Instrumental and Integrative Orientations in Second Language Learning among Sudanese Students

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Abstract

Motivation is one of the most influential factors in second/foreign language learning. It has been traditionally classified into two types, namely instrumental motivation and integrative motivation. The latter has been claimed to have a more positive impact on the language learning process than instrumental orientations. This study sought to investigate the nature of motivational orientations among Sudanese learners of English and German. The study involved 221 Sudanese undergraduate students studying English and German, respectively. The results of the empirical investigation demonstrated that Sudanese students were more instrumentally motivated to learn English in comparison to German. On the other hand, the students in the German department had more positive attitudes towards the German community and culture in comparison to the students of the English department. Gender differences have also been identified in the department of English only, where female students had a significantly higher level of motivation and were rather integratively motivated to learn English than their male counterparts. The study concluded that both instrumental and integrative constructs are complementary and that attention should be shifted towards motivational intensity in language learning.

Keywords: instrumental motivation; integrative motivation; German language; motivation and attitudes

Introduction

Motivation and attitudes are considered as substantial psychological constructs in explaining both the process and outcome of second language learning, e.g., (Al-Busairi, 1990; Zoltán Dörnyei, 2003; Gardner, 1985, 2001, 2010; Kleppin, 2001, 2002; Noels, 2005; Reimer, 2001). Gardner and Lambert (1972), who first empirically investigated the motivational factors in second language acquisition, found that motivation and enthusiasm in studying a target language are just as important as a person’s linguistic ability or general intellect when it comes to learning a second language.

One of the most common types of motivation for learning a new language is to integrate oneself into the target culture; this type of motivation is known as integrative motivation. An integrative orientation is characterized by a positive disposition toward learning, interacting, or becoming closer to the...
target language community, whereas an instrumental orientation is concerned with the potential utilitarian value of target language proficiency, such as passing an exam or getting a better job. Integrative motivation is one of Gardner’s most essential concepts in second language learning. It has a stronger correlation with proficiency in a second language than does instrumental drive. Much research supports the importance of integrative motivation.

Individual differences also play a significant role in learning a language. For instance, factors like age, gender, language background, peer influences, and parental level of education are some of the variables that influence language acquisition and attitudes (Ellis et al., 1994; Merisuo-Storm, 2007).

**Categorization of Motivation into Integrative and Instrumental**

In the literature of second/foreign language learning, motivation has always been categorized into two broad types, namely integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Integrativeness is a key concept in the socio-educational model, but the exact meaning of the term integrative motivation has rather been used in an ambiguous way and not clearly defined across different studies. For instance, Lambert (1974) asserts that integrative motivation reflects an interest in learning another language because of “a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other language group” (p. 98).

According to Gardner (1985), integrative motivation, which has also been termed as the integrative motive, is an overarching construct that consists of three components: motivation, orientation, and integrativeness. Thus, in Gardner’s view, the whole concept of L2 motivation (apparently excluding only instrumental motivation) is labeled as integrative motivation in the socio-educational model.

Gardner (2001) describes the integrative motivation that a desire in learning another language is shown in the varying integration of the two languages. It entails openness and respect for various cultures and ways of life at the most basic level. Withdrawal from the original group is possible, although this is more likely to be a case of integration rather than total identification with the community.

However, this conceptualization of integrative motivation has been questioned, especially in foreign language learning contexts. In this respect, Dailey (2009) argues that because of the shift in global languages, there is no model community to identify with, leading to a larger categorization of the integrative drive. In the same context, Dörnyei (2010) further supports this claim by stating that, in many language learning situations, and especially with the learning of world languages such as English or French, it is not at all clear who ‘owns’ the L2, and this lack of a specific L2 community undermines Gardner’s theoretical concept of integrativeness. Similarly, McClelland (2000) argues for redefining the concept of ‘integrativeness’ that emphasizes the integration with the global community, rather than identification with native speakers of the target language community and culture, highlighting the necessity to reappraise Gardner’s concept of integrative motivation to fit the perception of English as an international language.
Instrumental motivation, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of the functional and utilitarian reasons for learning the language, such as getting a better job or passing an entry exam. Instrumental motivation, as defined by Dörnyei et al. (2006), refers to the perceived pragmatic benefits of L2 proficiency and represents the fact that for many language learners, the usefulness of L2 proficiency is the most compelling reason to study the language. As a result, it encompasses utilitarian aims such as obtaining a better job or greater pay as a result of mastering L2.

**The Role of Motivational Type in Second Language Acquisition**

Motivation is one of potential factors in second/foreign language proficiency; positive correlations between motivation and second language outcome variables in many different contexts have been reported, e.g., Brown et al. (2001); Clément et al. (1994); Dunn & Iwaniec (2021); Kim & Shin (2021); R. Schmidt et al. (1996). Gardner and his associates have claimed that integrative motivation is the most important and predictable factor of excelling in a second language than instrumental motivation. However, this claim has at times been questioned and challenged in light of subsequent empirical research in different contexts than the Canadian English-French bilingual context. In this regard, Ellis et al. (1994) postulate that L2 achievement has been demonstrated to be substantially linked to integrative motivation. In formal settings, it interacts with instrumental incentives to serve as a powerful predictor of success. Integratively motivated students are more engaged in class and are less likely to drop out. However, integrativeness is not necessarily the primary motivator for L2 learning; certain learners, such as those who live in bilingual neighborhoods, may be affected more by other variables such as self-confidence or friendship.

Furthermore, Dörnyei (1994) contends that emotive predispositions toward the target language group are unlikely to account for a large amount of the diversity in language acquisition. In an empirical investigation, Liu (2007) shows that Chinese students have good views toward learning English and are strongly driven to do so; yet, they are more instrumentally motivated rather than integratively.

Instrumental motivation, on the other hand, was more prominent in foreign-language settings (Samimy & Tabuse, 1992). This implies that the context of foreign language learning tends to be instrumentally oriented since there is no opportunity to interact and identify with the language speaking community, whereas integrative motivation is more applicable in second-language learning settings, where there is direct access to the language-speaking community. Under some conditions, both integrative and instrumental orientations can be equally influential on language achievement in a foreign language situation. In this respect, Dörnyei (1990) argues that instrumental drives and the need for achievement may be useful until the intermediate level; however, in order to get beyond this point, that is, to really learn the language, one has to be integratively motivated.

Interestingly, in a study conducted later by Gardner and Mclntyre (1991), entitled: “An instrumental motivation in a language study: who says it is not effective?”, they realize the influential role of instrumental orientations in language learning. Their study examined the
impact of both integrative and instrumental motivation on the acquisition of French and English vocabulary. Integrative and instrumental motivation were shown to have an impact on learning. In other studies, it was shown that students who were driven by financial gain studied more than those who were not, but this difference vanished after the financial gain was eliminated. Those who were more integratively or instrumentally driven spent more time pondering the correct solution than students who were less motivated, indicating that both types of motivation are motivating.

A Critical Review of Gardner’s Integrativeness Conceptualisation

Most of the criticism of the socio-educational model has been directed to the concept of ‘integrativeness,’ pointing out the inapplicability of this concept in a foreign language context where no potential ‘integration’ is possible (Conttia, 2007). Many researchers in the field of L2 motivation, e.g., Dornyei (1994); Z. Dörnyei & Clement (2001); Lamb (2004); Rebecca Oxford & Shearin (1994) have criticized the over-emphasis on integrative motivation or integrativeness, as there is no such parallel term in mainstream psychology. Furthermore, the understanding of the term integrativeness is also different, at times even contradictory, among scholars. The concept of identification with the second language community has also been criticized, e.g., Pennycook (1995); Webb (2002). While Ely (1986) has also questioned the applicability of dichotomizing motivation into instrumental and integrative, and whether this conceptualization captures the full spectrum of student motivation. In addition, this model lacks a detailed description of the classroom situation of L2 motivation.

In regard to the predictive power of integrativeness in second language achievement, Au (1988) has argued that not all measures of integrative motivation correlated positively with L2 achievement. Moreover, Oxford and Shearin (1994) have also argued that the socio-educational model as proposed by Gardner is limited in scope and must be expanded outward to include a number of other motivational variables. A lack of agreement on a definition of motivation, the distinction between second and foreign language contexts, the absence of key motivational variables from the model, and teachers who do not understand their students' true motivation for learning are all listed as obstacles to a complete understanding of students' motivation.

Problem Statement and Research Questions

In today’s global, competitive and open world, the demand for foreign languages learning is obviously increasing. However, learning a foreign language is different from learning other subjects since it might also involve adopting certain behavioral patterns and cognitive attributes from another socio-cultural community. In this regard, Williams (1994) postulates that learning a foreign language is unquestionably different from learning other topics. This is primarily due to the social character of such an endeavor. After all, language is a part of a person’s entire social being: it is a part of one’s identity and is used to communicate that identity to others. Learning a foreign language entails much more than merely learning skills, rules, or grammar; it entails a shift in self-perception, the assimilation of new social and cultural behaviors and ways of being, and so
has a considerable impact on the learner’s social nature.

Additionally, most of the available studies on foreign language learning in Sudan have been focusing mainly on the English language, and there is a lack of empirical studies about other foreign languages, especially the German language. Thus, the current study attempts to bridge the gap and investigate and compare the two languages in terms of psycholinguistic orientations.

The study attempted to objectively answer how Sudanese students are instrumentally or integratively motivated towards learning English and German, whether there are any substantial differences in motivation and attitudes toward learning English and German among Sudanese students, and whether there are any significant differences between male and female students regarding their motivational and attitudes orientations towards the target language.

**Method**

**Participants**

The participants of this study are Sudanese undergraduate students enrolled at the Departments of English and German languages at the faculty of Arts, University of Khartoum in Sudan. The sample size was composed of 221 students; 148 participants were drawn from the Department of English language, and 73 participants from the Department of German language participated in this survey.

In order to select the research sample of the current study, the convenience sampling method was used as Fraenkel et al. (2011) clarify that convenience sampling is quite optimal when there are no chances to select a random and a systematic non-random sample. This sampling is also efficient and practical, especially when conducting the research survey in certain contexts such as certain universities or other educational institutions.

**Instruments of Data Collection**

Based on Gardner’s (1985) Attitudes and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) and current literature and available scales, two structured questionnaires were developed to investigate students’ motivation and attitudes toward learning English and German. The items were graded on a 5-point Likert scale. The motivation scale is composed of two subscales: instrumental motivation and integrative motivation; the attitudes scale also comprised two sections to measure the attitudes toward the language and toward the language speaking community.

The motivation scale is composed of 25 items for measuring the intensity and type of students’ motivation in Learning English and German Language respectively. The motivation scale included two sub-scales: first, sub-scale of Integrative motivation, which comprised 13 items to measure the type of motivation related to learning the language in order to communicate with members of the target language community and to know more about their culture and reflect an interest in studying the language for integrative reasons.

Second, the sub-scale of instrumental motivation comprised 12 items, aiming at measuring the type of motivation in learning the language for pragmatic objectives and fulfilling certain requirements. The attitudes scale is composed of 24 items for measuring the
Instruments Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are considered essential characteristics for conducting quantitative and empirical research with solid outcomes. Thus, the content comprehensibility of the survey instruments was considered during the process of items construction, translation, and backward-translation of the questionnaires, through reviewing existing scales and rigorous experts’ reviews and suggestions in the fields of Psychology and Linguistics. In the light of their detailed feedback, some items have been slightly modified, while others were reconstructed and restructured to remove the ambiguity and to make items quite clear before administering them to the intended respondents.

On the other hand, the reliability of the research instruments was statistically calculated by using Cronbach’s Alpha formula for all four sub-scales separately and then for each instrument in general. The overall internal consistency of the instrumental sub-scale was 0.67, the integrative sub-scale was 0.82, and the overall motivation scale was estimated at 0.855, which indicates that the instrument is statistically reliable. A similar process was carried out to calculate the reliability co-efficient for attitudes toward the language subscale, which was 0.65, the attitudes toward the community sub-scale were 0.75, and the overall attitudes scale was 0.814, which also indicates a significant acceptable level of reliability of the research instrument.

Findings and Discussion

Differences in the Motivational and Attitudinal Orientations towards Learning the Target Language

In order to test if there are significant differences between the English language learners and German language learners regarding their motivation and attitudes, an independent samples t-test was conducted. The results of the independent samples t-test as can be seen in (table 1) show that Sudanese students are more instrumentally motivated to learn English (M = 45.24, SD = 6.35), than their counterparts to learn German (M = 43.23, SD = 5.47) with conditions; t (219) = -2.313, p = .022. This indicates that instrumental orientations and utilitarian reasons to learn a foreign language are more predominant among the students of the English department than the German department. However, there are no significant differences between the two departments in terms of integrativeness. Regarding the overall motivational level, the mean score of motivation to learn English is greater (M = 96.14, SD = 13.14) than the mean score to learn German (M = 93.19, SD = 10.16). Nevertheless, this difference is not statistically significant since p = .069, but it could be taken as a tendency, which reflects that students in the English department are slightly
highly motivated to learn English than their counterparts in the German department.

On the other hand, there are significant differences between the two departments regarding their attitudes towards the target language community and attitudes in general. Whereas, there are statistically significant differences between the two groups in terms of their attitudes towards the target language community and culture in favor of the German department. This demonstrates that the students in the German department have more favorable attitudes towards the German culture and community ($M = 36.64, SD = 4.78$), $t (219) = 2.691, p = .008$, than their counterparts in the department of English language ($M = 34.53, SD = 5.82$).

Table 1

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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<td>81.18</td>
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<td>1.687</td>
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<td>.093</td>
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</table>

The results show that Sudanese students are more instrumentally motivated to learn English than their counterparts to learn German. This indicates that instrumental orientations and utilitarian reasons to learn a foreign language are more predominant among the students of the English department than the German department, whereas there are no significant differences between the two departments in terms of integrativeness. The instrumental orientation among Sudanese students to learn English is consistent with the established literature and empirical research in this field, e.g., (Abdel Hafez, 1994; Hong & Ganapathy, 2017; Latif Ugla, 2021; Qashoa, 2006; Zahra, 2009). The instrumentality in learning English has been claimed to be more predominant in a foreign language context due to the special status of the English language as a global language and Lingua-franca, where the pragmatic and utilitarian instances seem to be rationalized in the case of the English language. Thus, the instrumental motivation among Sudanese students could be contextualized within these research findings that have repeatedly reported that students most likely learn English as a foreign language for instrumental orientations. Mugaddam (2012) has also implied an instrumental orientation among Sudanese students to learn English.
Nevertheless, Chen et al. (2021) indicated instrumental motivation among Chinese students in learning German. In contrast, Hudson (2017) reported integrative orientations of overseas students learning English in Scotland. On the other hand, Liu (2019) found that Chinese college students were both instrumentally and integratively motivated to learn German.

On the other hand, significant differences between the two departments regarding their attitudes towards the target language community were found. Statistically significant differences between the two groups in terms of their attitudes towards the target language community and culture were identified in favor of the German department. This demonstrates that the students in the German department have more favorable attitudes towards and thus show more interest in the German community and culture than their counterparts in the department of English language. This could also be understood in line with the tendency of Sudanese students to learn English for instrumental reasons, while German seems to have different considerations among Sudanese than English, where German is still associated with a particular culture and community, and therefore such an interest in the German-speaking community and culture among Sudanese students might be particularly instigated to sustain learning the language.

**Figure 1**

The interaction between the target languages and gender differences in terms of instrumentality
Gender Differences in Motivational and Attitudinal Orientations towards Learning the Target Language

The results of the independent samples t-test as reported in (table 2) revealed that the mean score of female students in the English department on integrativeness (M = 51.79, SD = 7.21) is higher than their male counterparts (M = 48.00, SD = 9.22) with conditions; t (146) = -2.534, p = .012. This indicates that female students are more integratively motivated to learn English than male students, while there are no significant differences between female and male students regarding instrumentality. Additionally, female students have a higher level of motivation to learn English (M = 97.36, SD = 12.41), conditions; t (146) = -2.065, P = .041, than the male students (M = 92.17, SD = 14.76). However, no significant differences were found in terms of attitudinal orientations between male and female students.

Table 2
Gender differences in motivational and attitudinal Orientations towards learning English

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<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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<td>-1.056</td>
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<td>.334</td>
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</table>

On the other hand, the results of the independent samples t-test, as shown in (table 3) did not demonstrate any statistically significant differences between male and female students regarding their motivation and attitudes towards learning the German language.

Table 3
Gender differences in motivational and attitudinal Orientations towards learning German

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<th>df</th>
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</table>
Gender differences among Sudanese students regarding their level of motivation are in line with the most established literature and empirical studies on gender differences in relation to second/foreign language learning. Generally speaking, female students are claimed to have a significantly higher level of motivation and more positive attitudes toward the foreign language and language speaking community (e.g., Csizer & Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner & Lambert, 1972). This claim has been confirmed in a number of empirical investigations in the field of second language motivation. For example, Ellis (1994) found that female students have better attitudes towards second language acquisition compared to male students. Female students are found to allocate more time and money in purchasing and getting access to reading materials in English, and they will probably have better attitudes towards studying literature compared to male students. For instance, Williams et al. (2002), in their study, stated that girls demonstrated a higher degree of motivation to learn foreign languages than did boys, irrespective of the language to be learned. Shabaan (2000) also found that Lebanese female students were more motivated than their male counterparts to learn English.

Moreover, Sudanese female students were more integratively motivated to learn English than their male counterparts. This implies that female students learn the language for more than instrumental or utilitarian reasons, but rather they learn the language for their sincere interest in the target language and consequently the target language community and culture, which might also indicate integration and identification tendencies with the native language community. Nevertheless, integrativeness in foreign language context should be differently reinterpreted than in its traditional sense as proposed by Gardner in a second language context since there is no identified community to integrate within the case of foreign language learning. In this respect, Dornyei (2005) suggests that integrativeness is more related to some more basic identification process within the individual’s self-concept and, as such, could be better explained by students’ internal views of their possible future selves and ideal self-image.

**Conclusion**

This study sought to investigate Sudanese undergraduate students’ motivational orientations, namely instrumental and integrative motivation towards learning English and German as foreign languages. Additionally, gender differences in the motivational and attitudinal orientations were also examined. This study is based on the framework of the socio-educational model proposed by Gardner (1985). The role of integrative motivation has been most stressed over instrumental motivation in predicting the level of proficiency and success in learning a second/foreign
language. However, the current research challenges Gardner’s assumption of integrativeness, highlighting that integrativeness is not applicable in foreign language learning settings, arguing that there is no direct contact with the target language community, as this was the case in the original research in the Canadian English/French bilingual context. This has led to reinterpretation and reconceptualization of integrativeness to suit foreign language learning environment, in terms of international posture, imagined L2 community, bicultural identity, and idealized L2 self-image; see, e.g., (Csizer & Dörnyei, 2005; Zoltán Dörnyei, 2005; Lamb, 2004, 2007; Yashima, 2002).

The results of the empirical investigation demonstrated that Sudanese students were more instrumentally motivated to learn English in comparison to German. On the other hand, the students in the German department had more positive attitudes towards the German community and culture in contrast with the students of the English department. Gender differences have also been identified in the department of English only, where female students had a higher level of motivation and were rather integratively motivated to learn English than their male counterparts.

Based on these findings, it could be concluded that both instrumental and integrative motivation play an equal role in the learning of the target language, suggesting that instrumentality and integrativeness are rather complementary than contradictory, which has also been indicated in other empirical studies, e.g., (Al-Quyadi, 2000; Al-zubeiry, 2012). Thus, the dichotomization of Gardner’s socio-educational model of integrativeness vs. instrumentally over-simplifies the complex nature of L2 motivation. Therefore, it is important to shift the focus to the strength of motivation and motivational intensity instead of the traditional taxonomy of instrumental vs. Integrative motivation. Additionally, the conceptualization of the self-determination theory of intrinsic and extrinsic needs to be further investigated, given that it is more applicable irrespective of the distinction between foreign and second language context.

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References


Instrumental and Integrative Orientations...


