Motivators for learners of languages other than English in college elective courses in a monolingual social setting

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Abstract

Guided by the Second Language Motivational Self System (L2MSS) framework, this study examined to what extent the L2MSS components of ideal self, ought-to self, and learning experience described the motivation of learners who chose to enroll in college elective courses of modern languages other than English (LOTEs) in the monolingual social setting of Taiwan. Questionnaire surveys were conducted at the end of two consecutive semesters and learners were interviewed. Triangulation of survey and interview data suggested that a positive learning experience was the strongest variable in motivating effort. Although some classroom factors were known, others worth further exploration in instructional settings were pointed out. The ought-to L2 self was found to be an insignificant predictor with questionable validity. Instead, academic responsibility and instrumentality were found to be more relevant factors. Results on ideal self were less straightforward, suggesting that the ideal self for LOTEs may be qualitatively different from the English ideal self. Comparisons of data sets across time and learner groups indicated motivation did not change over time. By considering major L2MSS components and related constructs together, this study uncovered their relative adequacy in explaining LOTE motivation and suggested possible new perspectives for studying LOTE motivation in instructional settings.

Keywords: language learning motivation, languages other than English (LOTE), Second Language Motivational Self System (L2MSS), ideal L2 self, Taiwan

Introduction

Recent scholarship on L2 motivation indicates that current theories are loaded with findings from global English, which may be insufficient in accounting for the motivation for learning languages other than English (LOTEs) (e.g., Al-Hoorie, 2018; Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017; Oakes & Howard,

2019; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017). This language imbalance is even more pronounced when the factor of geographic area is compounded. More specifically, the leading locations where recent empirical studies of L2 motivation have been conducted are the Chinese-speaking areas of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China. However, the language studied in these areas has almost exclusively been English (Boo, Dörnyei, & Ryan, 2015, p. 151). Although this might seem to suggest that LOTE learning is a rare enterprise in these areas, recent reports have shown quite the opposite (e.g., Gao & Zheng, 2019). While much has been discussed about the fall of LOTE learning in the West and its underlying political and economic consequences, little is known about LOTE learning in other contexts.

At the center of recent scholarship on the inadequacy of English-laden motivation research in representing second/foreign language learning as a whole is the Second Language Motivational Self System (L2MSS) (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009). Through the lens of L2MSS, L2 learners' motivation can be explained by the gap between their current and future self images associated with the L2 in both the ideal (ideal self) and the obligatory (ought-to self) sense. In hindsight, L2MSS and its extensive adoption throughout the past fifteen years have been closely tied to the globalization of English as a lingua franca (ELF) around the world. In the 1990s, English started to gain popularity in schools due to the development of a more interconnected world. Some researchers began to discover the mismatch between their observations of L2 motivation and the then dominant Gardnerian socio-psychological theory (Gardner, 1985) of L2 motivation (see, for example, the response papers in *Modern Language Journal* in 1994). While Gardner's dichotomy of integrative and instrumental orientation provides insight for why L2 learners learn a language, it was not theorized to encapsulate a mandatory school subject that impacts students' future success. Additionally, English's original unique cultural association has been blurred in the transition from a national language to a lingua franca. This void, emerging as a natural consequence of our changing world, is filled by L2MSS mainly because it captures the essence of the high stakes of ELF, a feature that is not related to any other modern language. Now the distinction between ELF and LOTEs has started to emerge, bringing the issue of the survival of LOTE courses under the shadow of ELF in school curricula under the spotlight, and it seems that the reason L2MSS applies to ELF happens to be the reason why it may not explain LOTE motivation.

The current study, based at a university in Taiwan, addresses the issues discussed above. In a previous study, LOTE and ELF motivation were compared in a group of Taiwanese college students who took European, Southeast Asian, and Northeast Asian languages as electives (Huang, 2019). Initial findings suggested that learning experience best predicted LOTE motivation. To investigate further, the current study added a second-wave survey and collected interview data. It is hoped that the extent to which L2MSS can explain LOTE learning at different learning stages would become clearer when the following questions are answered:

1. What motivated college non-majors in learning LOTEs? Were there differences in motivation as learning progressed?
2. How did different motivators influence learners' reported effort?

Literature Review

Learning experience

L2MSS as a theory has the term "self system" in its label, but one of its three cornerstones—learning experience—is unrelated to a learner's self image. For this somewhat undertheorized construct,

Dörnyei (2019) contends that it "is not only a strong predictor of various criterion measures but is often the most powerful predictor of motivated behavior" (p. 19). In two recent reviews focusing on L2MSS-inspired studies, both Al-Hoorie (2018) and Mendoza and Phung (2018) found learning experience to be the strongest predicator of motivation among research reports. Similarly, Lamb (2017) reviewed studies on the interface of teaching and motivation and indicates that "most learners' early encounters with the second language still take place in classrooms, and these encounters may shape attitudes and determine students' willingness to invest further in the L2" (p. 301). Other studies separately focused on the various aspects of teaching, including the motivational influence of the teacher (Henry & Thorsen, 2018), peers (Kozaki & Ross, 2011), and course content (Busse & Walter, 2013) and pointed out their significance. Czisér, Kormos, and Sarkadi (2010) found classroom-related factors to consist of learner experiences in the learning group, the method of teaching and tasks used in class, as well as assessment. In their motivation model, Czisér *et al.* (2010) depicted the instructional setting as an independent circle overlapping the concentric circle of milieu and a myriad of learner-internal factors.

However, findings on the importance of learning experience as a motivator have been noted with reservation. For example, Mendoza and Phung (2018) acknowledge that learning experience may not have been as well scrutinized as the self concepts in survey research. Additionally, Csizér and Lukács (2010) point out that, for their learners of German and English, learning experience did not emerge as a significant latent dimension. In fact, most current survey instruments lump classroom-related factors together as one concept and little can be inferred about which features in the classroom experience it is exactly that motivate or demotivate and why.

Ideal self, integrativeness, and culture/community interest

Ideal self, integrativeness, and culture/community interest are three significant and partially overlapping constructs that have been extensively researched. Over the years, the concept of the ideal self has shown to be a robust predictor of motivation for English as well as for other languages across age groups and geographical areas (e.g., Csizér & Dörnyei 2005a; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; for a meta analysis, see Al-Hoorie, 2018).

Specifically on LOTEs, the ideal self has been found the major motivator for learners of German in Britain (Busse, 2013) and in Hungary (Czisér & Lukács, 2010) and learners of Mandarin in Hong Kong (Dörnyei & Chan, 2013). In a South Korean study (Kong *et al.*, 2018), it was found that the ideal self impacts on attitude, which in turn most influences intended effort, for commonly taught languages (English and Chinese), but notably not for those less-commonly-taught (Spanish and Arabic). Complicating the language commonplace dichotomy, recent studies on Anglophone expatriates learning Korean in Korea (Gearing & Roger, 2019) and Swedish ELF learners who have opportunities to practice English outside the classroom (Henry & Cliffordson, 2017) do not support the significance of the ideal self. For the former, the learners are believed to have rationalized their discontinuance by a lack of need and expectation (Gearing & Roger, 2019). For the latter, motivation is much less accounted for by the limited discrepancy between learners' current and ideal L2 selves.

Another interesting way to understand the LOTE-specific ideal self is to broaden its domains to go beyond the most familiar intrapersonal and career/education domains associated with L2 learning (Unemori, Omoregie, & Markus, 2004). In a study of two learners of Japanese in Australia, the learners' ideal L2 selves are also linked to the interpersonal and leisure domains of the future self (Nakamura, 2019). Such domains have rarely been discussed; but for learners who do not learn LOTEs for high-stake education and career opportunities, their ideal selves may well be better understood through these other lower-stake domains.

An antecedent of the ideal self in the evolution of theoretical constructs, integrativeness, is found to motivate learners of Russian, German, French, Italian, and English in Hungary (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005a, 2005b; Dörnyei & Clement, 2001) and learners of Spanish in the US (Hernández, 2006) in earlier studies. However, when integrative orientation is compared against the ideal self, Busse (2013) reports that it fails to predict motivation in learners of German. Moreover, a strong case against integrativeness is made based on survey data from Taiwanese ELF learners (Chen, Warden, & Chang, 2005; Warden & Lin, 2000).

Recent interest in LOTEs has made some researchers reconsider integrativeness. Some scholars believe that integrative orientation may well find itself resurfacing as an important source of motivation (Al-Hoorie 2017, p. 7) not subsumed under the ideal self (Gearing & Roger, 2019; Oakes & Howard, 2019). But it is also argued that motivation to learn LOTEs, except for heritage learners, is typically not integrative in English-dominant countries (Mendoza & Phung, 2018, p. 130). This inconsistency may be resolved with the weak form of integrativeness suggested by Oakes and Howard (2019). A neutral concept related to the weak form is culture/community interest. In fact, culture/community interest is the basis of the integrative motive, and this concept itself does not seem to involve the all-embracing inward identification (the ideal self) or outward involvement (integrativeness) with the L2. Particularly for LOTE learners in Asian contexts, it is found that cultural interest was the strongest predictor of effort put into the voluntary learning of Japanese, French, and German (Huang, Hsu, & Chen, 2015). In another study, Taiwanese LOTE learners' cultural interest also factored in as a significant predictor for intended effort (Huang, 2019).

The ought-to self and instrumental orientation

The ought-to self with its predictive validity is more equivocal than the ideal self. Some studies find its psychometric property to be less straightforward (Kormos & Csizér 2008; Lamb 2012); many others indicate that it contributes less to motivated behavior (e.g., Csizér & Kormos, 2009). In Al-Hoorie's (2018) meta-analysis, the ought-to L2 self's predictive validity is markedly lower than that of the ideal L2 self. LOTEs in particular, unlike ELF, generally do not impose a sense of obligation on the learners (Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017). In fact, learners may be faced with indifference or discouraging attitudes. Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie (2017) believe that the ought-to self may even have to be reconsidered as a self-dimension in L2MSS (p. 460). Some empirical studies suggest the obsolescence of the ought-to self in explaining LOTE motivation. Among them, Thompson (2017) makes a strong case against the ought-to self based on the particularly low ought-to-self scores found in learners of 34 different LOTEs in America. Unlike with English learning for which many learners feel both strong internal desire (the ideal self) and externally imposed necessity (the ought-to self), these LOTE learners possess strong internal desire but do not feel the same kind of obligation as their ELF-learning counterparts do. Similar conclusions are found with LOTE learners in Sweden and Poland (Oakes & Howard, 2019) as well as in Taiwan (Huang, 2019).

Nevertheless, some empirical evidence suggests the opposite regarding the ought-to self, especially in Asia. Two earlier studies in Taiwan discover learners of English to be motivated by instrumental orientation and course requirements, but not by other predictor variables (Chen *et al.*, 2005; Warden & Lin, 2000). A more recent study also finds the ought-to self to be a more prominent predictor of intended effort than is the ideal self (Huang & Chen, 2017). These results contradict most of those discussed earlier and may be related to the specific sociocultural milieu. As has been suggested in the coined term "Chinese imperative" (Chen *et al.*, 2005) referring to the Confucian tradition, students are usually expected to pursue academic success and perceive it as an obligation that, if fulfilled,

may honor their family (Huang & Chen, 2017).

With the above in mind, one is curious to see which wins out when the two elements, LOTEs (generally thought to have low ought-to self motivation) and Asians (high ought-to self) coexist. Current literature does not seem to provide an answer. A highly related concept is the instrumentalist view of L2 learning, which can be seen as the antecedent to the ought-to self and which contrasts with integrative orientation in Gardner's dichotomy (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991). In Asian contexts, because of the prominence of the ought-to self, instrumentality has sometimes been divided into the promotional and preventive forms. For middle school learners of English, preventive instrumentality is found to be more significant than the promotional one (Huang, 2017), but both forms of instrumentality are rejected as predictors of motivation for college LOTE learners (Huang, 2019). Based on the above, the role of instrumentality seems to be as unresolved as that of the ought-to self for LOTE learners.

Change of motivation over time

Among empirical LOTE studies concerning a change in motivation over one or two years in instructional settings, more decrease than increase has been observed. Reports of motivational decline include Japanese learners in the US from the Fall to the Spring semester (Samimy & Tabuse, 1992) and German, French, Italian, and Russian learners in Hungary (Dörnyei & Czisér, 2002) over seven years. In the latter, the four LOTEs are compared unfavorably with English as English became increasingly important as a lingua franca. Henry and Apelgren (2008) also find a decline in attitude to LOTEs and LOTE learning among learners of German, French, and Spanish from grade five to six. Likewise, German learners in the UK experience a significant motivational decrease in their first year of study (Busse, 2013). In Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant, and Mihic (2004), French learners in Canada experience moderate motivational change from the Fall to the Spring semester. More specifically, variables related to learning situations are more likely to change than those related to personal inclinations and are moderated by achievement, with higher achievers less likely to experience decreased motivation. An interesting combination of decrease in effort with increase in intent is observed in lower-level Japanese learners in the US within their first two years of study (Kondo-Brown, 2013) and German learners in the UK (Busse & Walter, 2013). On the other hand, increased motivation is found with college students in the US learning the less commonly taught languages of Chinese, Japanese, and Russian over the course of a year; this is attributed to students' strong wish to challenge themselves and their sense of accomplishment (Ueno, 2005).

Methods

The context and the participants

The research site was a university in northern Taiwan. It regularly offers LOTEs as electives to non-LOTE-majors. After taking into consideration learner size and geographical vicinity, eight LOTEs were selected for this study, namely Spanish, German, French, Japanese, Korean, Thai, Vietnamese, and Malay/Indonesian. The three European languages have long been popular, partly because of their early establishment in colleges since the 1980s and teaching staff being readily available. Japanese has been a familiar LOTE, too, because of historical and geographical reasons. Korean did not become a popular LOTE to study until a decade or more ago when its entertainment culture started to spread. The Southeast Asian languages were also not present in curricula at any level of education until around 2005 when both the numbers of inbound migrant workers and outbound business operations had multiplied, creating a demand for language talents.

A total of 337 participants completed surveys at both the ends of Fall and Spring semesters. Table 1 is a summary of the population and sample in terms of distribution between gender (male and female), seniority of study (first and second year in LOTE learning), and languages. Among them, the backgrounds of those 22 who completed interviews are summarized in Table 2.

Table 1 *Distribution of survey participants and the population they represented*

		By Gender		By Year of Study		By Language Clusters			Total
		Male	Female	1st year	2nd year	European	NE Asian	SE Asian	
Population	Number	362	890	1089	163	756	363	133	1252
	% Population	28.91%	71.09%	86.98%	13.02%	60.38%	28.99%	10.62%	100%
Sample	Number	74	263	288	49	189	101	47	337
	% Sample	21.96%	78.04%	85.46%	14.54%	56.08%	29.97%	13.95%	100%

Table 2 *Background of 22 interviewees*

Category	Number of interviewees in each subgroup
Seniority	1st-year learners: 14; 2nd-year learners: 8
Year in college	Sophomore: 3; Junior: 13; Senior: 6
LOTEs studied	Spanish: 3; German: 3; French: 3; Japanese: 3; Korean: 3; Thai: 2; Vietnamese: 2; Malay/Indonesian: 3
Majors	Psychology: 2; Accounting: 2; Diplomacy: 2; English: 2; Radio & TV: 1; Journalism: 1; Mass Communication: 1; Land Economics: 1; Public Finance: 1; Financial Management: 1; Spanish: 1; Philosophy: 1; Chinese Literature: 1; Law: 1; History: 1; Risk Management: 1; International Business: 1; Politics: 1

Instruments

Survey questionnaire

A questionnaire of 30 Likert-type items and a section requesting demographic information was developed based on past studies (e.g., Huang, 2017; Lamb, 2012). Gauged on a Likert-scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), the questionnaire items represented eight constructs. The rudimentary ones were the ideal self, the ought-to self, learning experience, and the criterion measure of intended learning effort. Four additional constructs were included because they had been found to be significant with similar learner populations. These included culture/community interest (Huang, 2019; Huang *et al.*, 2015), language learning attitude (Huang, 2019; Huang & Chen, 2017), instrumentality–promotion, and instrumentality–prevention (Huang *et al.*, 2015; Warden & Lin, 2000). The questionnaire was piloted with three student informants and their feedback helped the researcher refine the wording.

Reliability of constructs was examined through calculating Cronbach alpha values, which were between 0.65 and 0.95. To examine the validity, exploratory factor analysis was conducted. Parallel analysis with oblique rotation was chosen as the method to identify a number of factors. Among the eight constructs theorized, seven factors were extracted, cumulatively explaining 51.8% of the variance. The eigenvalues of the first six factors ranged from 5.040 for the first factor of learning experience to 1.564 for the sixth factor of instrumentality–promotion. The seventh factor—ought-to self, despite having a less satisfactory eigenvalue of 0.682, was retained because of its theoretical significance. Learning attitude, one of the eight hypothesized constructs, did not load onto a single factor; its three items were therefore excluded from the analysis. It is likely that the original operationalization of "learning attitude" to some extent overlaps with that of "learning experience" (Dörnyei, 2019). The items remained for analysis and the reliability indices of constructs are presented in Appendix A.

Interview guide

An interview guide was designed by consulting questions used in relevant interview studies (Czisér *et al.*, 2010; Ueno, 2005; Yaghoubinejad, Zarrinabadi, & Ketabi, 2017), piloted with two student informants, and modified accordingly. It started with a warm-up question that asked the interviewee to reflect on and describe his/her LOTE experience. Interviewees were then guided to first talk about incidents when their energy, time, and effort spent studying LOTEs were especially high and low, provide contextual detail for these incidents, elaborate on internal feelings, and relate the incidents to whatever factors they considered relevant. Interviewees were then directed to go from specific incidents to the bigger picture, describing observations of personal motivation development and contemplating on possible influences. "Why," "how so," or "could you elaborate on that" were intermittently asked to probe further. Each interview was wrapped up with a question about the prospect of further LOTE study and the underlying reasons.

Procedures

Survey data collection and analysis

The researcher visited all LOTE courses during session breaks to invite students to participate. A QR code on the invitation flyer allowed easy access to the online questionnaire portal. In their free time, invitees could read the researcher's message, provide consent, and spend fifteen minutes responding to the questions. Incentives were provided using a raffle drawing system to randomly choose and award one-fifth of respondents with a movie ticket or a convenience store voucher of similar value. Research ethics were carefully adhered to, and participants were ensured of their anonymity and freedom to withdraw at any time. To answer the research questions, descriptive statistics, ANOVA, correlation, and regression analysis were used.

Interview data collection and analysis

Interviews were conducted one-on-one in a small reserved room on campus. Interviewees were sent the questions via email ahead of time. The language of communication was the learners' L1 Chinese, with occasional code-switching involving English or the relevant LOTEs. All sessions, lasting from 30 to 60 minutes each, were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim into documents, the sum of which was about 100,000 Chinese characters. Both the researcher and a trained assistant listened to the audios and reviewed the transcripts independently to ensure accuracy.

For coding, one interview from each of the eight LOTEs was analyzed before codes were

established. Using a grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1997), the researcher and her assistant held frequent discussions during this period to explore possible systems of coding, which were then trialed against the eight interviews and modified iteratively. Labels were created as themes were observed; some categories were further divided into subcategories while others were lumped together as the number in each category increased or decreased. After several rounds of modification, the unit for data segmentation was set at the complete thought/incident level, and category labels were finalized. In four pieces of data, the thought/incident was considered relevant to more than one category and was assigned codes accordingly. Each thought/incident was counted into a category only once even when there were multiple mentions by the same interviewee. Three examples of coded data are shown in Appendix C.

Results

1. What motivated college non-majors in learning LOTEs? Were there differences in motivation as learning progressed?

Quantitative results

Descriptive statistics are presented in Figure 1. The four bars represent first-year learners in the Fall (1y-F), first-year learners in the Spring (1y-S), second-year learners in the Fall (2y-F), and second-year learners in the Spring, respectively. Variables were arranged in descending order from left to right based on their means. As can be seen, the four subgroups were generally similar within each variable, but differences among variables were unambiguous. Those constantly rated at 4 and above were culture/community interest and learning experience. Intended effort, the criterion variable, followed with means at around 4. For the next level, ideal self, ought-to self, and instrumentality–promotion had means around 3.50 (3.30 to 3.64). Rated uniformly at the bottom across four cohorts of data with means below the midpoint (2.44 to 2.64) was instrumentality–prevention.

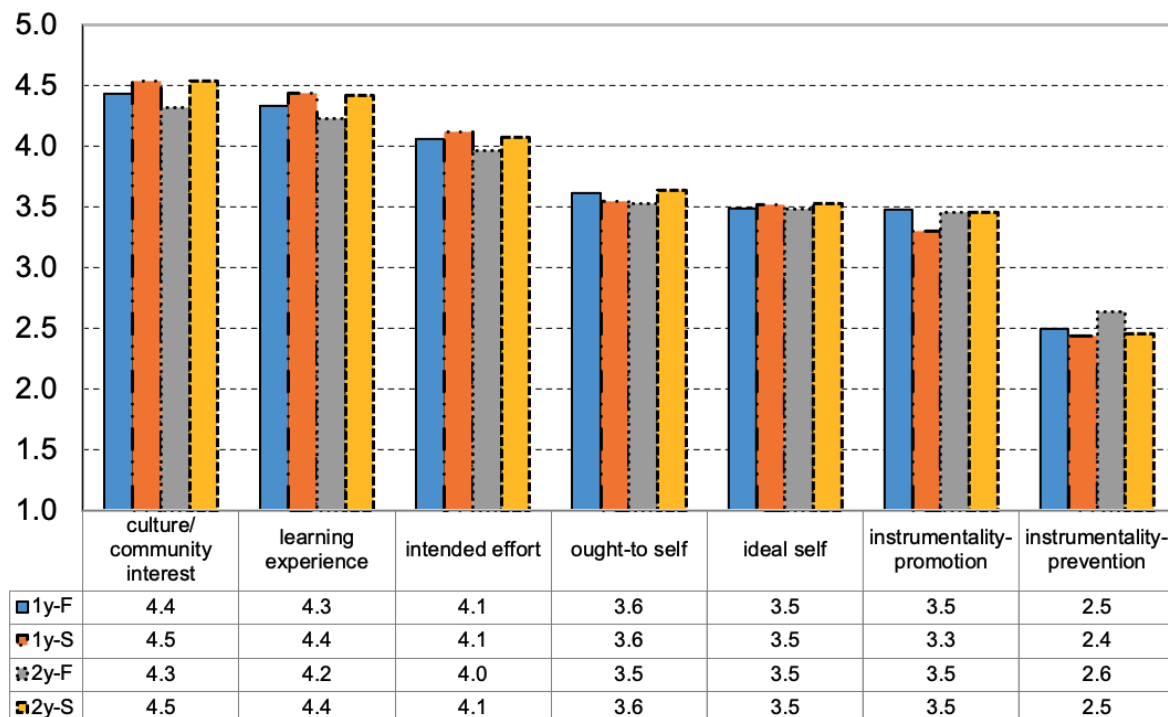|	culture/ community interest	learning experience	intended effort	ought-to self	ideal self	instrumentality- promotion	instrumentality- prevention
1y-F	4.4	4.3	4.1	3.6	3.5	3.5	2.5
1y-S	4.5	4.4	4.1	3.6	3.5	3.3	2.4
2y-F	4.3	4.2	4.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	2.6
2y-S	4.5	4.4	4.1	3.6	3.5	3.5	2.5

Figure 1 *Means of variables by year and semester*

The four parts of data were compared to examine the stability/variability of motivational patterns. A two-factor split-plot multivariate ANOVA was performed with two levels of learner seniority (first- vs. second-year) as independent measures and two levels of survey time (Fall vs. Spring) as repeated measures. No significant multivariate effect was observed by any source of variation; seniority groupings: Pillai's trace= .0017, $F(1, 334) = .286$, $p = .751$; survey time: Pillai's trace = .0036, $F(1, 334) = .600$, $p = .550$; seniority groupings x survey time: Pillai's trace = .0024, $F(1, 334) = .404$, $p = .668$. That is to say, motivation between the Fall and Spring semester did not change significantly and motivation between the first- and second-year learners did not differ.

Qualitative results

Interview data was analyzed for motivation/effort-related references as well as the sources and directions of influence. More than 50% of motivational factors were related directly to classroom learning. The bulk of classroom factors were divided into four types. The rest was unrelated to the classroom, accounted for nearly half of the data, and was represented in six categories. An overview of all ten factors with their relevant frequencies and percentages, divided by the direction of motivational influence, is presented in Table 3. Nearly two thirds of the influence were positive, but a small percentage was unidentifiable. In the four types of classroom factors, none appeared to be a predominant motivational force. Percentage-wise, six of these ten factors had a relatively higher presence, ranging from 10% to 18% each. The other four factors, though distinctive, accounted for only a total of 15%.

Table 3 *Summary of factors influencing motivation based on interview data*

Factors Influencing Motivation	Positive		Negative		Neutral			Total
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Classroom Related	65	33	32	16	8	4	105	54
Teachers and peers	28	14	4	2	2	1	34	17
Materials and tasks	16	8	17	9	2	1	35	18
Learning assessment	11	6	11	6	4	2	26	13
Language use opportunities	10	5	0	0	0	0	10	5
Beyond Classroom	56	29	32	16	3	2	91	46
Aspiration—pragmatic	21	11	3	2	1	1	25	13
Aspiration—non-pragmatic	13	7	6	3	1	1	20	10
Logistic affordance	6	3	21	11	0	0	27	14
External values	8	4	2	1	0	0	10	5
Culture	6	3	0	0	1	1	7	4
Past experience	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	1
Total	121	62%	64	33%	11	6%	196	100%

   2. How did different motivators influence learners' reported effort?

Quantitative results

Correlations between intended effort and other variables were examined to understand the strength of their linear relations (see Table 4). In a pattern similar to what was found in descriptive statistics,

those showing high correlation with intended effort were learning experience and culture/community interest. These are the same variables with the highest values on the left in Figure 1. At the next level were ideal self and instrumentality–promotion. Least correlated to intended effort were ought-to self and instrumentality–prevention.

Table 4 *Correlation coefficients between intended effort and other variables*

	Points in learning trajectory			
Intended learning effort	1y-F	1y-S	2y-F	2y-S
Learning experience	.735**	.685**	.727**	.632**
Culture/community interest	.589**	.551**	.610**	.619**
Ideal self	.504**	.496**	.501**	.352*
Instrumentality-promotion	.419**	.326**	.223*	.577**
Ought-to self	.004	.416**	-.063	.384*
Instrumentality-prevention	.047*	.133*	.101*	-.026

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$

To examine the relative strength of predictor variables, multiple regression models were built with intended effort as the dependent variable for first-year learners in both semesters. Second-year learner data, because of the small number, were not analyzed with regression. For the two regression models, examinations of residuals were performed and assumptions on normality, independence, and homogeneity variance were not violated. Results, as summarized in Table 5, were two models with adjusted R^2 at .62 and .54, respectively. Learning experience contributed most in explaining intended effort with standard beta values near .50 in both models. Both culture/community interest and ideal self factored in at the $p<.001$ level too, but their beta values were consistently much lower, ranging from .16 to .21. Instrumentality–promotion and instrumentality–prevention, although retained in both models, were not significant predictors of intended effort. The ought-to self, despite being kept in the analysis, was excluded altogether in both regression models.

Table 5 *Multiple regression models*

	First-year learners (n=288)			
	Fall Semester		Spring Semester	
	Std.β	S.E.	Std.β	S.E.
Learning experience	.471***	.039	.479***	.033
Ideal self	.162***	.036	.157***	.029
Culture/community interest	.211***	.048	.187***	.042
Instrumentality–promotion	.048	.034	-.008	.029
Instrumentality–prevention	.003	.022	.037	.021
Adjusted R²	.62		.54	

***$p < .001$

Qualitative results

Classroom-related motivational sources

Whereas the five survey items on learning experience were positive statements about LOTE courses

stated in very general terms that did not address any aspects of the learning experience in particular, interview data provided thicker information and revealed the specifics of the learners' classroom experiences. Four distinctive items are described below.

i)   Materials and tasks: This category, ranking highest among the ten factors at 18%, was divided roughly equally between positive and negative influences. On the positive side, interviewees mentioned materials as suitable, interesting, informative, and organized; tasks as authentic, practical, entertaining, challenging, and enabling; some thus provided a sense of achievement. When functioning as a demotivator, materials were viewed as archaic, unclear, disorganized, or too difficult; with some derided with specific complaints of not having accompanying audio and relevant resources. Demotivating tasks were described as monotonous, confusing, boring, disengaging, and frustrating, and thus lowered learners' intention to expend effort.

ii)   Teachers and peers: Ranked second at 17%, this category had its influence primarily on the positive side. Teachers were largely described as motivators of effort and as being clear, organized, enthusiastic, encouraging, good role models of LOTE learning, cultural ambassadors, information sources of fun LOTE-related tidbits and events, and effective progress monitors. Peers were mentioned less frequently, but they generally endowed learners a sense of belonging, comradeship, and responsibility. In the few cases of negative influence, teachers were compared unfavorably against other language teachers and peers were described as high achievers and hence inflicting pressure.

iii)   Assessment and evaluation: Assessment, representing 13% of the data, worked equally in the positive and negative directions, with major assessment events such as midterm and final examinations more often mentioned than smaller quizzes. Effort was induced mainly because assessment was tied to scores. Some students desired high scores that could lead to better opportunities for further academic pursuit. For others, they strived for high scores simply as part of self-expectation. Negative influence from assessment, when expressed, was usually intense and involved pressure. Much of this resulted from disappointment associated with less-than-satisfactory performance and lower-than-expected scores. Two interviewees reported feeling tricked and upset when tests were not what they had expected or had been told they would be like.

iv)   Language use opportunities: Opportunities to use the language stood out as one independent category, mentioned by ten of the 22 interviewees as a motivator, with its influence being exclusively positive. For these learners, being able to read, hear, and understand the LOTE input provided in class and to engage in information exchange and two-way communication gives them a sense of meaning, fulfillment, and empowerment. Some authentic communication opportunities were deliberately arranged by the teachers, and these were often exciting incidents prompting students to invest time and effort.

Motivational sources beyond the classroom

The six out-of-classroom factors were divided into internal and external forces. The following discussion started with the three internal ones.

i)   Aspiration–pragmatic: This type of motivational source refers to beliefs related to the utilitarian value of language, or lack thereof, at present and in the future. Distribution of data on the positive and negative side was a 21 to 3 ratio. The prospect of using the language and

having an additional competitive edge against most others who do not speak LOTEs was often declared with enthusiasm, even though the expected proficiency level was generally not high. A small number of interviewees expressed that LOTEs were of little practical value. It is to be noted that, for the same language, learners sometimes diverged in their perceptions regarding its utilitarian value.

ii)   Aspiration–non-pragmatic: Based on the figures in Table 3, this category ranked sixth among the ten motivators, with positive influence found about twice as much as negative. Learners' motivation was articulated as a pure interest for no particular reason, a challenge to oneself, a sense of curiosity, or an intention to keep doing well at what had been initiated. Reference to aspiration for the future was present but scarce, and mostly vague, ideal, and versatile, rather than a strong "climbing-the-career-ladder" mentality. For example, one interviewee alleged that he expected to do volunteer work for local Indonesian migrant workers with the language learned. Such allusions to the future, however, were often accompanied by uncertainty with phrases such as "maybe", "not quite sure", and "if chances arise". On the negative side, some interviewees expressed lack of motivation with no particular reason using such phrases as "I just lost my interest" or "Now I realize this is not for me."

iii)   Past experience: This refers to the learners' learning of the LOTE and cultural encounters in the past that prompted the intention to engage in LOTE learning.

While the above three motivators are more internally rooted, the next three are external forces. The most prominent one is logistic affordances taking up 14% of the data. The other two are more familiar motivational constructs akin to culture/community interest and family/social influence.

iv)   Logistic affordance: In terms of number, this category ranked first among the six beyond-the-classroom factors, having almost four times a negative influence than a positive one. Logistic affordance refers to one's various engagements and prioritizing among them, including academic workload, extracurricular activities, and part-time jobs. When everything in the temporal and physical environment is supporting and not conflicting with LOTE learning, there is positive influence. Basically, the availability of LOTE courses at a time slot fitting personal schedules and a vacancy for enrollment seemed to be the prerequisite for formal LOTE learning to occur in the first place, as many of these learners reported not getting a chance to take the course until their junior or senior years because, according to the university's regulations, the more senior students were given privilege over freshmen and sophomores in competing for the limited seats. Logistics worked both ways too. When conflicts between LOTE learning and other priorities were mentioned, they often sounded like excuses working against LOTE learning effort. Examples of negative influences included skipping classes owing to other activities and fatigue caused by the early hours of classes. However, one interviewee opted for her elective LOTE over a required course in the Spring term when there was a schedule conflict because, as she said, "language learning needs continual effort and the other course can wait."

v)   Culture: Interest in the LOTE-related culture and community influenced motivation positively for the most part, but it accounted for only 4% of the data.

vi)   Social values: This category was similar to the motivational forces of the ought-to self, with influences coming from family and the society as a whole.

These six out-of-classroom motivators could be compared to and reframed under the two self

concepts of L2MSS. Relevant to the ideal self are both pragmatic and non-pragmatic aspirations as well as culture. The aspirations, however, seem to depict an ideal self that is not typical in existing literature in that this LOTE ideal self is less potent and that it is not tied with future success. Culture, a construct largely absorbed in the ideal self in L2MSS-inspired studies, although having been brought back to the spotlight in more recent LOTE research as integrativeness (e.g., Oakes & Howard, 2019), did not seem to be an important factor in the interview data presented. Although the ought-to self has been shown important in ELF students within the same and similar societal contexts, it does not seem to be the case here for these LOTE learners. Finally, unrelated to self concept is the factor of external logistic affordances. Although this factor may be nothing new to practicing educators, it has seldom been a point of discussion in language motivation studies, and the data suggest it is worthy of our attention.

Discussion and Implication

Results of both quantitative and qualitative analyses are combined in the following subsections to examine how LOTE learners' motivation may be explained.

Learning experience

Both quantitative and qualitative analyses clearly pinpoint the significance of learning experience as a LOTE motivator. It consistently received very high ratings from learners across time and seniority groups (averaging between 4.23 and 4.44 on a 5-point scale). Compared against all other constructs, it was most highly related to the criterion variable of intended effort (with correlation coefficients between .632 and .735). Its standard beta values in both regression formulae were near .50 (.471 and .479, both at the $p<.001$ level). Moreover, it accounted for 54% of the motivational influences in the interview data. These results support previous studies that find learning experience to be the strongest predictor of L2 motivation (e.g., Al-Hoorie, 2017; Lamb, 2017; Mendoza & Phung, 2018). Given that the current LOTE learning happened in an instructional setting in a monolingual social milieu, the results are not surprising. After all, the LOTE classrooms were the learners' main, if not exclusive, source of LOTE contact and experiences. More noteworthy is the magnitude and the multidimensionality observed. Although other motivators, such as the ideal self, were also significant in regression models, the comparative importance of learning experience is shown by its omnipresence in all data types and its much higher weighting compared to other variables.

While the five items in the survey instrument describe learning experience in very general terms, its multidimensionality was uncovered through analysis of the interview data. Consistent with previous findings, it was found that teachers play an important role in motivating learners (Henry & Thorsen, 2018; Lamb, 2017). Also included in the human factor are peers. Of similar importance as the human factor, given the amount of data, are materials and learning tasks, a classroom factor also previously discussed (Busse & Walter, 2013). Two additional factors were given much less focus in the past, namely learning assessment and language use opportunities.

Assessment is an integral part of formal classroom learning. Even in elective courses where enrollment is a choice, institution mandates require students to be assessed by the instructor through assignments and examinations, eventually awarding a score on student report cards that are oftentimes compared with those of other students. Despite its intuitive significance, assessment has seldom been in the spotlight of L2 motivation research. For example, in theories like Czisér *et al.*'s (2010) nested systems motivation model, assessment as a component is only very briefly mentioned. The interview data in the current study reveal that assessment is no less important than two ideal-self-related learner aspirations. Some students made high grades a personal goal, which may

have led to other high-stake consequences and were therefore positively driven by score-related requirements. Although this phenomenon did not apply to all, students in this and other institutional and cultural contexts may well be driven by similar mindsets to pursue a higher grade-point average. For classroom teachers who want to boost, or at least maintain, their students' motivation, assessment is usually more than a tool to evaluate learning outcomes. Data in this study also suggest that assessment could demotivate when it failed to set students up for success.

Among the ten factors identified, language use opportunities in the classroom as a motivator represented just 5% of interview data, but its influence, as referred to by interviewees, was entirely positive. For these beginners, LOTE classes provided an environment for language skill practice that was not readily available outside the classroom. This suggests that offering language use opportunities in the LOTE classroom is beneficial. Additionally, such practice of engaging beginners in language use resonates with Ushioda's (2017) call to conceptualize learners as multilingual language users from early on rather than as deficient communicators (p. 477).

The above findings, together with Dörnyei's (2019) definition of learning experience—"the perceived quality of the learner's engagement with various aspects of the learning process" (p. 20) suggest directions for better understanding learning experience. Motivators identified in qualitative data revealed the spectrum of experience and engagement significant in instructional settings that teachers and researchers can pay attention to.

Ought-to self, instrumentality, and logistic affordance

Unlike other variables, the ought-to self construct in the current study did not obtain an eigenvalue above 1 in the validity check using factor analysis. Despite being retained for later statistical analysis, it did not remain in regression models. These results provide empirical support for Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie's (2017) doubt about it being a predictor of LOTE motivation. The ratings of the ought-to self (means: 3.53-3.64), however, were at a similar level with those of the ideal self (means: 3.48-3.53). Another variable at a similar level was also related to the ought-to self, i.e., instrumentality–promotion, but its partner variable instrumentality–prevention was especially low, reminding us of the very low ought-to self found in Thompson's (2017) American LOTE learners. Among these three variables, instrumentality–promotion had the highest correlation with intended effort, although none of them significantly predicted intended effort in regression models. Although perplexing, the combined results of insignificant predictive power and mid-level rating seem to suggest that these Asian LOTE learners were not much influenced by their ought-to-self images. At this point, interview results may shed some light on the issue in examining it further.

In the interview data, three of the six beyond-classroom factors were external to the learner. Among them, most related to the ought-to self were external values, but they account for only a small 5%. This seems to be consistent with most quantitative results, but it does not explain the mediocre ratings of the ought-to self and instrumentality–promotion. Clues were observed in two apparently ought-to-unrelated motivator categories, learning assessment and aspiration–pragmatic.

While learning assessment was a classroom factor, interviewees expressed desire to succeed that was not as much related to the particular LOTE as to the LOTE being a part in their academic record. For those who wanted a high GPA, such personal expectation was not discounted with courses taken being elective or the enrollment being voluntary. Past role-obligation and the ought-to L2 self arguments fitting for Asian ELF students do not seem strong in LOTE learning, but they linger. This ought-to self may be more academically oriented and has its unique role in instructional settings. Whether this academic ought-to self is specific to Asian and Confucian contexts or a more universal

feature applicable to other contexts is not clear. The fact that ought-to self was found insignificant in this study but significant in some earlier studies (e.g., Huang et al., 2015) may have to do with the demographics and proficiency level of participants. The participants in this study were, after all, non-LOTE majors taking elective courses without high-stakes obligation. Further studies are needed in this direction to help us ascertain the motivating role played by classroom assessment.

The other factor derived from interview data, aspiration–pragmatic, despite being an internal one, was closely related to instrumentality–promotion in survey data. While the obligatory ought-to L2 self was not factored in in regressions, instrumentality–promotion was more prominent, and it resembled the antecedent of the ought-to self—Gardner's instrumental orientation. This finding brings us back to one fundamental reason for much L2 learning, i.e., the language's utilitarian value and the learners' desire to obtain a competitive advantage brought about by this utilitarian value. Utilitarian, pragmatic, or instrumental, the values associated with using the LOTEs for real-life communication purposes, as opposed to those associated with ELF, may be less critical in defining one's future, and hence not obligatory and not ought-to.

A relevant but rarely discussed factor was beyond the boundary of self concepts. Logistic affordance, a motivating factor emerging from the *a posteriori* interview data types, was comparable in terms of data volume to both aspiration–pragmatic and learning assessment. This suggests its importance. Unlike classroom factors that are usually within the instructor's control or self-guides that are within the learner's mind, logistic affordance denotes environmental convenience or lack thereof for the learner, although it may still be subject to the learner's own interpretation. Educators may agree that when a student is highly motivated, nothing in the environment could be an obstacle to him or her, but very few learners are like that and this small group of dedicated learners, in fact, do not need much instructional assistance to flourish. For the average learner who is interested in learning a LOTE that is not widely acknowledged by the society around him/her, logistic affordance may have a bigger role to play than in an ELF situation. At the institution level, having enough course offerings at time periods to which learners can accommodate may be a prerequisite for LOTE learning to happen in the first place. Without this, even the most enthusiastic learners have to turn to other resources or simply give up. If promoting LOTE learning is an institutional policy, considering logistic factors for higher likelihood of students taking and continuing the lessons may be a worthwhile avenue to test out. Exactly how that could be achieved and how effective various measures are may need trials and deliberate communication with potential learners.

Ideal self and culture/community interest

Results regarding the ideal self, the central tenet of L2MSS, are less straightforward than the significance of learning experiences and the insignificance of the ought-to self. The ideal self was rated moderately by learners, a secondary predictor with statistical significance, but had only about one third the beta values of learning experience in the regression models. In the interview, learners' aspirations for the future, pragmatic and non-pragmatic, together accounted for less than a quarter of the data, which was less than half of those accounted for by the factors related to learning experience. The utilitarian, optional, additive, and low-stakes nature associated with LOTEs characterized the images learners had of their future self. These images were precarious and possibly produced a smaller, vaguer gap between the current and future LOTE selves than could their more dominant and durable English counterpart fashion for their English selves. For this reason, it seems that while the future LOTE self served to motivate learners, it did not motivate to the same degree and in the same way the English future self does for learning English. Therefore, LOTE instructors may be encouraged or be equipped with the skills to create a classroom milieu that is conducive to fostering vivid, plausible, and more endurable ideal selves (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009).

The future self depicted in many interviews is related to many of the broader life domains of the ideal self previously indicated by Nakamura (2019), in which the learners imagined future possibilities with some, if not minimal, LOTE proficiency to travel, volunteer, and live abroad. Most of these images were not tied to apparent materialistic values. This is different from the English ideal self for most learners of English in which one speaks with native-like proficiency and outperforms others in the job market to achieve the kind of success generally accepted by social standards. These contrasting LOTE future images not following a linear life path seem to be in line with the characteristics of today's 'slash generation'. This probably offers an explanation for the discrepancies found in previous LOTE studies about the construct's significance (as discussed in the literature review section) as well as the unclear middle-ground picture painted in the current study regarding the ideal self.

Also expressed in the aspiration–non-pragmatic value category of interview data was a pure interest for no particular reason, that is, learning for learning's sake. Such intrinsic interest has long been considered the strongest form of motivation. It may have been less conspicuous in ELF because most learners nowadays start learning English before they even have a chance to think about whether or why they do it. However, LOTEs are a different story. If cultivating motivated learners is the goal, making potential intrinsically motivated learners well informed of learning opportunities, reaching out to them, and maintaining their pure sense of joy in the learning process may be efforts well spent and more cost effective than targeting indistinguishably to learners in general. More studies on this particular learner group may reveal interesting unknowns to the field.

Similar to the ideal self, culture/community interest was a perplexing variable when data was triangulated. It ranked the highest among all variables in surveys (means: 4.32-4.54), was comparable to the ideal self in predicting effort, but accounted for only 4% of the interview data. One possible explanation for this somewhat counterintuitive finding may have to do with how the concept of culture was represented differently in survey and in interview. The three items of "culture/community interest" in the survey referred to cultural objects, traveling, and the LOTE speaker community. These concepts also existed in interview data, but probably because they were often more strongly associated with and overshadowed by classroom factors of the teachers (who were often native speakers and introduced the culture on a regular basis) and the learning materials (which dealt with cultural objects and introduced travel information), they did not resurface as a robust beyond-classroom factor. While some scholars suggest reviving integrativeness (Al-Hoorie, 2017; Oakes & Howard, 2018) in theories of LOTE motivation, the intricate role of culture/community interest and whether and how it could be separated from other classroom factors in explaining LOTE learning warrants more study.

Stability of motivation over the course of learning

Findings from this study were similar to those of Gardner et al. (2004) in that motivation was maintained from semester to semester and between first- and second-year learners. It should be noted that these learners were not involved in major institutional culture exchange activities during the course of their LOTE studies. However, the second-year learner population regularly decreased to about 15% of the number in the first year. It could be speculated that those who stayed in the second year did not lose motivation. Although implying a causal relationship should be dealt with cautiously, the very high rating of learning experience over time coupled with its predictive power for motivated effort could suggest that the positive learning experience helped sustain these learners' motivation. In previous studies where a decrease of motivation was detected, reasons were often associated with classroom learning such as difficulty of content (Busse, 2013), lack of achievement

(Gardner *et al.*, 2004), and peer influence (Kozaki & Ross, 2011). In the current study, the data suggested that remaining learners were generally positive about their teachers, peers, course materials, and learning tasks.

To conclude, the role of the ideal self and culture/community interest in LOTE motivation seem not to be as clear as the significance of learning experience and the insignificance of the ought-to self. Rather than resorting back to integrativeness, we may need a fresh lens through which to observe the ideal self that seems to be qualitatively different from the ideal self commonly associated with English.

Limitations and Conclusion

The current study has the following limitations. First, the instruments used were self-reports in surveys and interviews and did not include more objective observations of learner actions or measurements of performance outcome. Another limitation lies in the attempt to examine L2MSS as a whole. At the same time when comprehensibility and comparability of parts of the theory was covered, the specifics of each construct and more in-depth analysis may have been sacrificed. Thirdly, the eight LOTEs were not separated in data analysis and the specificity of languages was not addressed.

Significance of the study lies in the following aspects. Empirically, the targeted population are non-major college learners who chose to learn LOTEs in an instructional setting; this added to the spectrum of LOTE learner types in existing literature. Methodologically, the study combined quantitative and qualitative data so they complemented each other and allowed a more thorough examination of L2MSS as a whole. Theoretically, unlike many recent studies that zoom in on details or consider expansions of particular motivational constructs, this study scrutinized and compared all major L2MSS parts to allow a holistic picture of LOTE motivation to emerge.

In conclusion, the three major components of L2MSS explained LOTE motivation to various degrees. Learning experience was most critical and involved multiple dimensions. Ought-to L2 self was a problematic construct and failed to motivate. Ideal self, falling between the two, was featured with alternative possibilities that are less pragmatic. Although participants in this study may not be typical, they represent many of today's LOTE learners. Their interest in language, culture, and broader possibilities in life was nourished by the elective LOTE courses offered to them. Whether such opportunities make a difference in these learners' future and whether educational investment in LOTEs is justified and should be advocated are yet to be discovered. If the answers are positive, formal LOTE courses seem a promising avenue in today's ever restrictive and hostile geopolitical climate.

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Appendix A

LOTE Motivation Questionnaire Items

<u>LOTE</u> was replaced by the language individual learners were studying, for example, Japanese.

Ideal Self (4 items; Alpha = .83, .85)
- I can imagine myself using LOTE for communicating with people.
- I can imagine myself using LOTE effectively for listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- When I think of my future career, I can imagine myself using LOTE.
- I can imagine myself using LOTE I am learning in future activities I engage in.

Ought-to Self (3 items; Alpha = .65, .70)
- Learning LOTE is something I should do.
- I should be able to use LOTE effectively for listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- Learning LOTE is important to me in order to gain the approval of my peers/teachers/family.

Learning Experiences (5 items; Alpha = .95, .93)
- I like the atmosphere of my LOTE classes.
- I find learning LOTE very interesting.
- I always look forward to LOTE classes.
- I really enjoy learning LOTE this semester.
- I would like to have more LOTE lessons.

Instrumentality-Promotion (3 items; Alpha = .76, .75)
- Learning LOTE can be important to me because I think it will someday be useful in making money or getting a good job.
- Learning LOTE is important to me because I need it for further studies.
- Learning LOTE is important to me in order to achieve a special goal (e.g. to get a degree or scholarship).

Instrumentality-Prevention (3 items; Alpha = .85, .84)
- If my LOTE ability is poor, I may be viewed negatively by others.
- Learning LOTE is necessary for me because I don't want to get a poor score in proficiency tests.
- Learning LOTE is important to me because I would feel ashamed if I got bad grades.

Culture/community Interest (3 items; Alpha = .76, .67)
- I like the LOTE-related songs, magazines, newspapers, or books, etc. that tell me more about its culture.

- I want to travel to LOTE-speaking countries.
- I want to make friends with LOTE speakers.

Intended Learning Effort (6 items; Alpha = .87, .83)

- If a LOTE course is offered in the future, I would like to take it.
- I am working hard at learning LOTE.
- Compared with other subjects, I am more willing to spend time studying LOTE.
- Compared with my classmates, I think I study LOTE relatively hard.
- Even if I am not required, I am willing to learn LOTE.
- When I have a problem about LOTE, I immediately ask for help.

Appendix B

Interview Guide

1. What motivated you to learn the languages?
2. How do you spend your time learning the languages? Please provide examples.
3. How do you usually feel when you learn the languages? Please give in-class and after-class learning examples respectively.
4. What do you consider as the most important factors in learning the languages? Why?
5. What do you consider as the most difficult challenges? Why?
6. What are your short-term (within two years) and long-term (five years and beyond) goals for the languages you study? Why?
7. What do you know and think about the native speakers of these languages and their communities?
8. What kind of person do you think you will become? What roles do the languages you are learning play in your future?

Appendix C

Three examples of complete thoughts/incidents and codes assigned

(1)   Q: Other than that, anything else that prompted you to learn Indonesian?
       A: I guess it's the population. There are 300 million speakers
       Q: Yes…
       A: I think that's no fewer than Chinese or English, so I just took it. It may be good for my future.

   Excerpt (1) from interviewee #9 was classified as aspiration–pragmatic having a positive influence.

(2)   A: Frankly speaking, I think for the whole semester I was not very motivated. Every time I came to the classroom (I was like) a blank sheet…
       Q: Why?
       A: Others all seemed to have previewed and reviewed everything, and I was like not having done anything.
       Q: Why?
       A: I had no time. I was too busy. Even when I got up very early to study, I just couldn't finish the review.

   Excerpt (2) from interviewee #18, a Japanese learner, was classified as logistic affordance (lack of) having a negative influence.

(3)   A: As long as there are examinations, there is pressure.
        Q: Right.
        A: And grades, how do I say this…I don't think I did well on tests.
        Q: Yes?
        A: And compared to my classmates, my grades made me feel…I think I didn't do well...and I have a desire to do better next time.
        Q: So that made you work harder?
        A: Yes…because I care…care much about my grades.
Excerpt (3) from interviewee #8, a Vietnamese learner, was given two codes: 1) learning evaluation/positive influence and 2) teachers and peers/positive influence.