

# **The Socio-psychological Orientations of Saudi Learners of English as a Foreign Language**

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**Dr. Hameed Yahya A. Al-Zubeiry**

Assistant Professor of Applied

Linguistics

Al-Baha University

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## **The Socio-psychological Orientations of Saudi Learners of English as a Foreign Language**

### **Abstract**

The present paper aims at studying the socio-psychological orientations of Saudi learners of English as a foreign language (henceforth EFL). The study focuses on the two important factors namely, motivation and attitude. The motivation factor is considered in terms of instrumental and integrative orientations. As for the attitude factor, the study investigates the students' orientation with reference to their attitude to learning English and towards native speakers of English. The sample of the study consisted of 120 (male and female) students studying English as a foreign language in the Departments of English, Faculties of Science and Arts, Al-Baha University. A questionnaire based on *Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB)* was used for data collection. The findings showed that the students were highly motivated in both instrumental and integrative orientations. The study also revealed that instrumental orientation (utilitarian and academic reasons) is higher compared to the integrative orientation (social and cultural reasons). Regarding the students' attitude, the study demonstrated that the students had positive attitudes to learning English and towards native speakers of English. The study concluded with some pedagogical recommendations that may help in directing students' motivation and attitudes to better learning performance. Further research was suggested in relation to students' low proficiency and motivation.

**Keywords:** Instrumental motivation, integrative motivation, attitudes, English as a foreign language.

## الاتجاهات النفسية والاجتماعية للطلبة السعوديين في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية باعتبارها أجنبية

### مُلخَصُ البَحْثِ

يهدف البحث الحالي إلى دراسة الاتجاهات النفسية والاجتماعية للطلبة السعوديين في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية باعتبارها لغة أجنبية. وتقوم دراسة البحث على عاملين مهمين هما: الدوافع والاتجاهات، ويُنظر لعامل الدوافع من منظورين هما: الدوافع الوسيلية والدوافع التكاملية، أما بالنسبة لعامل الاتجاهات فتبحث الدراسة اتجاهات الطلبة من منظور اتجاهاتهم نحو تعلم اللغة الانجليزية واتجاهاتهم نحو المجتمع الناطق باللغة الانجليزية. وتتكون عينة الدراسة من ١٢٠ طالبا وطالبة يدرسون اللغة الانجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية في أقسام اللغة الانجليزية - كليات العلوم والآداب بجامعة الباحة، وتم استخدام استبانة لجمع معلومات الدراسة بناءً على اختبارات قاردنر (١٩٨٥) للدوافع والاتجاهات. وقد أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن الطلبة متحفزون بشكل عالٍ في كل من الدوافع الوسيلية والدوافع التكاملية، كما تُبين الدراسة أن الدوافع الوسيلية (أسباب نفعية وأكاديمية) هي الأعلى مقارنةً بالدوافع التكاملية (أسباب اجتماعية وثقافية). أما بالنسبة لاتجاهات الطلبة، فتشير الدراسة إلى أن الطلبة لديهم اتجاهات إيجابية نحو تعلم اللغة الانجليزية ونحو متحدثيها. وقد خلصت الدراسة إلى بعض التوصيات التي يمكن أن تساعد على توجيه الدوافع والاتجاهات لدى الطلبة نحو أداء تعليمي أفضل، واقترح البحث إجراء المزيد من البحوث فيما يتعلق بالكفاءة المتدنية والدوافع لدى الطلبة.

## **Introduction**

Motivation and attitudes to language learning are two important integral factors in the process of learning. Lack of motivation on the part of language learners may lead to a situation where learners do not show interest in learning the target language . Such a situation is likely to affect the learners' success in learning the language. A number of research scholars indicate that motivation is considered as a key factor that influences the rate and success of second/foreign language learning (McDonough,1983; Ellis, 1994). McDonough (1983, p.142), for example, states that "motivation of the students is one of the most important factors influencing their success or failure in learning the language". Similarly, learners' attitudes towards learning language or towards the native speakers of the language may come positive or negative; and this in its turn affects their motivation in learning the language. De Bot, Lowie and Verspoor (2005, p.72) claimed that "teachers, learners and researchers will all agree that a high motivation and a positive attitude towards a second language and its community help second language learning". These two factors, therefore, are of importance to the process of language learning.

The relationship between motivation and attitudes has been considered a prime concern in language learning research. Gardner and Lambert (1972, p.2) state that "his (the

learner) motivation to learn is thought to be determined by his attitudes towards the other group in particular and by his orientations towards the learning task itself." Lifrieri (2005, p.14) asserts that "attitudes are necessary but insufficient indirect conditions for linguistic attainment. Only when paired up with motivation proper do attitudinal tendencies relate to the levels of student engagement in language learning, and to attainment." In short, a better understanding of learners' motivation and attitudes may assist ESL/EFL curriculum and instruction designers to devise language teaching programs that generate the attitudes and motivation most conducive to the production of more successful ESL/EFL learners (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Midraj, 1998). Additionally, it can help material writers create and teachers select activities and tasks that tap students' motivation and attitudes (Midraj, 2003).

### **The Status of English In Saudi Arabia**

English is considered to be the most widely used language in the world. It is the language of science, technology, education, politics, business and trade, law courts and the mass media. A vast majority of people across nations communicate with each other through English. It is simply the source language opening the window or the international community in the global village and, as such, the passport to progress in every field of human endeavor. As a result, it has been recognized as an international language all over the world.

Arabic is the official language that is used in Saudi Arabia. It is the medium of communication, education, administration, and discussion in the legal procedures and mass media. Compared with Arabic, English is considered to be a foreign language. It is used for the purposes of international communication. However, this does not imply that the use of English is confined to the purposes mentioned above. As a matter of fact, there are situations and environments where English maintains the status of second language within the country. The foreign companies investing in different parts of Saudi Arabia, for instance, use English as a medium of communication and administrative procedures. Moreover, there are many expatriates living and working in the country who take recourse to English as a language of communication with the Saudi people. Some Non-Arabic speaking Muslims visiting Saudi Arabia for religious purposes use English as their link language for interacting with the people. In short, the importance of English in Saudi Arabia is not restricted only to interests and purposes outside the country. Its importance has been increasingly felt as a catalyst of progress for the country.

In view of the importance of English in Saudi Arabia, the Saudi government has taken serious steps in introducing English to the Saudi students. This is reflected in the document issued by the English Department in the Directorate of Curriculum at the Ministry of Education in 1421 H. (2000).

The document states that English education should foster students' ability to comprehend and express basic English, as well as foster interest in foreign languages and cultures. General goals include fostering students' motivation as well as developing receptive and productive language skills.

In addition, the Saudi government allocates a generous amount of funds to promote the students for the English language learning process and to facilitate them. They hire qualified, competent and committed foreign faculty members to teach English to their students. They offer attractive packages along with all the fringe benefits to the employees to get the maximum output from them (Shabbir & Bughio, 2009, p.75).

### **Statement of the Problem**

In spite of the efforts that Saudi government offered in improving students' English, there is a common dissatisfaction among language teachers in Al-Baha University with the low level of major students of English. It has been observed that a large number of students hardly interact with their teachers either in participating in their classes or in visiting them at their office timing for discussing their language learning problems. This could be partially attributed to the students' lack of interest in learning the language. The present research paper, therefore, is an attempt to investigate the students' motivation and attitudes towards learning English.



### **Research Questions**

The present study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1) Are the students motivated/interested in learning English as a foreign Language?
- 2) Are the students motivated instrumentally or integratively towards learning English?
- 3) What are the attitudes of the students towards learning English?
- 4) What are the attitudes of the students towards the native speakers of English?

### **Limitation of the Study**

The study is limited to two socio-psychological factors namely, motivation and attitude . It is also confined to 120 level-four students (male and female) studying English at Al-Baha University.

### **Literature Review**

As the present study has a socio-psychological orientation, two relevant approaches can be reviewed as literature background. They are sociological approach and psychological approach.

### **Sociological Approach**

It is generally assumed that language and human society are inseparable. Therefore, “the notion of language is

considered to be as a social index of occupation, religion, and social class and as a symbol of home, family, class, status, and country” (Carroll, 1953). This implies that acquiring the first language involves also acquiring the social and cultural dimensions of the language. However, in the situation of second language learning, the learner has to adapt to the social and cultural dimensions of the target language. This has been made clear by Bosco (1970). He suggests that the teaching of the language of English to the speakers of other languages entails orientation into the life patterns of the members of the targeted speech community. He states:

Language has a social, cultural and historical dimension. If a person is to function effectively in a speech community he must be acquainted with the life style of the members of the community. Such an orientation includes an understanding of what the speakers consider to be important and what they talk about (Bosco, 1970, p.75).

Consequently, any absence of concrete communication situations, which emphasize the functional aspects of language, is an important factor that may affect the process of learning second/foreign language. The existence of the three factors, viz, home, peer group relations, and community, has an enhancing role to the desired language behaviour. These three factors contribute positively in the case of first language acquisition, whereas in the second language learning, the situation is more complicated as the second language is not the

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language of home, nor even that of the peer group and community.

Mowrer (1950, cited in Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991) proposed that the success of a child in learning a first language could be attributed to the desire to gain identity within the family unit and then the wider language community. Based on this insight, Gardner (1982) went on to investigate motivation as an influencing factor in L2 acquisition. Before looking at the effect of motivation on second language learning, it seems of importance to realize that it is one variable, which, combined with other factors, influences a learner's success. In his Socio-Educational Model, Gardner (1985), identified a number of factors, which account for the role of social factors in second language acquisition. This model interrelates four aspects of L2 learning: the social and cultural milieu (which determines beliefs about language and culture), individual learner differences (related to motivation and language aptitude), the setting or context (formal and/or informal), and learning outcomes (linguistic and non-linguistic). Within this model motivation is perceived to be composed of three elements, namely, effort, desire, and affect. Effort refers to the time spent studying the language and the drive of the learner. Desire indicates how much the learner wants to become proficient in the language and affect illustrates the learner's emotional reactions with regard to language study (Gardner 1985).

It is believed that there is a direct relationship between the learner's attitude and the learner's motivation towards learning a second language. For our purpose the learner's attitude has a greater significance. The learner's motivation, however, will be considered in detail in the next section (i.e. in the psychological approach). To begin with, "attitude is defined as a reference to the set of beliefs that the learner holds about members of the target language group (e.g. whether they are seen as interesting, boring, honest, or dishonest, etc.) and also about his own culture" (Brown, 1973). Savignon (1976, p.295) claims that "attitude is the single most important factor in second language learning." Triandis' (1971) definition of attitude is filtered in Gardner's (1982) perception of motivation in his socio-educational model. According to Triandis, "attitude is defined as an idea charged with emotion which predisposes a class of action to a particular class of social situation" (pp.3-4). Wenden (1991) proposed a broader definition of the concept attitude. According to him, the term attitudes includes three components: cognitive, affective, and behavioural. A cognitive component is made up of the beliefs and ideas or opinions about the object of the attitude. The affective one refers to the feeling and emotions that one has towards an object, 'likes' or 'dislikes', 'with' or 'against'. Finally the behavioural component refers to one's consisting actions or behavioural intentions towards the object.

In view of the fact that language and social dimensions are integral parts growing together in the process of language acquisition, the learner simultaneously develops internal incentives that help in acquiring the first language. These incentives are observed through his cognitive, affective and behavioural processes. In second language learning, however, it is the external incentives which account for low of proficiency on the part of second language learners. Carroll (1967), in his study on foreign language majors, has suggested the importance of the attitude of parents as one of the external incentives that relate to learners' level of attainment. He indicates "One reason why some students reach high level of attainments in foreign language is that they have home environments that are favorable to this" (Carroll, 1967, p.138).

In their attempt to find out if any relationship exists among various attitudinal measures and second language attainment of Mexican, Chinese, and Japanese students, Oller, Baca, & Vigil (1977) and Chihara & Oller (1978), found that positive attitudes towards self, the native language group, toward the target language group and culture correlated highly with attained correct language behaviour.

In addition to the types of attitudes reviewed above, Gardner and Lambert (1972) have also investigated a number of different attitudes, which they consider to be of relevance to L2 learning. Stern (1983, pp.376-7) categorizes these attitudes into three types:

- a) attitudes towards the community and people who speak the target language or group specific attitudes;
- b) attitudes towards learning the language concerned;
- c) attitudes towards languages and language learning in general.

These attitudes, according to Ellis (1986, p.118), are influenced:

.....by the personality type of the learner, for instance whether he is ethnocentric or authoritarian .....may also be influenced by the social milieu in which learning takes place. Different attitudes, for instance, may be found in the monolingual and bilingual contexts.

In view of these attitudes, studies on L2 learning have found that the more ethnocentric and authoritarian L2 learners are the less achievement they make in learning the target language and the less ethnocentric and authoritarian they are the more favorable achievement they make.

Based on his observation in teaching English to Arab students, El-Sayed (1993) notes that the low proficiency of Arab students in their English emanates from the fact that Arab students have ethnocentric and authoritarian attitudes towards the target language (English) and its culture. He states:

...the hostility and suspicion one notices in the Arab students' attitudes towards western language and cultures is natural since it stems from the fact that the western colonized the Arab World and English is viewed by Arab students as a product of imperialism. ... They feel that they are compelled to acquire English and they resign to a status of subordination as a result of the cultural and ideological dominance of the native speakers of English in Britain and America. Our students move through the stressful episodes of western acculturation and, as a result, it becomes difficult for truly successful EFL learning situations to occur in Arab classes (El-Sayed, 1993, pp. 63-4).

To sum up, motivations and attitudes towards the target language are highly significant factors in second language learning. Karahan (2007, p.84) avers that "positive language attitudes let learner have positive orientation towards learning English." As such, attitudes may play a very crucial role in language learning as they would appear to influence learners' success or failure in their learning.

### **Psychological Approach**

In the psychological approach to language learning motivation plays a significant role in the acquisition of second language. A large number of researchers believe that a highly motivated learner achieves a desirable success in learning the target language. Gardner (1988), for instance, observes that "motivated learners tend to be more active in the learning

process.” Moreover, Harter (1981) notes that “motivated learners perceive themselves to be more competent learners.” Schmidt (1993) also indicates that "motivated learners are likely to pay close attention to the language input than those who are not so motivated." Cook (2001) points out that "highly motivated learners can notice pragmatic functions of language." As a result, motivation has been recognized as an important factor in learning a second language. Many researchers consider motivation as one of the main elements that determine success in developing a second or foreign language; it determines the extent of active, personal involvement in L2 learning (Oxford & Shearin, 1994).

Psychologically speaking, motivation is defined as a force within the learner characterized by an effective arousal that drives the learner towards an anticipated goal; in such a case, the objectives of the foreign language programme (McDonald, 1965). This definition seems to be consistent with the views of Crookes & Schmidt, (1991) on motivation. They identified motivation as the learner’s orientation with regard to the goal of learning a second language. Many researchers make a distinction between two types of motivation: integrative and instrumental motivation. In general terms, integrative motivation for language learning is defined as a high level of drive on the part of the individual to acquire the language of a valued second language community in order to facilitate communication with that group and to eventually



become a valued member of it. On the other hand, instrumental motivation for language learning is defined as a desire on the part of the individual to acquire someone's language system for utilitarian or practical reasons such as finding a better job or gaining upward social mobility (Gardner& Lambert, 1972, p.3).

The underlying assumption of the integrative motivation is that learners achieve success in learning the target language when they like the people who speak the language, admire the culture, and have a desire to become familiar with or even integrate into the society in which the language is used (Falk, 1978). It is believed that when the learner is residing in a community that uses the target language in its social interaction, integrative motivation is a key element in assisting the learner to develop some level of proficiency in the language. Consequently, integrative motivation is considered to be an important factor, so as to operate socially in the community and become one of its members. As Finegan (1999, p.568) observes, "integrative motivation typically underlies successful acquisition of a wide range of registers and a native like pronunciation."

Instrumental motivation is generally characterized by the desire to obtain something practical or concrete from the study of a second language (Hudson 2000). In other words, the purpose of learning a language is utilitarian, such as: getting a job, requesting higher pay based on language ability, etc.

Moreover, instrumental motivation is characteristic of second language acquisition where little or no social integration of the learner into a community using the target language takes place, or in some instances is even desired.

In the light of the fact that both integrative and instrumental motivation are essential factors of success in second language learning, it is, however, the integrative motivation which has been found to enhance long-term success when learning a second language (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Ellis, 1994). Based on studies conducted by Gardner and Lambert (1972), integrative motivation was viewed as being more important in a formal learning environment than instrumental motivation (Ellis, 1994). Dörnyei (1990) claims that a learner with an intrinsic (integrative) motivation is more likely to go beyond an intermediate level in a language than a learner whose motivation is extrinsic (instrumental). It must be noted, however, that some studies have argued that extrinsically motivated learners are just as likely to achieve success in the target language (Qashoa, 2006; Liu, 2007).

One area where instrumental motivation can prove to be successful is where a learner is provided with no opportunity to use the target language and therefore, no chance to interact with members of the target language. Lukmani (1972) found that an instrumental orientation was more important than an integrative motivation in non-westernized female learners of second language English in Bombay. The social situation helps

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to determine both what kind of orientation learners have and what kind is most important for language learning.

In view of what has been mentioned earlier, it is clear that motivation, in general, has a significant role in second language learning. The Integrative motivation is likely to be more effective in achieving success in acquiring the second language as the learner is psychologically and socially immersed in the learning process. The instrumental motivation, however, is perceived to be partially effective as the learner is psychologically motivated with immediate goals in learning the target language. Notwithstanding, the two types of motivation (integrative and instrumental) are very important factors in learning a second language. A low value in one of them is likely to result in low proficiency in learning the target language.

### **Related Studies**

A considerable amount of research has been done in different parts of the world to investigate learners' motivation and attitudes towards learning English. In Japan, for instance, Benson (1991) studied the motivation of Japanese learners towards learning English. He administered his research study on over 300 freshmen students. His findings demonstrated the importance of integrative and personal goals as factors in motivation among Japanese college students as he stated, "integrative and personal reasons for learning English were preferred over instrumental ones (Benson 1991, p.34).

Sarjit (1993) conducted a study to explore the language needs of consultants at a company. Learners' motivation was of concern in the study. A number of 26 consultants was the research sample of the study, 4 director and one instructor. Different techniques were used in collecting the data, such as questionnaire, interviews, and field observation. The major findings of the study indicated that instrumental motivation was the main reason for learning the language followed by personal motivation.

Rahman (2005) conducted a study to analyze and determine the various socio-psychological orientations of the undergraduate students of private universities of Bangladesh towards learning English. The study focused on what is considered as the two dominant socio-psychological variables. The sample of the study consisted of 94 students (56 male and 38 female) of 19-23 age group. A questionnaire and a semi-structured interview were used to elicit the data of the study. The research findings showed that students focus on English for 'instrumental reasons' as opposed to previous research conducted in Bangladesh, which concluded that 'integrative motivation' was the dominant motivational orientation for the students to learn English.

Considering studies on Arab EFL learners, some research studies have been undertaken to investigate learners' motivation and attitudes towards English language. Al-Quyadi (2002) carried out a comprehensive study to investigate the

psycho-sociological variables in learning English in the faculties of Sana'a University, Yemen. One of the main objectives of his study was to study the nature of the psychological variables of learning English by Yemeni EFL learners in terms of attitudes and motivation as measured by English majors at the Department of English, Faculties of Education at Sana'a University. The research tool used in collecting the data was a questionnaire administered on 518 students representing seven faculties of Education. Generally, the results indicated that the students had a high level of both 'instrumental and integrative motivation' towards the English language. Regarding their attitudes, the findings showed that the students had 'positive attitudes' towards the English language and the use of English in the Yemeni social and educational contexts.

Qashoa (2006) conducted a study among secondary school students in Dubai, UAE. The main aim of the study was twofold: 1) examine the students' instrumental and integrative motivation for learning English, and 2) recognize the factors affecting learners' motivation. Two research tools were used: questionnaire and interviews. The sample, for the questionnaire, consisted of 100 students. For the interview, on the other hand, the sample included 20 students, 10 Arab English teachers and 3 supervisors. The results revealed that students have a higher degree of instrumentality than integrativeness. Moreover, the findings indicated that subject-

related difficulties such as vocabulary load, structures and spelling were found to be the most demotivating factors for the students.

Another study was conducted by Moiiinvaziri (2007) to analyze and determine the various socio-psychological orientations of undergraduate students studying General English in universities of Sirjan, Iran. The study concentrated on instrumental and integrative orientations of students in learning English as a foreign language. In order to determine the students' tendency towards the mentioned orientations a population of 255 university students were given a questionnaire based on Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) (1985). The results of the study showed that contrary to some researchers' beliefs that in foreign language situations instrumental orientation is the dominant orientation, students were highly motivated in both instrumental and integrative orientations.

A more recent study has been carried out by Karahan (2007) in Turkey. The constant complaints raised by learners, teachers, and administrators, about the low level of proficiency in English among Turkish students were the reasons for which the study was conducted. The researcher attempted to find out the relationship between language attitudes and language learning which is a missing point of discussion on the problems of teaching English in Turkish EFL context. The researcher's main purpose of the study was to identify the

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interlaced relationship among attitudes, the starting age of language learning, and the place where the individual started to learn language within Turkish EFL context. The method of inquiry used was a questionnaire adapted from previous studies on language attitudes. The sample consisted of 190 (94 females and 96 males) eighth grade students of a private primary school in Adana, Turkey, where English was intensively taught. The findings showed that although the students were exposed to English in a school environment more frequently than other students at public school, they had only mildly positive attitudes; especially female students had higher rates. Moreover, the subjects recognized the importance of English language but interestingly did not reveal high level orientation towards learning the language.

Keeping in view the above mentioned studies, we observe that most of them consider motivation and attitudes towards language learning as two important variables in learning a foreign language. It has also been observed that different techniques were used in eliciting the required data of the study. A Questionnaire was the most common technique followed by all the researchers. The researcher, therefore, benefited from these studies in framing his questionnaire to elicit the data of his study. The research findings of the previous studies showed the proportional effect of the two types of motivations (instrumental and integrative) in learning a foreign language. It is hoped that the present study is a

contribution to the previous studies in that it studies the motivation and attitudes of students who have different situations and educational background.

### **Methodology**

Since the main purpose of the present study is to investigate the motivation and attitude of Saudi students in learning English as a foreign language, a group of Saudi students was selected as subjects for the present study. These subjects were enrolled in the fourth level (second semester of the second year) in the departments of English in the following faculties of the Al-Baha University:

- Faculty of Arts, Al-Baha,
- Faculty of Science and Arts- Baljurashi,
- Faculty of Science and Arts- Al-Mandeq,
- Faculty of Science and Arts- AlMukhwah

The sample of the study consisted of 120 (70 male and 50 female) students out of the total number enrolled in the respective faculties. They have had seven years of English instruction in the public schools and a one year requirement course of English at the university level (what is so-called preparatory year). So they had an almost identical and instructional language background. The socio-economic background of the selected subjects was more or less the same since all were from middle class families in rural and semi-urban areas. Their ages ranged between 19-23. They were



homogeneous as they had the same mother tongue (Arabic) and were educationally and socially well-matched.

### **Instrument and Procedures**

A two-section questionnaire was used to explore the students' motivation and attitudes towards learning English. Section A aimed at collecting background information about the students in terms of their age, gender, and level of study. It also included some Yes-No questions inquiring about students' use and choice of English.

Section B, on the other hand, consisted of twenty-four items used to probe students' motivation and attitudes towards learning English. The students' responses ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree (Likert 5 scale format). The questionnaire items were developed on the basis of Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) (1985), which is reported to have good reliability and validity (Gardner, 1980; 1985; Gardner and Smith , 1981; Benson, 1991). Additional items were incorporated in the questionnaire on the basis of a pilot experiment which contained six open-ended questions aiming at revealing whether students had motivation patterns that do not strictly conform to the previous studies in this area.

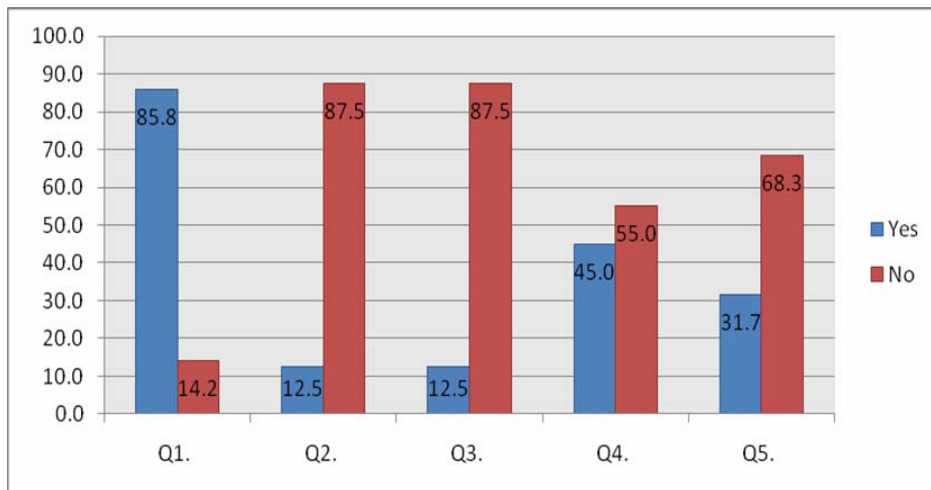
It is worth indicating that the researcher translated the questionnaire into Arabic and gave it to a specialist of Arabic (the Head of the Department of Arabic) for revising and editing the translated copy.

On the basis of permission granted by the deans of the respective four faculties mentioned earlier, the researcher visited the Departments of English in the four faculties under investigation for administering the questionnaire. The researcher was able to get the cooperation of the lecturers in providing him with their class time.

### **Result of Data Analysis and Discussion**

This section presents results of the questionnaire according to the previously stated research questions. However, it seems important to refer to the result analysis of the students' profile/background section at first. The result is shown in the figure below:

**Figure (1): The Results of Student Profile/Background**



A cursory look at the figure above shows that the respondents had negative answers to questions related to the use and interest of English (Q3, Q4, and Q5). Question 2 , i.e., "Do your father/mother speak English," receives a highly negative answer namely, 87.5%. The respondents, however, had only one positive answer that is related to their choice of joining English as their first option in the university. It seems that the findings of this analysis support the researcher's hypothesis that the students lack the required degree of interest to learn English.

In order to answer the research questions of the study, the data was fed into computer and then was analyzed by using SPSS 15.0 for Windows. Descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, and standard deviation) were carried out for all the items involved in the study.

**Q1: Are the students motivated/interested in learning English as a foreign language?**

To answer this question, 12 question items were used to elicit students' motivation in terms of instrumental and integrative orientations. Tables 1 and 2 summarize the results of responses to these questions.

**Table (1) : Descriptive Statistics of Instrumental Orientation (n=120)**

<b>Questionnaire item: Studying English is important to me because .....</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>St</b>
1. I'll need it for my future career.	1	3	2	72	42	<b>4.26</b>	<b>0.69</b>
2. it will be useful in getting a good job.	2	1	4	70	43	<b>4.26</b>	<b>0.72</b>
3. other people will respect me more if I know English.	4	23	21	28	44	<b>3.71</b>	<b>1.24</b>
4. it will enable me to travel around the world.	1	14	11	44	50	<b>4.07</b>	<b>1.03</b>
5. it will make me a more knowledgeable and educated person.	4	9	16	40	51	<b>4.04</b>	<b>1.08</b>
6. it will enable me to have access into internet.	2	7	14	48	49	<b>4.13</b>	<b>0.95</b>
<b>Total Mean Score</b>	<b>4.08</b>						

**1= Strongly disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Neutral; 4=Agree; 5= Strongly agree**

Considering Table (1) which shows the descriptive statistics of instrumental motivation, we observe that items 1 and 2 receive the highest mean scores (4.26 both) of all the items. Future career and getting a good job are highly favoured among the subjects in learning English. Item 6 (..... enable me to have access into internet ) comes next in order with a mean score of 4.13. This is followed by items 4 and 5 related to learning English for travelling around the world and making one a more knowledgeable and educated person. They have mean scores of 4.07 and 4.03 respectively. Item 3 is the lowest item of all the instrumental orientations for learning English. It has a mean score of 3.71.

**Table (2) : Descriptive Statistics of Integrative Orientation (n=120)**

<b>Questionnaire item: Studying English is important to me because ...</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>St</b>	
1. it will allow me to be more at ease with other people who speak English.	11	17	16	31	45	<b>3.68</b>	<b>1.35</b>	
2. it will allow me to meet and converse with more and varied People.	5	9	11	49	46	<b>4.02</b>	<b>1.08</b>	
3. it will enable me to better understand and appreciate British and American art and literature.	7	12	30	28	43	<b>3.73</b>	<b>1.21</b>	
4. it will enable me to interact more easily with speakers of English.	7	14	16	40	43	<b>3.82</b>	<b>1.21</b>	
5. it will enable me to understand and appreciate the English way of life.	14	20	22	30	43	<b>3.42</b>	<b>1.36</b>	
6. I will be able to participate more freely in the cultural activities of English people.	9	20	25	26	40	<b>3.57</b>	<b>1.31</b>	
<b>Total Mean Score</b>	<b>3.71</b>							

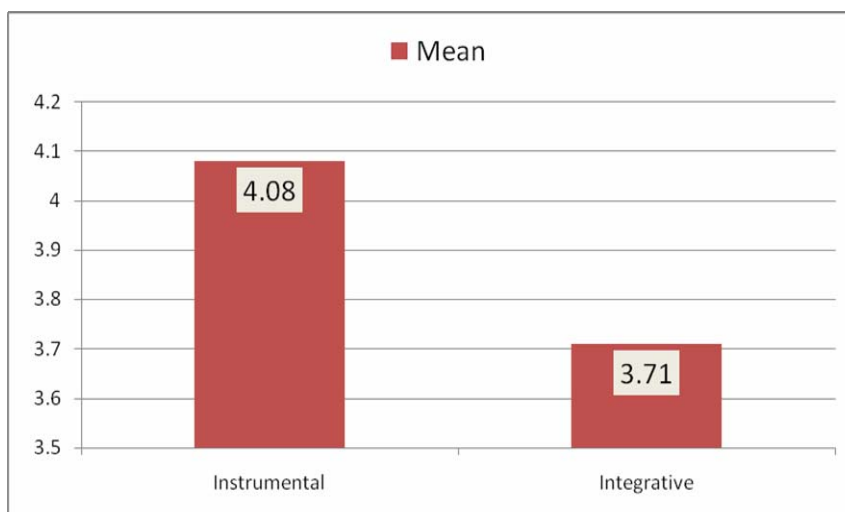
**1= Strongly disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Neutral; 4=Agree; 5= Strongly agree**

A look at Table (2) of the descriptive statistics of the integrative motivation of the subjects suggests that item 2 (... allow me to meet and converse with more and varied people) shows the highest mean score of 4.02 compared to the other items. Items 4, 3, and 1 receive quite high mean scores of 3.82, 3.73, and 3.68 respectively. In contrast, items 6 and 5 related to the students' interest of learning English for understanding and appreciating the English way of life and for participating more freely in the cultural activities of English people show

low mean scores of 3.57 and 3.42. It could be concluded that students' language ego and cultural factors might have prevented them from showing a higher motivation for these items. Variables such as identity and social-cultural distance are significant in learning a language in a foreign context.

**Q2: Are the students motivated instrumentally or integratively towards learning English?**

**Figure (2): Overall Mean Scores of Instrumental and Integrative Motivation**



To answer this question, the researcher calculated the overall mean scores of the instrumental motivation and integrative one to compare between them. The figure above shows that instrumental motivation shows a higher mean score of 4.08 compared to integrative motivation which receives

3.71. Such findings seem to conform to the claim of scholars like Gardner (1985) and Brown (1994) who assert that learners of English in a foreign context are more likely to develop instrumental motivation more than integrative motivation. Sarjit (1993) and Qashoa (2006) also found that instrumental motivation is the strongest orientation for learning English compared to integrative orientation.

**Q3: What are the attitudes of the students towards learning English?**

**Table (3) : Descriptive Statistics of Attitudes to Learning English (n=120)**

Questionnaire item:	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	St
1. I love learning English	1	3	3	84	29	<b>4.14</b>	<b>0.65</b>
2. Learning English is very important because it is the language of technology and Trade.	0	6	8	62	44	<b>4.20</b>	<b>0.77</b>
3. I would rather spend more time in English class and less in other classes.	8	19	18	35	40	<b>3.67</b>	<b>1.27</b>
4. The development of Saudi Arabia is possible mainly by educated people who know English well.	4	7	14	50	45	<b>4.04</b>	<b>1.02</b>
5. English is a very important part of the school programme.	3	11	10	59	37	<b>3.97</b>	<b>1.00</b>
6. My parents feel that it is very important for me to learn English.	3	11	16	42	48	<b>4.01</b>	<b>1.07</b>
<b>Total Mean Score</b>	<b>4.00</b>						

1= Strongly disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Neutral; 4=Agree; 5= Strongly agree

Table (3) illustrates the subjects' answers to questions related to their attitude to learning English. It shows a higher positive attitude to learning English with an overall mean score of 4.00. Items 2, 1, 4, and 6 receive the highest mean scores of 4.20, 4.14, 4.04, and 4.01 respectively. In contrast, items 5 and 3 are low with mean scores of 3.97 and 3.67. This, interestingly, reveals that the subjects have moderate attitude to questions of relevance to English classes in schools. The association of English with schools is likely to be a disturbing point on the part of the subjects to have such results.

**Q4: What are the attitudes of the students towards the native speakers of English?**

**Table (4) : Descriptive Statistics of Attitudes towards Native Speakers of English (n=120)**

<b>Questionnaire item:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>St</b>	
1.If Saudi Arabia had no contact with English-speaking countries, it would be a great loss.	20	24	16	31	29	<b>3.21</b>	<b>1.44</b>	
2.English films are more enjoyable than films in other languages.	6	9	6	54	45	<b>4.03</b>	<b>1.09</b>	
3.Native speakers of English are very sociable and kind.	15	40	20	19	26	<b>3.01</b>	<b>1.37</b>	
4.I wish I could have many native English- speaking friends.	5	٢٣	12	47	33	<b>3.67</b>	<b>1.19</b>	
5.The more I get to know native speakers of English, the more I like them.	4	29	13	30	44	<b>3.68</b>	<b>1.28</b>	
6.I like the English culture.	15	11	12	48	34	<b>3.63</b>	<b>1.32</b>	
<b>Total Mean Score</b>	<b>3.53</b>							

**1= Strongly disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Neutral; 4=Agree; 5= Strongly agree**



Table (4) suggests that the subjects show a comparatively positive attitude towards native speakers of English with an overall mean score of 3.53. Interestingly , item 2 which is related to subjects' attitude towards English films shows the highest positive attitude with a mean score of 4.03. Items 5,4, and 6 receive quite high mean scores of 3.68, 3.67, and 3.63 respectively. Items 1 and 3 received neutral attitude with mean scores of 3.21 and 3.01. Such neutral views relating to questions about Saudi Arabia having no contact with English-speaking countries as a great loss and about native speakers of English as sociable and kind could be due to lack of contact on the part of the subjects with native speakers.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study aimed at investigating the motivation and attitude of Saudi students of English as foreign language at Al-Baha University, Saudi Arabia. The findings of the study showed that the subjects are highly motivated in learning English for both instrumental and integrative orientations. Instrumental motivation received the highest point of agreement of the subjects' responses. This confirms the opinion of some researchers who believe that in a foreign language situation students are instrumentally oriented. Integrative motivation, however, showed comparatively less impact on the subjects in learning English as a part of the culture of its people. With regard to the subjects' attitudes, the

findings revealed that the students had comparatively positive attitudes towards both learning English and native speakers of English. It is worth indicating that the subjects' attitude towards native speakers of English showed more or less neutral responses . This could be due to the subjects' socio-cultural identity. Though the study revealed that the targeted students had high instrumental and integrative motivations and positive attitudes towards learning English, the fact remains that there is a wide gap between students' motivation and the reflections in their performance.

In the light of the findings of the study, the following could be recommended:

1) Various measures need to be taken to direct the students' motivation to better learning performance. It is the task of foreign language teachers to take necessary measures in creating an atmosphere that enhances their students' motivation for learning English.

2) Course books should be selected keeping in mind the target students' interests, background, and culture.

3) University teachers need to reconsider their different roles including the affective ones and shouldn't confine their roles solely to providing information.

4) Further research on how to bridge the wide gap between students' motivation and the reflections in their performance is recommended.

### **About the Author**

Dr. Hameed Yahya Al-Zubeiry is an assistant professor of Applied Linguistics, Sana'a University. At present he is working at AL-Baha University, Faculty of Science and Arts- Beljurashi- Al-Baha, KSA. His areas of interest include writing process, interlanguage, discourse analysis, pragmatics, socio-psychological studies.

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