Expanding the Gardnerian model of motivation

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The Gardnerian framework of language learning motivation draws considerable attention from both language researchers and instructors. However, relatively few attempts have been made to expand the framework. In an effort to improve how motivation is assessed and identified, this article presents two perceived shortcomings to the popular Gardnerian model of language learning motivation as well as two suggestions that may improve our understanding and use of the motivation concept. These suggestions include moving away from the useful yet restrictive integrative/instrumental dichotomy by incorporating orientations uncovered in specific language learning locales as well as abandoning the "snapshot" picture of motivation that ultimately fails to capture temporality inherent in language learners' goals.

ガードナー博士が提唱する外国語学習に対するモチベーションの構想は、言語学者や語学教師からかなり注目されている。しかしながら、その構想をより発展させる試みがほとんどなされていない。モチベーションに対する考察・分類を向上させ、議論を促す狙いで、本論文では、人気を博すガードナー博士のモデルに欠落していると思われる点をあえて二点指摘し、モチベーションの概念への理解をより深めるために二つの提案を試みる。提案の一つ目は、特定言語学習において適用されている分類を取り入れることによって、有用であるが、制限的なintegrative/instrumentalの二分法から離れること。二つ目は、言語学習者の目標の中に存在する一時性を最終的に捕えることのできない「寸見」を止めることだ。

Since the 1950s, language acquisition researchers and practitioners have spent an increasing amount of time, energy, and consideration on language learning motivation (hereafter, LLM) in an effort to construct a model that predicts and encourages proficiency in learning. By the 1990s, LLM and other affective factors became concepts of such intense interest that they briefly appeared to be *the* key elements to the language teaching and learning process. Unfortunately, such optimism proved premature.

Although the topic of motivation has become increasingly popular with researchers and teachers, relatively few have attempted to expand current LLM models so that they may more clearly depict learners' motivation

as developed and expressed in their own particular learning locales. One possible reason for this is a general willingness to permit the most common LLM model – the Gardnerian socio-educational model – to go unchallenged. Put simply, this multifaceted model includes and depicts *integrative* and *instrumental motivation orientations*, the former arising from a learner's desire to enter into the target language and interact with native speakers, the latter stemming from a more utilitarian basis (i.e., for test taking or job use). As applicable as these orientations may be in some situations, it is speculated that an uncritical acceptance of these terms has caused them to become so commonplace and readily relied upon in the literature and conversation that it seems as though (a) these are the only two orientations learners may possess and (b) stating learners' orientations is an end in itself (i.e., stating motivation orientations is all that is required; what practitioners do with this information is irrelevant). These do not, in fact, sum up all possible motivation orientation types, nor do they adequately represent the broader temporal spectrum that may exist behind learners' motivation.

In an attempt to also expand the motivation model that others have viewed as useful yet restrictive (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 1994a, 1994b; Oxford & Shearin, 1994) and to provide a fresh perspective on the topic, this article will first illuminate perceived shortcomings behind the Gardnerian LLM model and illustrate why it requires expansion. Second, it will present suggestions on how to improve our understanding and use of motivation as a concept.

The Gardnerian LLM Model: Holes in the Framework

There is little doubt that the pioneering work of R. C. Gardner and associates has simultaneously sparked interest in and charged second language researchers to further explore the many dimensions involved with LLM. Indeed, although the list of those who speculate on, theorize about, and conduct research in the area of LLM is extensive (see Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994; Clément & Kruidenier, 1983; Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 1994a; Gardner & Smythe, 1975; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Skehan, 1991), it was Gardner and Lambert's 1959 article *Motivational Variables in Second Language Acquisition* and later their 1972 book entitled *Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning* that effectively cemented the authors as the founding fathers of and leaders in the LLM field.

The cement has proven quite hard to crack. Those like Au (1988) who challenged Gardner's approach to LLM assessment have only met stiff rebuttals (see Gardner, 1988). It took several years before anyone else voiced support in favor of improving what appeared to many to be a positive yet still incomplete motivation model. In following calls for expanding Gardner's socio-educational model of motivation (see Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 1994a), Oxford and Shearin (1994) maneuvered a call to expand the model of LLM, albeit warily. Their tactic was to suggest various ways the LLM model *might* be extended, thereby quietly yet cogently moving the model forward.

Their call was partially successful. While some of their ideas (e.g., incorporating motivational constructs and developmental theories from other fields) led down new and exciting avenues of research, a decade later, Gardner's

position on the subject has essentially remained unchanged. In his defense, Gardner has impressed upon instructors and researchers that "motivation is a complex phenomenon, and though the reasons or the goals [of a learner] are part of it, it is the motivation that is responsible for the [learner's] success" (Gardner, 2001, p. 16). In other words, while orientations are not without consequence, a person's effort and desire to learn are far more important. In fact, Gardner has even shown that the existence of a motivation orientation, be it integrative or instrumental, can still influence learners' second language learning more so than for those not so motivated (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991).

Gardner (2001) has also admitted that there could be other factors and variables in the language learning situation spurring motivation, thereby causing the integrative and instrumental motivation orientations to lose their uniqueness. However, while positive correlations between these two orientations were found long ago (see Clément, Gardner, & Smythe, 1977; Gardner & Smythe, 1975), Gardner's refusal to explore and research learners' other possible reasons for language learning – such as those described by Oxford and Shearin – have left some like Dörnyei (1994b) wondering if a private agenda exists behind his research.

Some researchers have questioned the strict Gardnerian model of motivation and even abandoned it because the language learning locale under examination would not support such a limited number of orientations. For instance, Dörnyei (1990) questioned the integrative/instrumental dichotomy because it appeared odd that Hungarian English language learners would feel compelled to enter a target-language culture of which they had only second-hand knowledge. Benson (1991) examined the attitudes and motivation of Japanese university students and extended the Gardnerian duality by adding a third "personal" motivation orientation because of identified language learning reasons that could not realistically be categorized as either integrative or instrumental. Others have also rejected the dichotomy, either because other orientations were empirically revealed (cf. Clément & Kruidenier, 1983; Cooper & Fishman, 1977) or because of disappointment that the dichotomy fails to adequately describe learners in specific contexts (cf. Teweles, 1995).

Researchers may find this dichotomy limiting because Gardner has mainly researched motivation in *second* rather than *foreign* language learning contexts. As much of his research, especially his early formative studies, examined native English speakers learning French in Canada, it is intuitive to imagine that integrative and instrumental motivation orientations would most likely be the strongest or most apparent because of the learners' proximity to French speakers and the financial and other incentives to learn French, respectively. The work of Dörnyei, Benson, and others, however, point to the necessity of expanding the model so that it identifies varied and more context-relevant motivation orientations for learners who are not directly exposed to native speakers of the target language. In short, although Gardner would agree that motivation orientations and goals for learning are not unvaried and static across language learning locales (see below), it is nevertheless the case that a more comprehensive model of motivation that *incorporates* rather than simply *acknowledges* different orientations based on language learning context has long been needed but has yet to appear.

Researchers may also perceive deficiency in the dichotomy because of Gardner's insistence upon integrativeness as being one of the key variables to motivation. While Gardner does propose a broad view of motivation that includes the three aspects of *desire* (to achieve the goal of learning the language), *effort* (in learning the language), and *favorable attitudes* (toward the language), the model to which he subscribes and promotes is essentially weighted because it is composed of *integrativeness*, *attitudes toward the learning situation*, and *motivation* (all of which comprise *integrative motivation* as a construct). Integrativeness as a variable in language learning holds a prominent place in his socio-educational model, largely because of his insistence that language learning, unlike other school subjects, requires the learner to adopt action and thought patterns congruent with those of the target culture. Gardner (2001) justifies his inclusion and continued use of this *integrativeness* variable (and not, for instance, *instrumentality*) in his model by insisting that while it is possible to incorporate other motivational variables, the basic structure of the model would nevertheless be maintained, and he uses his past research (e.g., Tremblay & Gardner, 1995) to support his claim.

A second perceived shortcoming of the popular Gardnerian model, over and above the limiting number of orientations, is that it labels a language learner as being integratively or instrumentally motivated *for a specific moment in time*. For instance, Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (A/MTB) is meant to ascertain learners' *integrativeness*, *attitudes toward the learning situation*, and *motivation* at the time of battery administration. While the battery may be suitable for some assessment situations, it does not provide a complete picture of learners' motivation to learn because it may not always be clear to either learners or researchers if the answers to the questions relate to learners' proximal or distal language learning goals.

For instance, the A/MTB presents items to be rated that are similar to the following:

> *Studying French can be important to me because it will allow me to participate more freely in the activities of French Canadians.*

Based on the phrasing of this item, even if learners assert that they "strongly agree" with the statement, it is unclear exactly where their goals lie. Does this item tap their proximal goals (i.e., if learners know French *now* they will be able to participate more freely) or distal goals (i.e., in the future *after having studied*, knowledge of French will allow for participation in the activities of French Canadians)? The answer is elusive, yet the temporal distinction remains crucial. Gardner (1985) defines language learning orientation as a class of reasons for learning a language, that is, as the *long-term* goal(s) behind a person's language learning endeavors, but it cannot be assumed all learners only possess distal language learning goals or that they consider their goals to be distal in nature. There is also no guarantee that learners will complete the A/MTB with only their long-term goals in mind. It is therefore unwise for researchers to assume learners will only provide answers that reflect distal goals for language learning. In fact, Gardner's socio-educational model of motivation, while the most commonly known and used model that incorporates the A/MTB as a means of motivational assessment, has been

labeled a "snapshot" view of motivation that does not take into account potentially important temporal dimensions of motivation.

For example, Rubrecht's (2004) research with Japanese third year high school students revealed their motivation orientations to be highly instrumental if viewed only in the short term (i.e., in relation to the students' proximal goal of studying for and passing their university entrance examinations). However, because the students generally viewed their high school English studies as a foundation for their future use of English (e.g., for a future job), they ultimately evinced a wide range of goals that were neither all instrumental in nature nor all aimed at aiding them in passing their examinations. This research illustrates that motivation orientations, if they are meant to label or describe learners' reasons for language learning, should reflect both their proximal and distal learning goals. Consequently, motivational assessment measures must somehow take temporal differences in language learning goals into account.

Suggestions for Improving the Motivational Model

The current view of motivation as found in Gardner's model depicts motivation orientations as (a) essentially spanning a continuum between integrative and instrumental motivation orientation (with the former weighted) and (b) describing little more than the temporally ambiguous motivation orientation of learners at the time of questionnaire completion. If motivation is a "goal-directed process, determined by the kinds of purposes for which the learner *intends to use the language in the future* [italics added]" (Ushioda, 1996, p. 36), it makes sense to purposefully and clearly construct battery items or questionnaire questions that tap into and distinguish between learners' proximal and distal reasons for language learning and examine the relation these temporal aspects have with motivation.

There are ways, therefore, in which the LLM model may be improved. One way is by including other possible orientations into the model and into motivational assessment procedures. Gardner himself, in his early A/MTB work, explained that others who wish to use that test battery should make all necessary adjustments to make it fit the language learners and their language learning locale (as stated in the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery: Technical Report, 1985, retrieved via personal communication with Gardner). While it is realized that test instruments cannot be applied without first taking into account aspects specific to test settings, frameworks for assessing and describing learners' orientations should incorporate orientations uncovered by empirical research and, if applicable, move beyond the heretofore useful yet nevertheless restrictive integrative/instrumental dichotomy.

The second suggestion concerns constructing motivational models that reflect both proximal and distal motivation orientations. As mentioned above, Rubrecht's (2004) research presented results indicating that English language learners possessed proximal goals that (a) did not necessarily match their distal goals yet (b) were personally very important for them to complete. To give an example, one female student in that study was found to be instrumentally motivated because she strongly desired to study English in order to pass her university entrance examinations, yet she was also found to be integratively motivated because of her

desire to study English in the U.S. Her proximal motivation orientation was instrumental because her English language learning was for testing purposes, but the fascination she exhibited for English and for native English speakers caused her to want to enter into the target-language culture, thereby evincing her distal integrative motivation orientation. Which temporal aspect was the more compelling for this student – either the proximal or the distal – could not be determined. However, as a male student in the same study remarked that "unless I go to university, nothing [in my life] will get started," it remains obvious that neither language learners nor researchers can afford to summarily dismiss the potential effects proximal goals exert on learning. As learners naturally make temporal interpretations of questionnaire or battery items meant to assess their motivation orientations (the results of which are subject to *further* temporal interpretation by researchers), the factor of temporality must be accounted for and included in motivation orientation labels as well as in assessment procedures.

Considering the female student mentioned above to possess only one language learning motivation orientation (either instrumental or integrative) would hence be inadequate to accurately describe her motivation to learn English. In such cases where proximal and distal goals for learning another language significantly differ, it would make sense to adopt ways of describing motivation that clearly express aspects of the motivation behind these temporally disparate goals. Thus, one may say that a more appropriate description of her motivation orientation would be *instrumental/integrative*, where the former label describes the motivation behind her proximal goals, the latter her distal goals.

In fact, it would be of benefit to henceforth label *all* learners' motivation orientations in this temporal manner, even when there is no apparent discrepancy between the overall motivation orientation label for a learner's proximal and distal goals. For instance, a Japanese student who wishes to learn English for examination purposes may evince an instrumental motivation orientation for learning. She may also desire to work in Japan using English after university graduation but expresses no desire to travel, live abroad, or interact with native English speakers. In such a case, labeling her motivation as *instrumental/instrumental* would clearly depict her proximal and distal goals for learning English. Although the specific *instrumentality* behind her proximal and distal goals has changed, both goals can still nonetheless be considered instrumental.

Labeling learners' orientations this way would have two distinct advantages. First, it would show relative stability over time in learners' language learning motivation orientations. If necessary, the *kind* of orientation could be further specified. For instance, *instrumental-test/instrumental-job* would indicate an unchanged overall instrumental motivation orientation but with a change from learning the language for testing purposes to learning for a job or career. Second, should such a system of labeling be widely adopted, it would be easier to distinguish between learners described under the original Gardnerian system of orientation labeling that did not consider temporality behind motivation and the labels that use such a distinction. For example, if researchers henceforth begin making a concertive effort to use temporal distinctions in their labeling, should a learner be found in the literature to

be labeled with an integrative motivation orientation, then it would be clear that that label might be suspect, as temporality was likely not considered when assessing motivation orientation and because a series of interpretations were likely made by both learner and researcher.

Conclusion

Over the past several decades, advances have been made in our understanding of how second language learners go about the process of learning languages, and attempts have been made to comprehend motivation's role in this process. While researchers have succeeded in developing and refining the tools used to assess and study language learning motivation, one may still venture that the tools remain too restrictive and incomplete.

The chief aim of this article was to consider ways to expand what is currently the most popular LLM model so that researchers and teachers may ultimately improve how motivation is assessed and perceived. To this end, two shortcomings to the Gardnerian model of motivation were identified and two suggestions were presented in an attempt to enhance the understanding of LLM and the factors that should be included in the concept. Readers are encouraged to critically consider this and other motivation models of motivation so that increasingly mature models may come to be developed.

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