



A descriptive study on the literature of the L2 motivational self-system and its practical implications

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Abstract

The study focused on growing interests in the L2 Motivational Self-System (L2MSS) and its practical implications by examining some major books, book chapters, edited books, some validation and intervention studies grounded on this model. The study adopted scanning research design, and the researchers accessed the materials through the Internet and university libraries in Turkey. In the study a total of four books (edited books and book chapters), eight validation studies, and seven intervention studies were reviewed. The materials were analyzed using coding method of the qualitative data analysis. As the resources revealed, the relationship between language learning and the concept of self could be explored through a plethora of research designs that address various research questions. In the study it was found out that the L2MSS and its pedagogical programs would continue to attract the attention of both academics and instructors leaning on new areas of research that remained unexamined today.

Keywords: The L2MSS; the Ideal L2 self; vision; validation studies; intervention studies

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1. Introduction

Since Dörnyei (2005, 2009) proposed his new model motivational system called The L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS), it has drawn the attention of the scholars and implementers in the field of second language (L2) motivation. This article reviews the growing interest in the L2MSS in recent decades and it explores various examples of its practical implications. The L2MSS has revolutionized the understanding of motivation understanding by combining L2 motivation research and psychological theories of the self. The socio-educational model developed by Gardner and Lambert (1959) dominated L2 motivation research for over three decades. Specifically, their concept of integrativeness was very influential in the field to understand L2 learners' learning behaviors for a long time. Within their model, the concept of 'integrativeness' refers to an

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individual's openness to take on the characteristics of another cultural or linguistic group and his/her desire to integrate into the target language community (Gardner, 2005; 2010).

This concept of integrativeness as well as the socio-educational model of Gardner and Lambert resulted in many subsequent theories and related practical implications in the field of L2 motivation research for over 30 years (Tatar, 2017). Starting from the early 1990s, though, researchers began criticizing the theoretical content of integrativeness. Their main argument was that it did not provide any conceptual links to cognitive motivational constructs that appeared in motivational psychology, such as the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) or Goal Theories (Ames, 1992; Locke & Latham, 1996). Furthermore, L2 motivation researchers found the concept of integrativeness too narrow and claimed that its validity is largely limited to the Canadian context (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Thus, a new era called the 'cognitive-situated period' began where the characteristics related to the motivation of learners became widely researched starting from the early 1990s. Tremblay and Gardner (1995) extended the socio-educational model by incorporating various new constructs from the Theory of Expectancy-Value (Wigfield, 1994) and Goal Theories (Ames, 1992; Locke & Latham, 1996) to make them relevant to bilingual contexts. Between 1993 and 2004, a project was initiated to analyze Hungarian learners' attitudes towards learning foreign languages (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002; Dörnyei, Csizér & Németh, 2006). This project led to a theoretical shift in L2 motivation research with researchers focusing more on the internal domains of 'identity' and 'self' instead of the instrumental/integrative dichotomy (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009). This concept of 'self' has become the focus of L2 motivation research in the last two decades with researchers' efforts to explore and analyze language learners' motivational dispositions (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009).

Through his L2MSS model, Dörnyei (2005, 2009) combined the Theory of Possible Selves developed by Markus and Nurius (1986) and the Self-Discrepancy Theory of Higgins (1987, 1996) that were prevalent within mainstream psychology. He integrated them into L2 motivation. Having explored the links between fantasy, cognition, and motivation, Markus and Nurius (1986) proposed that 'possible selves' played an important role in shaping individuals' behaviors. In their hypothesis, "possible selves represent an individual's ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming" (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954). In his research on self-discrepancy, Higgins (1987, 1996) explored the existence of a number of different selves and the results of the discrepancies that exist among these different selves. These self types conceptualized by Higgins (1987, 1996) include the ideal self, which represents an individual's hopes, dreams and aspirations; the ought self, which captures an individual's perceived responsibilities and obligations and the type person an individual feels s/he ought to be; and the actual self which refers to the way an individual

currently sees themselves. The Self-Discrepancy theory of Higgins (1987, 1996) postulates that discrepancies prevailing among these self types cause several negative feelings. As such, the desire to lessen the discrepancy between an individual's actual and ideal or ought self is what leads to motivation.

Dörnyei (2005, 2009) drew on these two mainstream psychological theories and provided L2 equivalents of these self types in the L2MSS. He argued that students' language learning behaviors (i.e. how much effort they are eager to put into language learning and to what extent they are persistent) are mainly affected by three different constructs: the Ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self and their learning experience. The 'Ideal L2 self' can be defined as the extent to which learners can imagine themselves as highly competent users of the L2. The 'ought-to L2 self' captures the external pressures that learners are aware of during the learning process. Lastly, the 'L2 learning experience' includes situated motives pertaining to the immediate learning environment and involves learners' attitudes towards classroom dynamics and factors (i.e. the effect of instructor, curriculum, classmates, and experience of success) (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009). Accordingly, the model not only involves two isolated self-guides, but also a component concerning the learning setting.

Following Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) refinement of the model, the field of L2 motivation research has witnessed a surge in publications and a proliferation of studies grounded on the L2MSS (Boo, Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). The empirical validation of the two pillars (the Ideal L2 and ought-to L2 selves) and studies centered around possible practical implications of Dörnyei's self-based conceptualization have become quite popular around the world.

This descriptive study aims to present the most important works in the literature related to the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) and its practical implications in order to show the influence of the L2MSS on L2 motivation research. For brevity's sake, the scope of this study was limited to the major books, chapters within books, and empirical studies of validation and intervention that reflect the key aspects of the L2MSS.

2. Method

This descriptive study adopted a scanning research design, and the details of the research are as follows:

2.1. Materials and analysis

The study resources were accessed through the Internet using key words pertaining to the L2MSS model, and via a total of four books (edited/chapters) (Table 1), eight validation studies (Table 2), and seven intervention studies (Table 3). The materials were analyzed using coding method of the qualitative data analysis.

Table 1. Materials used in the study

| Resource type | Author/Researcher | Year | Publisher Journal/University |
|---------------------------|--|------|--|
| Book chapter | Zoltán Dörnyei | 2005 | Lawrence-Erlbaum Associates |
| Book chapter | Zoltán Dörnyei | 2009 | Multilingual Matters |
| Book | Jill Hadfield & Zoltán Dörnyei | 2013 | Longman |
| Edited book | Kormos Csizér & Michael Magid (Eds.) | 2014 | Multilingual Matters |
| Article in an edited book | Tatsuya Taguchi, Michael Magid, & Mostafa Papi | 2009 | Multilingual Matters |
| Article in an edited book | Stephen Ryan | 2009 | Multilingual Matters |
| Article in an edited book | Abdullah S. Al-Shehri | 2009 | Multilingual Matters |
| Article in an edited book | Kata Csizér & Judit Kormos | 2009 | Multilingual Matters |
| Article in a journal | Tae-Young Kim | 2012 | English Teaching |
| Article in a journal | Muhammad Islam, Martin Lamb & Gary Chambers | 2013 | System |
| Unpublished PhD Thesis | Halit Taylan | 2017 | The University of Exeter |
| Unpublished MA Thesis | Nazmiye Ezel Şahin | 2020 | Çağ University |
| Unpublished PhD Thesis | Michael Magid | 2009 | The University of Nottingham |
| Article in a journal | Michael Magid & Letty Chan | 2012 | Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching |
| Article in an edited book | Letty Chan | 2014 | Multilingual Matters |
| Unpublished PhD Thesis | Jessica Mackay | 2015 | Universitat de Barcelona |
| Unpublished MA Thesis | Amelia Yarwood | 2018 | Kanda University of International Studies |
| Unpublished PhD Thesis | Yue Yang | 2019 | University of the Pacific |
| Article in a journal | Saeed Safdari | 2019 | Language Teaching Research |

3. Books, chapters within books, and edited books on the L2MSS and its practical implications

Inspired by the Possible Selves Theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986), Dörnyei (2005) introduced a novel approach to explain and understand second language (L2) motivation from a new perspective: The L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS). In Chapter 4 of “The Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition,” he provides the theoretical framework of L2MSS. The chapter is titled “Motivation and Self-motivation” and starts with the importance of motivation as a key aspect in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). After a brief introduction, three phases of L2 motivation research are described: (1) the social psychological period (1959-1990), (2) the cognitive-situated period (during 1990s) and (3) the process-oriented period (2000-2005). The author explains these three periods in detail and introduces several motivational theories that emerged in each period. Empirical studies showing the evolution of motivational theories and new conceptual issues regarding L2 motivation are also covered in this chapter. After providing a synopsis of the evolution of L2 motivation theory after 1990s and expounding on promising conceptual issues in L2 motivation research, the author presents his new conceptualization of L2 motivation. He reframes the concept of L2 motivation by relating it to a theory of self and identity. Through the rest of the chapter, the author deals with the need for this new understanding to L2 motivation, ‘possible’ and ‘ideal selves’, and integrativeness and the ideal language self. The author carefully builds a basis for his new approach and focuses on the interrelationships of the motivational variables and criterion measures that were studied by Kormos Csizér and him. Following this, the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) is laid out in detail. The author draws particular attention to the Ideal L2 self and defines it as powerful motivator in learning another language because of individuals’ willingness to reduce the gap between their actual and ideal selves. Temporal aspects of the L2MSS theory, L2 motivation and SLA research, educational implications, teacher motivation and practical implications related to the L2MSS are described in the rest of the chapter, before the author’s conclusion.

In 2009, Zoltan Dörnyei authored a chapter of the book “Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self” (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009) where he explained his motivational self system in detail. This was Chapter 2 of the work and titled “The L2 Motivational Self System.” In it, the origins of this novel model are described as well as possible selves and future self-guides. Other sub-titles of this chapter include: the distinction between future self-guides and future goals, the role of imagination and imagery, the Self-Discrepancy Theory, and conditions for the motivating capacity of the ideal and ought selves. Dörnyei (2009) also provides empirical evidence that points to the need for reinterpreting Gardner and Lambert’s (1959) term of ‘integrativeness.’ Having provided the theoretical framework of the L2MSS, the author draws attention to various studies that have

validated the L2MSS until 2009 and arrives at five general conclusions from these studies. Contrasting the previous book chapter, Dörnyei (2009) devotes the rest of this chapter to methods of raising L2 learners' awareness about their Ideal L2 self and strengthening it. He outlines six steps for achieving learners' Ideal L2 self. The first step is described as 'creating the vision in L2 learners.' According to Dörnyei (2009), stimulating learners' vision includes "... in effect, increasing the students' mindfulness about the significance of ideal selves, guiding them through a number of passible selves that they have entertained in their minds in the past, and presenting powerful role models" (p. 33). The author suggests 'strengthening learners' vision by means of imagery enhancement' as the second step. He introduces the concept of 'guided imagery,' presenting different subject areas that have explored guided imagery as well as examples from previous studies. 'Substantiating the vision' is portrayed as the third step to anchor ideal self images "in a sense of realistic expectations" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 36). As such, learners' ideal L2 self should be plausible. 'Keeping the vision alive' is depicted as the fourth step in reinforcing L2 learners' Ideal L2 self, and the author lists various activities to function "as potent ideal self reminders" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 37). The author states that the fifth step involves 'operationalizing the vision by developing an action plan' that would enable L2 learners to realize their Ideal L2 self through a set of concrete goals. 'Counterbalancing the vision by considering failure' is given as the last step for maximum effectiveness. Dörnyei (2009) underscores that there is a need to balance L2 learners' Ideal L2 self by employing some activities that would introduce their Feared L2 self for the sake of raising their awareness about undesired results that would arise if they do not learn the L2 appropriately. The author brought the chapter to an end with three concluding points about his theory.

"Motivating Learning" was written by Jill Hadfield and Zoltan Dörnyei in 2013. This book presents a new approach to L2 motivation grounded in a vision of the Ideal L2 self. This theory argues that if learners possess a rich and inspiring vision of the language learner they could become in the future, they will feel motivated to study hard and achieve this vision (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009). In the book, Hadfield and Dörnyei (2013) explore ways to apply the various components of the L2MSS into a teaching sequence. The book is composed of four parts. Part I is titled "From Research to Implications" where the authors elucidate the main premises of L2 motivation, the vision of knowing an L2, how motivation relates to the self, and the construct of a visionary motivational program. Because Part II contains of a set of hands-on classroom tasks, the authors use Part I to draw a theoretical framework on which these tasks have been designed. Thus, Part II, which, which is the central part of the book, provides readers with 99 activities and commentary on each to direct from research to practice. Hadfield and Dörnyei (2013) divide Part II into three main sections and propose a set of activities under the sub-titles of "Imaging Identity: My Future L2 Self", "Mapping the Journey: From Dream to Reality" and "Keeping the Vision Alive." Language instructors can easily incorporate these

activities in the classroom because the aim, level, time, materials, procedure, and script of each activity are provided by the authors. Part III is titled “From Application to Implementation” and covers methodological suggestions that explain how the activities in Part II can be used in a language classroom. For instance, different methods to incorporate these activities into an already-existing syllabus or to a different context are explained in meticulous detail in Part III. Hadfield and Dörnyei (2013) make suggestions about future research regarding vision in the language classroom in Part IV, which is titled “From Implementation to Research.” Readers are provided with an explanation of action research and answers to various questions regarding it. The authors use this part to describe the types of interviews used in L2 research and propose interview topics and questions. Part IV comes to an end after suggestions for processing the interview data and recommended further reading.

“The Impact of Self-Concept on Language Learning” was published as an edited volume in 2014. As the editors of this book, Kormos Csizér and Michael Magid (2014) divided the book into four parts and wrote an introduction about the self-concept and language learning. In this introduction, the editors deal with the importance of the self-concept in L2 motivation and provide a brief summary of the evolution of L2 motivation research. In Part I, theories related to self-concept are presented in three different chapters. The first chapter belongs to Zoltan Dörnyei (2014) where he focuses on: future self-guides, the L2MSS, vision, vision and goals, vision and imagery, imagery capacity, and sensory preferences. The author ends this chapter with practical implications and future directions in L2 motivation research based on the vision and future self-guides. The second chapter was written by Maya Sugita McEown, Kimberly A. Noels and Kathryn Everhart Chaffee (2014). In it, the authors consider the terms ‘self’ and ‘identity’ in three commonly used theoretical frameworks: (1) the Socio-Educational Model (Gardner, 1985, 2010), (2) Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000), and (3) The Second Language Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2009). In the final chapter of Part I, a new model of the self is proposed by Sarah Mercer (2014). The author suggests re-imagining the self as a network of relationships by incorporating the personal and social dimensions of the self-concept as well as combining the self-model with contextual and temporal variation. In Part II, eleven empirical studies pertaining to the self-concept and language learning across various countries (i.e., Hungary, Korea, Australia, Japan, Poland and so on) are collected. Part III involves two studies from teachers’ perspectives. Gabriella Mezei (2014) uses Chapter 16 to depict a study that investigated how teachers’ motivational strategies affect learners’ selves and motivation. Yuzo Kimura’s (2014) longitudinal case study in Chapter 17 focuses on the dynamic changes in teachers’ motivation. Part IV of this edited volume involves three intervention studies carried out by Magid (2014), Chan (2014) and Mackay (2014). The results of three studies exploring how self-related training improves learners’ motivation are reported in

Chapter 18, 19, 20 respectively. In Part V, the editors make recommendations for future research direction based on the topics discussed throughout the volume.

4. Validation studies on the L2MSS across countries

The L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) provides a synthesis of new conceptualizations of L2 motivation with the theories of self and identity found in mainstream psychology. It has been apparent since 2005 and its tripartite structure has been validated in several contexts such as Iran, Japan, China, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, Hungary, Korea, Pakistan and Turkey. The present review involves some major validation studies in various settings as illustrated in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Major validation studies of the L2MSS throughout different countries

| Study | Setting and sample | Instruments |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Taguchi et al. (2009) | Iran, Japan, China nearly 5000 university and secondary level students, working professionals | Three versions of a questionnaire to be used in Iran, Japan, China The first part of the questionnaire had items measuring the participants' motivation and attitudes The second part involved questions about participants' background information |
| Ryan (2009) | Japan 2397 tertiary and secondary-level participants | A large scaled nation-wide attitudinal questionnaire involving seven motivational dimensions |
| Al-Shehri (2009) | Saudi Arabia, the UK 20 Arab ESL students studying English in Saudi Arabia, 28 Arab ESL students studying English before starting their undergraduate program in the UK, 102 high school graduates who studied English as their second language | A self-report questionnaire containing 41 items that focused on four main variables |
| Csizér & Kormos (2009) | Hungary 202 secondary level and 230 college and university students | A questionnaire consisting of 65 Likert-scale items measuring participants' motivation and 10 questions about their background information |
| Kim (2012) | Korea 2,832 elementary, junior high and high school students | A questionnaire composed of 75 Likert-scale items measuring 11 psychological factors and 10 questions about the participants' background |
| Islam, Lamb & Chambers (2013) | Pakistan 975 undergraduate students | A motivational factors questionnaire (MFQ) involving 71 six-point Likert-scale items on 13 motivational scales |
| Taylan (2017) | Turkey 250 English preparatory school students | A motivation questionnaire comprising 109 Likert-scale items on 17 scales |
| Şahin (2020) | Turkey 274 English preparatory school students | A motivation questionnaire involving 30 five-point Likert-scale items An achievement attributions questionnaire consisting of 23 items |

One of the major validation studies of the L2MSS was conducted by Taguchi, Magid and Papi (2009). Nearly 5,000 participants from Iran, Japan and China participated in this study. Although university students formed the majority of participants in all settings, secondary level students and working professionals were also included in the Chinese sample. The researchers aimed to replicate Dörnyei's Hungarian study in the context of three Asian populations. The study also aimed to identify a possible relationship between the integrativeness and the Ideal L2 self. The researchers also examined the existence of two instrumentality types and how they correlate to the Ideal L2 self and the ought-to L2 self. The results of the correlational analysis revealed that integrativeness can be replaced with the Ideal L2 self because of the positive correlation found in all three Asian contexts. The average correlation coefficient was found to be over .50 for all samples. Furthermore, significant correlations between these two variables were also explored within the sub-groups. In terms of the correlation of integrativeness and the Ideal L2 self with criterion measures as another variable, criterion measures were found to be highly correlated with the Ideal L2 self rather than integrativeness for every sub-group except for English majors in the Chinese sample. The correlational analysis also verified that it is possible to divide the instrumentality variable into two groups, namely the promotional and preventional instrumentality. Interestingly, the results revealed that promotional instrumentality was more correlated to the Ideal L2 self, while preventional instrumentality was more correlated to the ought-to L2 self. In general, this study validated the L2MSS through the analysis of Structural Equation Modelling (SEM).

A large-scale survey was carried out by Ryan (2009) to validate the L2MSS in Japan. The respondents of the survey included 2,397 English learners from five tertiary level settings and four secondary-level institutions. Similar to Taguchi et al.'s study, Ryan (2009) also aimed to validate whether the Ideal L2 self can be equated to integrativeness through replicating Dörnyei's study carried out in Hungary. Another focus of the study was to explore how integrativeness and the Ideal L2 self affected Japanese learners' motivated behaviors while learning English. The final objective of the study was to compare how integrativeness and the Ideal L2 self work among all sub-groups. The researcher reported that the Ideal L2 self and integrativeness showed a very high correlation ($r = .59, p < .001$), thus suggesting that the Ideal L2 self could be equated with integrativeness. For the sample as a whole and all the sub-groups, the Ideal L2 self was found to be more effective in explaining their motivated behaviors because it showed higher correlations with the criterion measures than integrativeness.

Al-Shehri (2009) examined the Ideal L2 self from another perspective, focusing on the connection between the Ideal L2 self, imagination and learners' visual style. In this study, it was hypothesized that learners with strong visual learning styles would possess

a strong imagination capacity and visual imagery, so they would possibly build an enhanced Ideal L2 self due to the noticeable imagery facet of the Ideal L2 self. The participants included 200 Arab students studying English, and the instrument of the study was a self-report questionnaire composed of 41 items on four domains: (1) the Ideal L2 self, (2) imagination, (3) criterion measures, and (4) visual learning style. A strong correlation was found between criterion measures and the Ideal L2 self ($r = .78, p < .01$). This result verifies the hypothesis that the Ideal L2 self is a powerful motivating factor for learners' intended effort while learning another language. Another strong correlation ($r = .65, p < .01$) was explored between the participants' Ideal L2 self and their visual learning style. This confirms the researcher's hypothesis that visual learners can form strong Ideal L2 selves. Al-Shehri (2009) also explored the significant correlation between imagination and visual learning styles ($r = .40, p < .01$), verifying a positive relationship between these two variables.

Csizér and Kormos (2009) examined the role of the Ideal L2 self and the ought-to L2 self as well as the L2 learning experience among two language learner populations in Hungary. Their objective was to provide empirical support for the L2MSS through applying Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to data gathered from a questionnaire. Participants included 202 secondary-level students and 230 college and university students. The findings of the SEM analysis empirically supported the theory behind the L2MSS as both the L2 learning experience and Ideal L2 self significantly contributed to criterion measures variable for both populations. Furthermore, the L2 learning experience, the ought-to L2 self and the Ideal L2 self were found to be either not associated with each other at all or to have low correlations. This finding indicates that these three constituents of the L2MSS are independent motivational constructs, separate from one another.

Another large-scale validation study was conducted by Kim (2012) in Korea with 2,832 participants from Grades 3 to 12. The sample was drawn from 14 elementary, junior high and high schools. The researcher compared the L2MSS by Dörnyei (2009) with Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model. In addition, the impact of age on the motivational profile of Korean EFL learners was examined. Another objective of this study was to find if the L2MSS or the socio-educational model would better predict the proficiency of Korean EFL learners of English. The researcher used a motivation questionnaire consisting of items adapted from Kim's (2011) and Taguchi et al.'s (2009) studies. Investigated were 11 psychological factors: the ought-to L2 self, the Ideal L2 self, preventionality, promotional instrumentality, demotivation, family influence, motivated behavior, integrativeness, attitude to L2 community, cultural interest, and attitude to learn English. The results of this cross-grade survey revealed that Korean EFL learners' motivational trajectories demonstrated a curvilinear pattern, which means their motivation level constantly diminished until Grade 9. However, it began increasing again from Grade 10 to Grade 12. Regression analyses indicated that Dörnyei's (2009) L2MSS

predicted learners' English proficiency better than Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model. In addition, learners' ought-to L2 and Ideal L2 selves explained their motivation better than prevention/promotional instrumentality and integrativeness. The study also proved that as an external and social type of future self-guides, the ought-to L2 self, performed only at the cognitive level, while as a more internalized future self-guide, the Ideal L2 self, tapped into both the affective and cognitive levels.

İslam, Lamb and Chambers (2013) provided empirical evidence to the ongoing validation of Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) motivational model within a Pakistani context. The theoretical framework of this study was based on the L2MSS with some context-specific factors also being incorporated. The study included 975 Pakistani undergraduate student participants. The study had four objectives: (1) to investigate the usefulness of the L2MSS in order to understand and explain the L2 motivation of a sample of tertiary levels students from Central Punjab; (2) to examine what kind of relationship exists between the three key facets of the L2MSS with each other and with the learners' reported attempts to learn English; (3) to test if two aspects of the instrumentality, prevention and promotional, are related to any distinct future self-guides of the participants; (4) to discover other motivational factors that might be important to understand L2 motivation in Pakistan, particularly if the participants' understanding of their national attachment and national interest are connected to their future L2 self guides and also to their reported learning attempts. A motivational factors questionnaire called 'MFQ' was developed by the researchers. The items of the questionnaire were adapted from the items of four studies Dörnyei et al. (2006), Ryan (2009), Taguchi et al. (2009), and Yashima (2009). The MFQ consisted of 13 motivational scales including the Ideal L2 self, integrativeness, intended learning effort (criterion measures), the ought-to L2 self, the promotional and prevention instrumentality, cultural interest, milieu, national interest, English anxiety, international posture, attitudes to learning English and attitudes towards the L2 community. The national interest scale was specifically developed for this study by the researchers. The mean values and standard deviations of these scales were calculated, and the results showed that all motivational scales had high mean values except for English anxiety. The researchers concluded that participants were highly motivated to learn English and their learning desire was affected by multiple factors. In addition, the analysis of intended learning effort ($M = 4.47$, $SD = .78$) indicated that they were not only motivated to learn English, but they were also willing to invest the necessary effort in learning English. Regression analyses of this study showed an R^2 value 0.57, which means that the model can explain 57% of the variance in the participants' reported learning attempts. They also discovered that three variables, the ought-to L2 self, the Ideal L2 self and attitudes to learning English, represented the main components of the L2MSS. The results also revealed that prevention and promotional instrumentality exist as two distinct types of instrumentality. While promotional instrumentality was found to be the strong predictor of the Ideal L2 self,

preventional instrumentality was proven to be the strong predictor of the ought-to L2 self. It was also explored that three key aspects of L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2009) contributed significantly to one another. However, when analyzing their mutual contribution and correlation, the results revealed low correlation rates, which led to doubts that they might have been measuring the same thing. Several other factors proved salient to participants' L2 motivation, particularly cultural interest, international posture, and milieu. As the newly formed construct of this study, national interest, proved to be a distinct variable, with a potential correlation between national interest and international posture was also being explored. The study confirmed that the participants' national interest was more influential on their Ideal L2 self.

Taylan (2017) conducted another validation study to explore if Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) motivational framework could fit the L2 motivation of Turkish university students. The sample consisted of 250 English preparatory school students at a university in western Turkey. The objectives of the sub-research questions aimed to determine eight points: (1) the relationship between participants' intended learning efforts and three main elements of Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) system, (2) the relationship between these three components, (3) if the preventional and promotional instrumentality types are associated with the ought-to L2 self and the Ideal L2 self of Turkish learners of English in a separate way, (4) if milieu and family influence are connected to the ought-to L2 self and the Ideal L2 self discretely, (5) if there is a relationship between the Ideal L2 self and promotional instrumentality and participants' desire to study and work abroad, (6) if there is a bond between imagination and the participants' Ideal L2 self, (7) if the participants possess salient attitudes toward learning English, the ought-to L2 self and Ideal L2 self, and (8) which type of instrumentality, preventional or promotional, seem to more important to Turkish learners of English. A 109-item Likert scale questionnaire was employed to answer these questions with items adopted from Yashima (2009), Taguchi et al. (2009) and Al-Shehri (2009). The questionnaire measured the following scales: intended learning efforts, milieu, imagination, family influence, international contact and posture, preventional and promotional instrumentality, desire to study and work in different parts of the world, the ought-to L2 self, the Ideal L2 self, and attitudes toward learning English. The results of the study revealed that Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) theoretical framework on the L2 motivation partially fit the motivation of Turkish learners of English. The researcher suggested some modifications to the model to comply with the Turkish context. The attitudes toward learning English, the ought-to self and the Ideal L2 self were proved to be linked to Turkish participants' intended learning efforts and were verified as separate independent components measuring the different facets of L2 motivation. However, Taylan also (2017) reported that "the two standpoints, own and other, overlap in terms of instrumentality promotion, instrumentality prevention and family influence" (p. 2). The effect of the attitudes toward learning English on participants' intended learning efforts was explored to be higher than the Ideal L2 and

the impact of the ought-to L2 self raised doubts. Furthermore, the study revealed that family influence related to the ought-to L2 self rather than the Ideal L2 self. Contrasting Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) proposal, no significant relationship between the ought-to L2 self and milieu was detected in this study. The results also indicated that the instrumentality variable consisted of two foci: (1) promotional instrumentality, which is associated with the Ideal L2 self, and (2) preventional instrumentality, which is connected to the ought-to L2 self. In addition, a relationship between imagination and the Ideal L2 self was discovered, as proposed in Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) motivational system. The international contact and posture criteria were found to be instrumentally important for participants' Ideal L2 self. This confirms the hypothesis that international status English is a powerful source of motivation in L2 learners' future selves, as proposed in the L2MSS.

A quantitative study carried out by Şahin (2020) sought to examine the L2MSS and achievement attributions of Turkish EFL learners on success and failure. In order to understand Turkish university students' motivations, the researcher focused on the L2 learning experience (attitudes towards learning English), the Ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self and the linguistic self-confidence. A motivation questionnaire consisting of 30 items was administrated to analyze these four variables related to the L2MSS, with items adapted from Dörnyei and Taguchi's study (2010). In addition to the motivation questionnaire, an achievement attributions questionnaire was employed as the second instrument of the study. This questionnaire was designed by Saticilar (2006) and involved 23 items to measure Turkish EFL learners' achievement attributions. The main objective of the study was to explore the motivational self system of preparatory school EFL students as well as their achievement attributions that relate to their success or failure in English. Furthermore, this study aimed to reveal whether or not students' achievement is a factor in their motivational self-system and their achievement attributions. The data gathered from 274 participants was analyzed. Both descriptive statistics and paired samples t-tests were run on SPSS. The study revealed that Turkish EFL students had a high level of linguistic self-confidence and possessed a strong Ideal L2 self. Participants' overall L2 learning experience, namely their attitudes towards learning English, were also found to be positive. On the contrary, the ought-to L2 self did not contribute much to the L2MSS dimensions of Turkish EFL learners. The study also showed that that Turkish EFL students mostly attributed their success and failure to internal and uncontrollable causes. While Turkish EFL learners' achievement in English was ascribed to stable causes, their failure was based on unstable causes. Finally, the researcher detected that the participants' achievement was a factor not only in their L2MSS, but also in their attributions in English.

In short, the L2MSS has been widely researched across numerous learning contexts and the researchers in the field of L2 motivation have proven the distinct constructs of the model through diverse methodologies and instruments.

5. Intervention studies based on the L2MSS

As theoretical and practical paradigms of the L2MSS have broadened, another research line has emerged in the area of L2 motivation research: self-based intervention programs. These programs apply the premises of the L2MSS and possible selves theory to classroom settings by promoting learners' future self-guides, particularly their Ideal L2 self, through creating a language learning vision and aspiring to enhance imagery. The intent is to motivate language learners by improving their vision concerning their future selves. Several studies involving intervention programs have been carried out, including those by Magid (2011), Magid and Chan (2012), Chan (2014), Mackay (2015), Yarwood (2018), Yang (2019) and Safdari (2019).

Table 3. Intervention studies based on the L2MSS

| Study | Setting and Sample | Instruments |
|---------------------|--|---|
| Magid (2011) | China, England 1,154 middle school students from China 31 international students attending a British university | In the quantitative part of the study, a questionnaire composed of 67 items measuring 10 factors was used. The questionnaire had also some questions about participants' background. In the qualitative part of the study, two questionnaires composed of 5 items measuring participants Ideal L2 self and questions about their background. Interviews were held. |
| Magid & Chan (2012) | Hong Kong, England 31 international students attending a British university 80 university students attending a university in Hong Kong | A questionnaire that was given before and after the intervention based on items from Taguchi et al.'s (2009) and Ryan's (2009) questionnaires. Semi-structures interview were held. |
| Chan (2014) | 80 second-year Chinese university science students | Pre-course and post-course questionnaires measuring the participants' vision of their possible L2 selves based on the items of Ryan's (2009) motivation inventory and post-questionnaires included some questions about participants' evaluation of the intervention Interviews were held. |
| Mackay (2015) | Spain 95 students attending the preparatory school of a university in Barcelona | A questionnaire administered before and after the intervention The Language Contact Profile Questionnaire Semi-structures interviews were held. Learner written work Teacher observation Field notes Language Logs Online feedback questionnaire |
| Yarwood (2018) | Japan 47 university students | A Motivational Factors Questionnaire (MFQ). Interviews were held. |
| Yang (2019) | China 50 second-year college English major students | A survey called "L2 Motivation Questionnaire" which was given before and after the intervention. A follow-up interview was held. |
| Safdari (2019) | Iran 51 female and male adult EFL learners | A self-report questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale was administered before and after the intervention. Short passages were written by the experimental group participants to reflect their ideas and experiences about the intervention program. |

Magid (2011) conducted a study that consisted of two phases. The first phase included the validation of Dörnyei's (2009) L2MSS with 1,154 middle school and university students from China. The second phase, on the other hand, applied Dörnyei's (2009) L2MSS on 31 internal students from China who attend a British university. The researcher developed an intervention program to encourage the participants to spend more time and effort in studying and learning English through improving their vision regarding their Ideal L2 self. The intervention program of this study continued for four weeks, with the researcher presenting a series of two-hour lessons per week. Four units were covered throughout the program, consisting of visualization activities (positive and negative situations) and four activities that aimed to improve their Ideal L2 and Feared L2 selves. A motivation questionnaire was given before and after the application of the intervention program. After a paired sample t-test was run, a statistically significant increase was explored in the participants' Ideal L2 self after the intervention program. The findings of this study confirm that with the help of visualization training, L2 learners' vision of Ideal L2 self can be enhanced. The results of the qualitative data analysis showed that the program enabled participants to set specific and clear goals and improved their imagination. The intervention program also elicited various emotions from participants such as confidence, fear, pressure, and a sense of urgency. The researcher reported an improvement in participants' L2 proficiency as a result of the intervention. The program was considered effective because it was determined that participants' motivation to learn English and confidence in language learning increased after the program. The study demonstrated that participants' attitudes towards learning a foreign language positively changed and they became aware of the vital role of English in their lives as a result of this intervention program.

Magid and Chan (2012) designed two different intervention programs in line with Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2MSS across England and Hong Kong with 31 participants in England and 80 participants in Hong Kong. The study investigated how these two programs performed in arousing Chinese university students' motivation to learn English through strengthening their Ideal L2 self. The program implemented in England was a voluntary program at an English university while the program employed in Hong Kong was a compulsory English course at a university. The participants in England were provided with various activities including developing action plans, drawing a timeline, tasks for considering feared selves, and listing goals. The intervention program in Hong Kong revolved around The Ideal Self Tree activity that was adapted from an activity called The Possible Selves Tree developed by Hock, Desler, and Shumaker for another study (2006). In addition, scripted and guided imagery were also used in both programs to make participants' vision of their Ideal L2 self more vivid and elaborate. The participants in England were not only exposed to positive scripted imagery situations, but also to negative situations aimed at offsetting their Ideal L2 self with their Feared L2

self. On the other hand, the learners in Hong Kong were guided to use all their senses and imagine themselves in positive situations, such as writing a good essay, having fluent conversations with a friend in English or delivering a successful presentation in the future. Different from the program in England, the program utilized in Hong Kong involved two sessions for language counseling. The researcher met with participants and led them to talk about which goals in their action plans they had achieved until their counselling sessions and the current goals they were focusing on. The researcher suggested certain strategies for the difficulties they had encountered while achieving their goals. Participants also described their Ideal L2 self tree by linking different aspects of their personal life, career and studies to learning English and considered how they would benefit from their English knowledge in the future. Quantitative data was gathered via a questionnaire that was administered to participants before and after the programs in both settings. A paired sample t-test was performed to compare the participants' level of Ideal L2 self in the pre-intervention and the post-intervention stage and in both settings statistically significant differences were detected in the strength of the participants' Ideal L2 self. The results of the qualitative data analysis verified this finding and indicated the increase in the participants' higher scores regarding their Ideal L2 self was mainly due to their increased confidence in their English. The more they became self-confident in their English, the clearer and more specific vision of their Ideal L2 self they attained. Another finding was that both group participants could set clearer goals because of their intervention programs. Thus, they felt more motivated to learn English and became more self-confident in their English.

A study by Chan (2014) examined the effect of an imagery training strategy on learners' Ideal L2 and Feared L2 selves and learning experiences. The study also analyzed learners' responses to three main constituents of the intervention program: language counseling sessions, visualization exercises and drawing an Ideal L2 self tree. The participants of this study were 80 Chinese university students, and they attended a 12-week English course that was compulsory for them. During the intervention program, the researcher guided participants to draw an Ideal L2 self tree, complete four in-class visualization exercises and attend two language counseling sessions lasting for 20 minutes. While creating their Ideal L2 self trees, participants were guided to envision their future selves communicating fluently in English, both at the workplace and in their personal lives. During visualization activities, learners closed their eyes and imagined possible scenarios in which they felt confident while using English. As a follow-up task, participants were encouraged to talk about their feelings during these visualization exercises. Through the two language counseling sessions, it was aimed to help participants to envision themselves as competent users of English, determine concrete learning goals and make them aware of their learning attitudes. Data was collected via a motivation inventory adapted from Ryan's (2009) questionnaire and interviews. The quantitative data collected from the pre-course and post-course questionnaires was

analyzed via SPSS 18.0 and the results of a paired-sample t-test revealed an increase in the strength of participants' Ideal L2 self after the imagery intervention. However, their Feared L2 self did not change at a significant level. Half of the participants reported the emergence of another self: the Ideal speaking self. Nearly two-thirds of the participants found visualization exercises useful. 60.3% of participants rated four or above for the Ideal L2 self tree on a five-point Likert scales. The qualitative data analysis revealed that half of the participants evaluated the task useful in shaping their goals. This task appeared to be moderately effective in motivating participants. 81.3% of participants rated four or above for language counseling sessions and the qualitative data analysis indicated that nearly half of the participants found them useful.

Mackay (2015) specifically designed an intervention program based on Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2MSS to be used at a language school of a university in Barcelona. Two groups with B2:2 proficiency level (according to CEFR) formed experimental groups of the study. There were 47 participants in the experimental groups. The results gathered from experimental groups' ratings were compared to the results from two control groups of the same proficiency level. The control groups consisted of 48 participants. Two different teachers taught these groups and each teacher had one intervention and one control group to present their courses. The intervention program comprised activities dealing with: visualization, Ideal L2, ought-to L2, and Feared L2 selves, positive role models and goal-setting. The researcher sought to determine the impact of her intervention program on participants' three future self-guides and on their L2 learning experience. In addition, its effects on participants motivated behavior and time spent on the target language outside the class as well as teachers' and learners' reactions to the intervention program were examined. Semi-structured interviews were held to gather cross-sectional qualitative data and longitudinal data was gathered from the semi-structured interviews with five participants from the experimental groups. The interview data was analyzed via NVivo 2. Further qualitative data was collected through participants' records of their weekly contact with the target language and the written work they produced during the intervention activities. The results of the study showed that although the intervention program influenced participants' Ideal L2 and Feared L2 selves, it did not have any impact on their ought-to L2 self. Another finding was that there were other factors affecting participants' Ideal L2 and Feared L2 selves, such as learners' maturity, past learning experiences, their beliefs, and desire to engage with novel techniques like visualization. Certain effects were also explored in the participants' perceptions of their L2 learning experience, such as developing metacognition, increased willingness to communicate (WTC) in and out of the classroom, a subtle change towards a more internal attributional system, and positive opinions about group dynamics. In the intervention groups, improvements in reading and speaking skills were also detected. The activities of the intervention groups were positively evaluated by participants due to their novelty and student-centered nature. Teachers' reactions to the intervention were

also positive; however, they stated that these activities needed to be prepared and applied with utmost care and these activities would be more suitable to be taught by experienced teachers.

Another intervention study was conducted by Yarwood (2018) to determine motivational variables concerning Japanese learners' Ideal L2 self through an examination of the changes in their Ideal L2 self. She also aimed to find to what extent the intervention program stimulated these changes. The prepared questionnaire was answered by 47 Japanese university students and only six participants were interviewed after the intervention. The researcher specifically designed an intervention program that composed of six, one-hour lessons presented on a weekly basis. The program began by introducing the concept of the Ideal L2 self through exemplars and Ideal L2 self visualization tasks. It was followed by reality-check tasks to help participants to set realistic goals. Additional activities introduced learners to some obstacles they would encounter while learning another language and the role of self-guides in the process of making language learning decisions. The researcher guided participants to validate their language learning goals and ensure these goals were achievable with the help of using proper language learning strategies. The intervention program concluded with a written visualization task to enrich learners' Ideal L2 self. Pearson's correlation coefficient analyses revealed that a more vivid vision of Japanese learners' Ideal L2 self could be developed with the help of three motivational variables. If learners desire to learn a language and show an interest in its speakers and cultural products, these motivational factors would be beneficial to develop a well-defined Ideal L2 self. Another finding of the study indicated a positive correlation between the Ideal L2 self and promotional instrumentality. The results from the qualitative data indicated that it is possible to build a clearer and more specific Ideal L2 self through an intervention program; however, there is a need for scaffolding metacognitive approaches and allocating time for individualized counseling. The researcher also reported that offsetting participants' Ideal L2 self through the consideration of failure motivated participants and had a positive impact on their learning behaviors, but also intensified their lack of L2 self-confidence. Furthermore, it was found that creating a supportive L2 learning atmosphere significantly contributed to the participants' L2 confidence and their views on the usefulness of the intervention.

Following this, Yang (2019) carried out a mixed-method study in China to analyze the effects of an Ideal-L2 self based intervention on Chinese learners' Ideal L2 and ought-to selves, their views on the L2 learning experience as well as their intended learning and motivation efforts necessary to learn English. The participants of this study consisted of 50 second-year college students who were English majors. There were two classes of control and treatment groups and all members of these groups responded to a survey called the L2 Motivation Questionnaire, which was given before and after the

intervention. However, only five participants selected from the treatment group joined a follow-up interview. An intervention program composed of eight sessions was implemented with treatment groups. Besides these eight sessions, each treatment group participant was provided with two one-on-one counseling sessions. The control group members, on the other hand, continued their English studies on their own after their daily English learning routines. The first three sessions of the intervention centered around visualization of participants' Ideal L2 self through the use of pictures, short articles, follow-up writing tasks on their Ideal L2 self, and listening to guided scripted imageries in a relaxed classroom atmosphere. In the fourth session, some possible obstacles they may encounter while achieving their Ideal-L2 self were introduced to participants. They were guided to create a timeline showing their short and long-term language learning objectives as well as possible difficulties and obstacles within a realistic time frame. A follow-up presentation was carried out and learners discussed their own timeline with their classmates in the sixth session. Participants were then invited to make any necessary revisions to their timelines in light of their classmates' feedback as homework. The first one-on-one counseling session was held between the fifth and sixth sessions to support learners about their timelines or personal learning difficulties. The last three sessions revolved around writing an action plan to help learners to operationalize their vision by setting short and long-term goals for their future personal life, their college life and future work. Specifically, in the eighth session, participants were led to express their concerns or fears about accomplishing their Ideal L2 self and action plans. They were asked to make any changes in their Ideal L2 self-descriptions if they felt necessary. After the eighth session, the second counseling session took place to encourage participants to attain their Ideal L2 self after the intervention. Some advice was given if they had any questions about their Ideal L2 self. The results of the ANCOVA tests and content analysis of the qualitative data revealed that the treatment group members' Ideal L2 self became stronger and more vivid at a statistically significant level after the intervention. The treatment group participants gained confidence in creating their Ideal L2 self vision. The intervention program also moderately lessened their ought-to L2 self. The treatment group participants' L2 learning experience developed to a great extent because participants could set clearer learning aims, move from passive learning to active learning and create detailed action plans and reflections thanks to the intervention.

Lastly, a recent study was done by Safdari (2019) to operationalize L2MSS for improving Iranian EFL learners' motivation by means of a vision enhancement program. The study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of an intervention program which was designed as a vision-based motivational program on Iranian EFL learners' motivational attributes. Among the participants, 51 female and male adult EFL learners took part in this study, separated into control and experimental groups. During an academic term, the experimental group members were exposed to a treatment consisting of six steps:

creating, strengthening, substantiating the vision of participants related to their Ideal L2 self; transforming the vision into the practice; keeping the vision alive and counterbalancing the vision through various Ideal L2 self activities; image streaming; writing future autobiographies; the role-model activity; and reading about unsuccessful learners and so on. A self-report questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale was administered before and after the intervention. The qualitative data was gathered through short passages written by the experimental group participants to reflect their ideas and experiences about the intervention program. The results of the ten ANCOVA tests and qualitative data analysis indicated that the vision-based motivational program of this study was effective in improving Iranian EFL learners' Ideal L2 self as well as their vision. While the experimental group participants' Ideal L2 self, attitudes towards L2 learning, intended effort in learning L2, and imagery capacity improved at a statistically significant level compared to those of the control group participants, their ought-to L2 self remained steady as a result of the intervention. Safdari (2019) concluded that EFL learners' motivation and future self-guides can be enhanced via conducting this type of vision-based interventions.

In short, intervention studies based on the L2MSS have proven that learners' future self-guides, and their Ideal L2 self in particular, can be enhanced. These interventions have been well-received by both learners and teachers alike.

6. Conclusion

Since the L2MSS was formulated by Dörnyei in 2005, it has received extraordinary interest from scholars and instructors in the field of L2 motivation. As the resources reviewed in this article have revealed, the relationship between language learning and the concept of self can be explored through a plethora of research designs that address various research questions. The literature on the L2MSS and its practical implications have deepened researchers' and practitioners' understanding of the effect of the concept of self on language learning by including in their studies language learners from different age groups, genders and proficiency levels who study English as a foreign or second language within state or public settings from diverse national and cultural backgrounds. The L2MSS has proven that it is a simple model that can be easily adapted to a wide range of contexts and motivate language learners on their path to language acquisition. Due to these features, it seems that the L2MSS and its pedagogical programs will continue to attract the attention of both academics and instructors who will focus on new areas of research that remain unexamined today.

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