

IMPACT OF GLOBAL ENGLISH TO FORM THE IDEAL L2 SELF AND MOTIVATION OF ASIAN RURAL L2 UNDERGRADUATES

Prasangani K.S.N., Ph.D.

Department of English Language Teaching (DELT), Faculty of Social Sciences & Languages, Sabaragamuwa
University of Sri Lanka
nilushikap@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study examined the key contribution of global English to motivate the L2 undergraduates in two rural Asian contexts. A 49-item adapted motivation questionnaire was used to collect the data from 362 Sri Lankan and 60 Malaysian rural undergraduates. Dornyei's L2 Motivational Self System was utilized as the major theoretical framework of the study. In order to find the relationship between the motivation and ideal L2 self of the undergraduates Pearson correlation analysis was run. Interestingly there was a significant positive correlation between the motivated learning and the ideal L2 self in both groups. Further, the ideal L2 self of these learners highlighted the timely need of global English to reach their future goals.

Keywords: Global English, L2 Motivation, Ideal L2 Self, Rural Asian L2 Learners

Introduction

Globalisation has created the inescapable need of global English for the all L2 learners, because global English directly impact on the educational policy, curriculum provision, and language pedagogy (Ushioda, 2013). In the globalised world, global English has become the necessary communicational tool and educational skill (Graddol, 2006). Hence the motivation to learn global English increases in the L2 world.

Dornyei (2009) initiated the movement of defining L2 motivation based on the L2 learners' needs of acquiring global English to gain the global identity. Dornyei's theorisation of L2 motivation was beyond the traditional integrative motivation (Gardner, 1985) which aspires the psychological attachment with the target language community. It is much more practical for the globalised world, because with the expansion of the globalisation English has become the global language and specially the language of Asia. In fact, the ownership of English has shifted to the L2 speaking world particularly Asia (Kachru, 2011). Within this context integrativeness has become an unacceptable concept in Asia (Islam, Lamb, & Chambers, 2013; Prasangani & Nadarajan, 2015; Taguchi, 2013; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009).

Motivation Studies on Global English

Dörnyei, Csizer and Nemeth (2006) propelled movement of L2 motivation related to the global English by examining the motivational aspects of language learning of Hungarian English learners with reference to the globalisation trends. In their longitudinal large scale Hungarian study, they found interesting changes of language learning motivation between world language learning and non-world language learning. They emphasised the marginalised position of non-world language learning, including German which is the traditional regional lingua franca of Hungary and high learning tendency of world language of English. These changes in Hungary signified the influence of contextual and social factors for L2 learning motivation due to the spread of globalisation.

This "Global English" movement became an unavoidable factor of change for L2 learning motivation, because global English has become the medium for globalisation to reach the international community. As the members of the global community L2 learners motivated to learn English to build their international identity and relationship via global English (Yashima, 2009).

As a result, "integrativeness" was further questioned in L2 learning motivation (Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2006; Lamb, 2004) because English has become the global language (Crystal, 2003), a necessary educational skill (Graddol, 2006) and international lingua franca (Jenkins, 2012). Thus, the integration or psychological attachment with the L2 community was not reliable anymore due to the global ownership of English.

Dornyei (2009) recognised the need for change in the L2 learner's motivation process and considered the globalisation effects for L2 motivation and took stock of the confusion that arose out of the integrativeness principle and redefine the L2 motivation according to the globalisation period, because with the spread of globalisation learners' motivation on English learning seemed to be beyond the integrative and instrumental perspective. Dornyei's longitudinal study on Hungarian learners (Csizer & Dornyei, 2005) further supported the identification of the inadequacy of integrativeness and helped refine the L2 learner's motivation process. Thus, Dornyei (2009) helped develop a new conceptualisation of the L2 Motivational Self System with the help of

“Possible Selves” (Markus & Nurius, 1986). L2 Motivational Self System redefines the integrativeness as ideal L2 self and ought to L2 self due to its close attachment to the learner’s external (instrumentality) and internal (attitudes towards L2 speakers) selves. In the L2 Motivational Self System central focus was given to the ideal L2 self which refers to the attributes that learner ideally would like to possess (e.g. future aspirations, hopes and dreams of learning English). The ought to L2 self refers the attributes that learner ought to possess to overcome the future negative outcomes (e.g. obligations, responsibilities, duties for the family, parents, teachers and etc.). Added to that Dornyei (2009) added a third component to the L2 Motivational Self System as L2 learning experiences which refers the situation specific motives related to the immediate learning environment and experiences (e.g. language teacher, peers, syllabus, facilities available and etc.) (Dornyei, 2014).

At present L2 motivation researchers have moved on to further examine the L2 Motivational Self System because of its central concern on the learner self. This has become more pertinent due to the spread of global English in the world and L2 and FL learners are increasingly being seen as members of the global English community. In fact, L2 Motivational Self System proves more meaningful in the L2 motivation research field when addressing the emerging needs in the globalised world (Ushioda & Dornyei, 2012).

In 2012, Lamb pioneered a study in Indonesia by focusing on both urban and rural EFL learners. The results of the study proved the development of learner ideal L2 self to be heavily based on regional differences of learners, because rural learners show a weak ideal L2 self compared to urban learners due to the lack of exposure to the globalisation and the need of global English. This is parallel with You and Dornyei (2014) where they found urban L2 Chinese learners as the highly motivated group compared to the rural group due to the importance of global English to reach the needs of globalisation. The value of global English not only enhances the motivation to learn global English but also the imagination of the L2 learners as the speakers of global English (Munezane, 2013; Prasangani, 2015).

It must be noted that recent motivation studies found the strong motivation of the urban learners to reach their future goals via global English. However, few motivation researchers have been able to focus on the rural L2 learners’ motivation and they consistently have shown the weak L2 motivation of the rural L2 learners. This indicates a need to understand and investigate the rural L2 learners’ motivation to learn global English to reach their future goals.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the L2 motivation of the rural L2 learners to learn English. This study focuses specially to examine the motivation to learn English of rural L2 learners in Sri Lanka and Malaysia by focusing following research questions.

1. What is the nature of the relationship between the three components of L2 Motivational Self System with the motivation?
2. What is the contribution of ideal L2 self to the global English?

Methodology

Participants of the study are non-English major Sri Lankan and Malaysian L2 learners of English who are studying in government universities. In total 362 Sri Lankan and 60 Malaysian students volunteered to participate in the current research. The participants’ motivation was examined by collecting quantitative data, using an adapted motivation questionnaire. A 49 item Likert- scale questionnaire was distributed to each participant to complete and submit to the researcher directly. The questionnaire consisted with the questions of motivated learning, ideal L2 self, ought to L2 self, and attitudes towards learning English (See Table 1).

Table 1: Categories of the Motivation Questionnaire

Motivated learning	Measure L2 learners’ intended learning effort to improve English at university and outside the university by themselves. Adapted from Taguchi et al., (2009); Lamb, (2012); and Islam et al. (2013).
Ideal L2 self	Measure future vision of the L2 learners related to communication and future career. Adapted from Taguchi et al. (2009), Lamb (2012), and Islam et al. (2013).
Ought to L2 self	Measure the importance of L2 learners’ parental and academic influence to learn English. Adapted from Taguchi et al. (2009), and Lamb (2012).
Attitudes toward learning English	Measure the help of L2 learning experiences. Adapted from Taguchi et al. (2009), and Lamb (2012).

In order to assess the suitability of motivation questionnaire in Sri Lankan and Malaysian contexts, the reliability test was run separately in the both contexts. In accordance with the results obtained the wording of the

questionnaire was changed. The modified questionnaire was used to collect the data. The collected data were subjected to SPSS 22.0 for the statistical analysis. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted between the variables to examine the nature of relationships as the major data analysis method.

Results

Table 2 shows an overview of the participant profile of the study. As shown in the table majority of the Sri Lankan participants were from Rathnapura and majority of the Malaysian participants were from Sarawak.

Table 2: *Participant Profile*

Sri Lanka		Malaysia	
District	Percentage %	State	Percentage %
Ampara	5	Sarawak	34
Anuradapura	7	Kelantan	20
Badulla	12	Sabah	8
Batticaloa	1	Terengganu	8
Hambantota	7	Kedah	1
Jafna	17	Pahang	10
Kilinochchi	1	Perak	10
Mannar	1	Melaka	4
Monaragala	4	Perlis	4
Mullaitvu	1	Negeri Sembilan	1
Nuwara Eliya	4		
Polonnaruwa	3		
Puttalam	4		
Rathnapura	25		
Trincomalee	2		
Vauniya	6		
Total	100	Total	100

Nature of relationship between motivated learning and L2 Motivational Self System

Table 3 compares the correlation between the motivated learning and the ideal L2 self of the Sri Lankan and Malaysian participants. What is interesting in the correlation data is that ideal L2 self has the highest significant correlation with the motivated learning of the both L2 groups. The most striking result to emerge from the data is that for the Sri Lankan rural undergraduates ideal L2 self is the only significant factor to motivate their English learning, because there is no significant correlation between motivated learning and ought to L2 self, and attitudes towards learning English.

Table 3: *Correlation of the Variables with the Motivated Learning*

Scale	Motivated Learning	
	Sri Lanka	Malaysia
Ideal L2 self	.564**	.733**
Ought to L2 self	.277	.471
Attitudes towards learning English	.328	.655**

Anyhow, there was a significant correlation between the motivated learning and attitudes towards learning English among the Malaysian L2 learners. Interestingly, ought to L2 self has no significant correlation between the motivated learning of the Malaysian L2 learners too.

Table 4: *Ideal L2 Self Descriptive Analysis*

Questionnaire item	Sri Lanka	Malaysia
	Agree %	Agree %
I can imagine myself studying in a Malaysian university where all my courses are taught in English and spoken in English.		73%
I can imagine myself studying in a Sri Lankan university where all my courses are taught in English and spoken in English.	80%	
I can imagine myself writing e-mails/letters fluently in English.	70%	66%
The things I want to do in the future involve English.	88%	74%
I often imagine myself as someone who's able to speak good English.	77%	74%
I want to be the kind of Malaysian who speaks English fluently.		78%
I want to be the kind of Sri Lankan who speaks English fluently.	89%	
I see myself one day communicating in English with western speakers.	84%	78%
Studying English is important to me because I would like to become close to L1(US/British/Australian & etc) speakers of English.	64%	66%
Studying English is important to me because I would like to become close to L2 (Malaysians, Indians, Sri Lankans, & etc) speakers of English.	71%	74%

As can be seen from the Table 4 majority (89% and 78%) of Sri Lankan and Malaysian L2 learners want to be fluent English speakers by protecting their national identity. Added to that they highly preferred to improve English to communicate with the western speakers, their future activities, be good English speakers and study in the English medium. It is apparent from this table that they lack the preference to learn English to be close to the L1 community and they prefer to learn English to become close to the L2 community.

Discussion

What is the nature of the relationship between the three components of L2 Motivational Self System with the motivation?

The current study found that ideal L2 self as the highest significant correlated factor for the English learning motivation of the Sri Lankan and Malaysian rural undergraduates. However, the finding of the current study do not support the previous studies of Indonesia (Lamb, 2012), and China (You & Dornyei, 2014), because they found the weak ideal L2 self among the rural Asian learners. There are several possible explanations for this result. One possible explanation for this might be the exposure and learning environment of English in Indonesia and China, because they learn English as a foreign language (FL). On the other hand Sri Lankans and Malaysians learn English as their second language (L2) and they do have a long history of formal English learning form the colonial period onwards (Kirkpatrick, 2011;Prasangani, 2014). In addition, due to the long history of English education English has become a dominant language of the country and education. More than that it has become a weapon of demarcation between the rural and urban (Kandiah, 1984). Thus, English is a compulsory need for the rural community to uplift their social and economical status. Furthermore, the expansion of the globalisation and the role of English as a global language has created a necessary requirement of learning English to learn and work (Muftah & Rafic-Galea, 2013; Schiffman, 2005). In accordance with the need of English has become a dream of their inner self and the need of speaking in English, learning in English, and working in English have become innate desires of the rural learners in these two L2 contexts to tackle the emerging requirements of the country and the world.

It is somewhat surprising the weak correlation between the motivated learning and the ought to L2 self. This finding corroborates the studies of Islam et al. (2013), Lamb (2012) and You and Dornyei (2014). The reason for this may be the weak impact of parental influence for the rural learners' English learning, because rural parents have no enough English knowledge to support their children (Lamb, 2012).

Another important finding was the significant correlation of attitudes towards learning English or learning experiences and motivated learning. Surprisingly, the relationship was significant only among the Malaysian L2 learners. It seems possible due to the learning experiences learners gain from the classroom, peers, and other sources. Sri Lankan rural L2 learners may have lack of positive learning experiences compared to the Malaysian rural L2 learners. This data must be interpreted with caution, because the sample of Malaysia is small.

What is the contribution of ideal L2 self to the global English?

One unanticipated finding is that both Sri Lankan and Malaysian L2 learners ideally want to be fluent English speakers by keeping their national identity. That is again confirm the validity of global English rather than the validity of colonial English, because with the spread of globalisation, the local varieties of English gave more

confidence for the L2 learners to stand among the global community with their own cultural identity. As well as L2 learners became more comfortable with their own variety (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008).

Furthermore, these L2 learners ideally want to be fluent speakers in English. This is because communication in English has become an essential requirement of globalisation and English has become the mode of communication (McCrum, 2010). They realised the importance of global English to face their future challenges.

Conclusion

The present results of this study are significant to identify the ideal L2 self of the rural L2 learners in Asia. The most striking finding of the study was the significant correlation between the ideal L2 self and the motivated learning. Interestingly their ideal L2 self is highly related to the need of global English to tackle their future challenges. However, the weak correlation between ought to L2 self and motivated learning suggesting the need of revisiting the component in future research. Apart from that, attitudes toward learning English should investigate further. However, more research on rural L2 learners in different Asian contexts to be undertaken to have a broad understanding about the ideal L2 self.

Limitations and Future Research

Although this research has achieved its goals, there are some limitations to address in the future research. This study has used the quantitative data to imply the results, but qualitative data also needed to have a balance picture. In fact, it is better to follow mixed method in the future research. Further, correlation analysis is not enough to see the strong picture of the rural L2 learners. Added to that sample size is not adequate to generalise the findings. Finally, there is a great need of L2 motivation studies in the rural Asian contexts.

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