

**THE NOTIONS “INTEGRATIVE ORIENTATION” AND “INSTRUMENTAL ORIENTATION” AND THEIR EXTENTS OF RELEVANCE IN TODAY’S ELT MOTIVATIONAL STUDIES: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS**

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**Abstract**

This paper aims to give a critical analysis on the two prevailing notions introduced by Gardner and associates, Integrative Orientation and Instrumental Orientation, in today’s ELT researches. Dörnyei and associates argued that integrative and instrumental orientations are unable to capture learners’ fluctuations and complexity of motivation as the result of many factors from within learners and outside learners, who are also social beings in their respective environments. The two orientations also trigger misinterpretations among researchers as they are often used interchangeably with motivations while they are two very different concepts. Furthermore, the growing prominence of Global English perspective, which does not see L1 speakers of English as the standards of “correctness” and “good English” also contributes to growing irrelevance of the integrative orientation notion among researchers. Based on the critical analysis, it is suggested that researchers focus on qualitative approaches in investigating English learners’ motivation as the acknowledgement of its complexity and to limit greed to oversimplify and generalize motivation of learners, who are also social beings with all the complexity and dynamics.

**Keywords:** *Integrative orientation, instrumental orientation, motivation*

## INTRODUCTION

The term “motivation” is widely known in every day’s life even among lay people. At least intuitively many people might claim they know what it means. They can easily say that somebody is “motivated”, or somebody has “motivation” to do something. Digging a little deeper, however, researchers found that the term is not as straightforward as it seems (Dörnyei, 1998; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Williams and Burden (1997) defined motivation as “a state of cognitive and emotional arousal, which leads to a conscious decision to act and which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and or physical efforts in order to attain a previously set goal” (p. 120). Thus, from the definition, someone can be said to be motivated if he or she has three dimensions of motivation, namely conscious decisions, sustained efforts, and intended goals.

Furthermore, starting from Gardner and Lambert’s (1959) initial study, many researchers had conducted numerous motivational studies, some of the first and most prominent of which were those of Gardner and his associates in Canada. They introduced integrative and instrumental orientation notions (see Gardner & Lambert, 1959; 1972). Later, Dörnyei, one of authorities in the field of learners’ individual differences, also proposed some frameworks which still accommodated some elements of Gardner’s two notions (see Dörnyei 1994a; 2005). Furthermore, the influence of these notions in motivational studies could be found in many educational researches in ELT. However, the rapidly changing and dynamic ELT field may require ELT practitioners and researchers to look back and find out the extents of the two notions’ relevance in English language learning and researches. Hence, this paper will present a critical analysis of how along with their respective

associates, Gardner and Dörnyei, two authorities in language learning motivation, presented the notions within their theoretical frameworks, as well as the notions’ extents of relevance in today’s language learning and researches.

## DISCUSSIONS

### **The positions of the notions within Gardner’s and Dörnyei’s frameworks**

Based on his 12-year-long study with his associates in Canada, Gardner constructed Socio-Educational Model for Second or Foreign Language Learning consisting of three elements, effort, desire, and positive attitude (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). These three elements, they stated, will appear in motivated learners, and they will distinguish the motivated from the less motivated. In other words, being motivated, in Gardner’s concept, because of the good attitudes towards the language and its community, someone will show desire or willingness to learn the language, enjoyment in doing so and show continuous effort in the process.

Furthermore, to arouse this motivation, ones need orientations. In regard with this, Gardner and Lambert (1972) introduced two orientation notions, integrative and instrumental, both of which have influenced many motivational studies until now. Despite mentioning various other orientations in the subsequent works (see Gardner, 1985; Gardner & Tremblay, 1994; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995), Gardner seemed to prioritize the two above-mentioned orientations. First, integrative orientation refers to interest in learning L2 because learners are interested in its culture or the L2 community, to the point of being accepted as a member of that other group (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). This will lead them to learn more about

the cultural community in an open-minded way. Instrumental orientation, furthermore, is connected to the potential pragmatic gains of learning (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Social and economic gains are usually associated with this. For example, somebody learns English to get better occupation, promotions, or a higher salary. Between these two orientations, furthermore, integrative one is considered to have a more crucial role for successful learning as it is considered to be more sustainable and long lasting (Gardner, 1985).

Despite supporting Gardner's statement of the more important role of integrative orientation in learning beyond intermediate level, based on his study in Hungary, Dörnyei (1990) concluded that motivation is also influenced by various learners' factors and learning situations. Therefore, different from Gardner's model concerning largely on integrative and instrumental orientations, Dörnyei (1994a) proposed a three-level framework of L2 motivation. The framework consists of language level, learner level, and learning situation. It is interesting that Gardner's notions are only included in one of the three levels, language level, encompassing components such as culture, community and pragmatic value (Dörnyei, 1994a.). It suggests that in Dörnyei's framework, motivation is a much more robust concept influenced by not only language-related aspects but also those of learners' characteristics and situations in which learning takes place. Simply put, Dörnyei argued that motivation is related not only to what is learnt but who learns it and in what context. Hence, Gardner's notions while being worthwhile might not be sufficient to further understand motivation as they are unable to capture various factors concerning learners and dynamic situations of learning process affecting motivation.

Afterward, Dörnyei (2005) proposed another "natural progression" of Gardner's model, adopting Gardner's notions with some overlapping yet more detailed changes. As the continuation of Higgins's (1987) notions of Ideal Self and Ought to Selves, Dörnyei (2005) proposed a new framework, L2 Motivational Self System, consisting of Ideal L2 Self, referring to the ideal-self learners wish to achieve concerning their L2 learning, and Ought to L2 Self, emerging from their perceived obligation to meet expectation and avoid possible negative outcomes, and L2 Learning Experience, like classroom, teachers, classmates or past learning experience (Dörnyei, 2005).

In this framework, furthermore, Gardner's integrative and instrumental orientations are again incorporated. As Ideal L2 Self focuses on promotions, like hopes and accomplishment, those learning L2 hoping to be part of the L2 community (integrative orientation) and those learning L2 hoping to obtain pragmatic accomplishments like a job promotion or a better salary (instrumental orientation) are said to be guided by their Ideal L2 Self (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Analysing instrumentality further, however, ones can notice instrumentality can also have a prevention focus. Some easy examples are adult learners already working might learn an L2 to not get stuck in the same structural positions at their companies, and school students may learn an L2 to not fail in the final exam or to not disappoint their parents. In this regard, Dörnyei broke down Gardner's instrumental orientation into that with accomplishment focus as part of Ideal L2 Self mentioned earlier and that with prevention focus as part of Ought-to L2 Self because the orientation to learn an L2 is more influenced by learners' perceived obligation to avoid a negative outcome. Perhaps also seeing integrative and instrumental notions from this point,

Ushioda (2011) held the opinion that Gardner's two notions are actually hardly distinguishable from each other as both are parts of one's internal process of self-concept. This opinion is also supported by some empirical studies (e.g.: Lai, 2013; Lamb, 2004).

From the explanation, it is clear that while Gardner focused more on external reference groups affecting motivation, Dörnyei emphasized more on imagined self or vision about future self as the powerful motivator. In favour of Dörnyei's, furthermore, Ushioda (2011) asserted that Dörnyei's Motivational Self System is more able to approximate what people are experiencing when being engaged in goal-directed behaviours like language learning. It is because it tries to understand the fluctuation and complexity of motivation experienced by individuals rather than trying to categorize it in a seemingly clear-cut boundary. Taking this into account, now there are a lot of studies investigating language learners using Dörnyei's Motivational Self System as the theoretical framework (see Henry, 2013; Lamb, 2012; Papi & Temouri, 2013).

### **The notions' extents of relevance in today's ELT researches**

Integrative and instrumental notions, despite seeming quite straightforward, have been criticized by numerous subsequent works (E.g.: Dörnyei, 1998; Lamb, 2004; Norton, 2000). The first point of criticism is the interchangeable use of the term "orientation" and "motivation" in many empirical studies researching the relationship between motivation and achievements. Regrettably, this misinterpretation still happens even in a few recent studies (E.g.: Choubsaz & Choubsaz, 2014; Mao, 2011; Samad, Etemadzadeh, & Far, 2012; Soozandehfar, 2010; Yu & Downing, 2012).

In those studies, what the researchers did was to give learners set of questionnaires, each item of which indicated integrative or instrumental orientations. Then, they set a test and obtained the correlation between the questionnaire data and the participants' test results. In this case, these studies might have overlooked the possibility that while orientation is the antecedent of motivation, it is not automatically converted into one. For example, a participant answers that she learns English so that she can get a better job in the questionnaire. Whether that means she will automatically show some sustained efforts to do so is still uncertain. Simply put, somebody showing that she has reasons to learn a language does not necessarily mean that she is motivated.

In fact, Gardner did emphasize that orientation and motivation are two very different concepts (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991; Gardner & Tremblay, 1994). He emphasized that orientation is a particular reason for studying L2 while motivation is the driving force to do so (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991; Gardner & Tremblay, 1994). Hence, it is possible that learners have, for example, instrumental orientation in learning L2, but to connect it with their learning outcome, researchers should see whether these learners show real efforts to attain that learning outcome because orientation is merely antecedent of motivation and not motivation itself (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991). To see the relationship between attainment and motivation, researchers are to make sure that the learners are motivated, seen through efforts, desire and attitude mentioned previously, either with an integrated or instrumental goal in mind. Gardner & MacIntyre (1991) further stated that it is difficult to see how either orientation can promote proficiency if they are not linked with motivation.

As previously mentioned, orientation is the antecedent of motivation, but it is not automatically converted into one. Therefore, it might be worthwhile noting for researchers investigating this field that before they use quantitative methods, like distributing any questionnaire battery to investigate the respondents' orientations and test them afterwards, they might need some qualitative methods, like observations and interviews, to see whether the respondents are indeed motivated in the first place. Otherwise, researchers might end up doing researches based on certain assumptions without even investigating whether their assumption even exists in the first place.

Regarding the prolonged misinterpretation above, Dörnyei (1994a; 1994b) stated that this might be partly attributed to Gardner's prioritizing both integrative and instrumental orientation over other orientations in his Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), a test seeking learners' evaluation of classroom learning situation (Gardner, 1985) despite him acknowledging that there are some other orientations playing roles as the antecedents of motivation and that people are complex beings (Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). Perhaps, this is why Dörnyei (1994a; 1998) himself referred Gardner's two orientation notions interchangeably to those of motivation. Besides, surprisingly and regrettably, despite Gardner's statement that orientation and motivation are two different concepts (see Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991; Gardner & Tremblay, 1994), Gardner and MacIntyre's (1991) study seemed to interchange orientation and motivation with a very subtle difference, hence showing inconsistencies.

Furthermore, Gardner asserting that integrative orientation has more important role in L2 learning than

instrumental orientation ever since 1959 (Gardner & Lambert, 1959; 1972; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991) also stimulated many debates in the field. In line with Hamp-Lyons' (1983) early counter-claim three decades ago, some authors asserted that their much more recent empirical findings did not fit with the statement (Dörnyei, 2005; Warden & Lin, 2000). First of all, ones need to compare the Canadian context in which Gardner's study was initially conducted and the contexts of other studies (Dörnyei, 2005; Ushioda, 2013). In the first context, French (learners' L2) was the second official language of Canada. That also means that the learners had frequent contact with French speakers and culture. Therefore, it might be understandable that the integrative orientation played the more important part than the instrumental one. However, the results of many studies conducted in EFL contexts in which learners have very limited contact with L2 speakers, community, and culture, indicated the opposite. They found that instrumental orientation is more dominant (E.g.: Lamb, 2004 in Indonesia; Koiso, 2003; Yashima, 2002; 2009 in Japan). Even more, some other studies found that people learn English for national duty to promote their countries (E.g., Al-Hag & Smadi, 1996 in Saudi Arabia; Orton, 2009 in China), again supporting the more important role of the utilitarian, and pragmatic (instrumental) goals than the integrative ones.

However, apart from the misinterpretation of orientation as motivation surrounding studies on Gardner's two notions, in line with Dörnyei's frameworks and emphasizing that learners' motivation should be understood inseparable from social aspects of their life, Norton (2000) found that Gardner's distinguishing learners with such clear-cut orientations as integrative and instrumental very

problematic in the first place. What was worse and surprising, even Gardner himself did treat these two notions as a pure dichotomy in at least two of his works (E.g.: Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991; Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant, & Mihic, 2004), amplifying the confusion among researchers even further about the notions. These works contradicted Dörnyei's and associates' idea stating that motivation is influenced by numerous socio-cultural factors surrounding language learners as social beings rather than as learners per se (Dörnyei, 2005; Norton 2000; Ryan & Dörnyei, 2013).

Furthermore, the criticisms to Gardner's notions explained above in English educational researches are amplified with the growing prominence of Global English (Coetzee van-Rooy, 2006; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Kachru & Nelson, 2006; Ushioda, 2013). According to Global English paradigm, all English varieties, native or non-native, are accepted in their own right rather than evaluated against the benchmark of native speakers of English (Jenkins, 2006). This growing-in-prominence paradigm sees that English speakers, regardless of whether they speak the language as an L1 or an L2, may have their own characteristics, including accents, pronunciations, and dictions, in using English and it is not necessary to compare their language capability with that of L1 speakers of English as the standard of being "right" or "wrong".

In relation with the integrative notion Gardner and associates presented, furthermore, Global English paradigm makes the target language community characterizing integrative orientation begin to lose its reference and meaning (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Islam, Lamb & Chambers, 2013; Lai, 2013; Lamb, 2004; Ortega, 2009; Thompson, 2010; Ushioda, 2006; Yashima, 2002; 2009).

English is now seen simply as "a basic educational skill (much like literacy, numeracy or computer skills) not tied to a particular culture or community. (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 72). Besides, there is now a growing number of people from various L1 speaking English as L2, referred to as English as Lingua Franca (ELF) speakers (Seidlhofer, 2011). Even though it is difficult to estimate for sure, it is stated that the number of L2 speakers of English (ELF speakers) is more than one billion, while the number of L1 speakers of English is approximately 320-380 million only (Crystal, 2003). Thus, the number of ELF speakers is much more than that of people speaking English as L1.

Even more, highlighting his findings that Japanese learners learn English because of their desire to be part of international community rather than the community of L1 speakers of English, and irrelevance of Gardner's definition of integrative orientation, McClelland (2000) suggested a new definition, referring it to integration to the global community rather than merely to Anglophone community. Furthermore, Lamb (2004) and Yashima (2002; 2009) added that now many English learners develop a bicultural identity in which rather than being interested in the community of L1 speakers of English, these learners tend to keep their local culture while at the same time feeling that they are part of the global community.

## CONCLUSION

As the conclusion, some important points can be reemphasized. Gardner's dual concepts of integrativeness and instrumentality had dominated research works prior to 1990s. Even though regrettably, we do still find a few recent

empirical studies using these linear concepts, since the 1990s, these concepts have gained a lot of criticisms. They were pioneered by Dörnyei's studies counter claiming the concepts and also triggered by the growing prominence of Global English, leading the concepts to fall out of favour with motivational researchers, who now turn the attention to better understand learners' motivation by taking into account learners' complexity as social beings. That is to acknowledge learners as well as their motivation change and fluctuate over time as well as to resist the temptation of making a too broad generalization about motivation, which might lead to oversimplification of its complexity.

Considering the debates in the field of motivational studies especially criticism directed towards Gardner and associates' concepts of integrative and instrumental orientations, nowadays motivational studies have changed directions from quantitative analysis with the heavy focus to integrative and instrumental notions pioneered by Gardner and associates to qualitative analysis initiated by Dörnyei and associates. It is triggered by some factors. First, Gardner's integrative and instrumental orientation notions have fallen out of favour due to their inability to capture learners' motivation as the result of intertwining factors from within and outside learners, who are social beings with their complexity. Besides, they are unable to take into account learners' uniqueness and the shifting process of motivation itself. In addition, studies investigating learners' motivation which distinguish it into integrative and instrumental ones may be considered too oversimplifying or even misleading. Gardner himself, despite stating that orientation and motivation are two different concepts, have not been able to give satisfying answer on how motivational studies can assess whether participants are motivated and merely

“oriented”. Even more, Gardner and MacIntyre's (1991) study did show inconsistency by treating motivation and orientation almost interchangeably with very subtle difference.

Hence, it is suggested that ELT researchers start to approach motivation qualitatively through doing interviews, focus groups, and observations, and analysing learners' journals to better capture learners' views and the dynamics of their motivation in learning English. By giving prominence to qualitative approaches, it means we have to also limit our “greed” of generalizing findings on motivational researches. That is to acknowledge that learners' motivation is a complex construct unique from one learner to another.

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