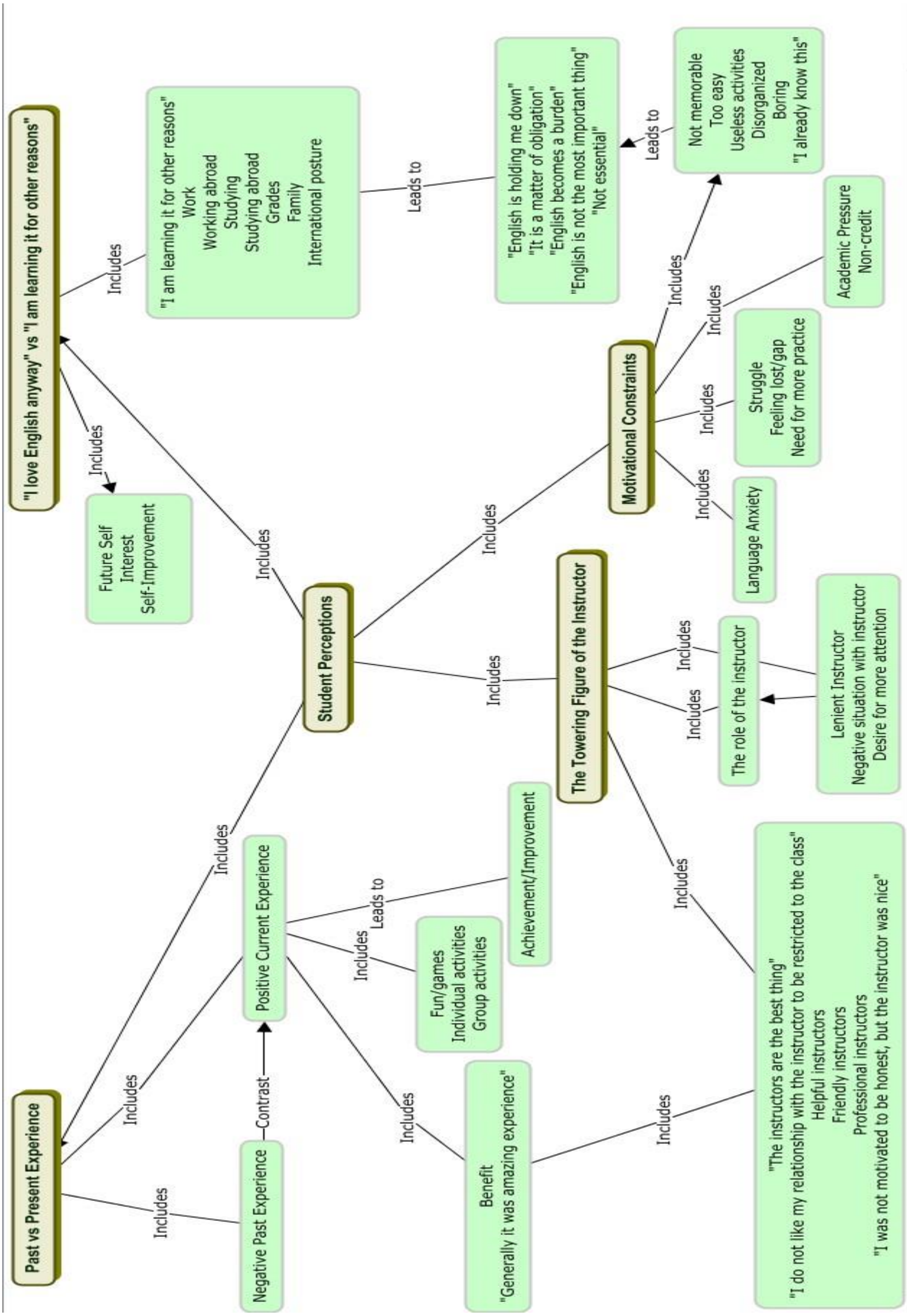
1. What motivated you to join [institution name]?
2. Which English course were you placed in?
3. Do you think you were placed fairly?
4. What do you think of the English curriculum at [institution name]?
5. Were you motivated to study English from the beginning?
6. What are the best/worst features of the courses you studied?
7. What are the forms/methods of teaching adopted in your course?
8. What are the forms/methods of assessment adopted in your course?
9. What are the main factors that can motivate a student to learn English?
10. How do you evaluate your own need for an EFL course?
11. How do you plan to improve your English after the Remedial courses?
12. Do you think it is possible to reach the desired level of proficiency you are aiming for? Explain.
13. What do you think will happen if your English never improves further?
14. How often do you practice English outside the class?
15. What kinds of activities did you enjoy the most in class?
16. Which is better for you: individual, pair, or group work?
17. In what ways do you find learning English important?
18. How does the course/teacher motivate you to learn more?
19. How are grades important in the EFL courses at [institution name]? Do you agree with that?
20. Which strategies do you apply in order to pass an English course?
21. Which of these items would cause you embarrassment in class: making a mistake in a speaking activity, in a writing activity, receiving oral feedback from the teacher, etc.? Would you like to add anything else?
22. What is your goal for learning English? For today? For the long term?
23. To what degree are you committed to learning English? Please give examples.
24. What do you think is the most important factor in learning ESL?
25. Who are you studying English for? Yourself? Your parents? Or someone else?
26. What are your perceived challenges in developing high English proficiency?
27. How does your family view English language learning?
28. What is your most pleasant memory as a language learner? Please describe it.
29. What is your most unpleasant memory as a language learner? Please describe it.
30. What kind of relationships do you have with your ESL teacher(s) in class and out of class? (Explain it separately). How do they help you to learn English?

31. What kind of relationships do you have with your ESL students in class and out of class? (Explain it separately). How do they help you to learn English?
32. Among the four areas (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, writing) in English, what is the most needed and important area for you?
33. To develop your prioritized area mentioned above, what effort do you make?
34. Can you compare between learning English in school and university?

Appendix 5: Initial Code Groups



Appendix 6: Code Mapping



Appendix 7: Code Density

Code Group	Codes	Density
Internal Drivers	▪ Future Self ▪ I love English anyway ▪ Interest ▪ Self-Improvement	93
Motivational Constraints	▪ 'I already know this' ▪ Academic Pressure ▪ Boring ▪ Disorganized Course ▪ Feeling Lost/ Gap ▪ Language Anxiety ▪ Need for More Practice ▪ Non-Credit ▪ Not Memorable ▪ Struggle ▪ Too easy ▪ Useless Activities	145
Ought-to Drivers	▪ English becomes a burden ▪ English is holding me down ▪ English is not the most important thing ▪ I am learning it for other reasons ▪ I have a problem with languages. I do no ▪ International Posture ▪ Not essential ▪ it is a matter of obligation. ▪ Ought-to: Family ▪ Ought-to: Grades ▪ Ought-to: Living/ Working Abroad ▪ Ought-to: Studying ▪ Ought-to: Studying Abroad ▪ Ought-to: Work	80
Socio-educational Benefits	▪ Achievement/ Improvement ▪ Benefit ▪ Fun/ games ▪ Generally, it was just amazing exp. nice ▪ Group Activities ▪ Individual Activities	107
Student Instructor Relationships	▪ Desire for Individual Attention ▪ Friendly Instructors ▪ Helpful Instructors ▪ I do not like my relationship with the i ▪ I was not motivated to be honest, but the instructors were nice ▪ Lenient Instructor ▪ Negative Situation with Instructor ▪ Professional Instructor ▪ Role of the Instructor ▪ The instructors are the best thing	79
School Experience		35

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