

Mainstream Theoretical Trends and Future Directions of L2 Motivation Studies in Classroom and CALL Contexts

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Abstract

This article reviews second language (L2) motivation studies in the classroom and computer-assisted language learning (CALL) contexts with a focus on theoretical trends. Given the differences in these two contexts, it was highly critical to trace the theoretical trajectory and predict the future direction of L2 motivation theory with respect to reported theoretical inconsistencies and calls for theoretical reevaluations. The rigorous review of 158 major studies in two educational fields revealed that despite the popularity of the L2 Motivational Self System in classroom context studies, it is not equally welcomed and adopted in the CALL context. Accordingly, a critical review of the L2 Motivational Self System provided an opportunity to highlight decade-long overlooked reports of inconsistencies and calls to revisit the current L2 motivation theories. Outlining the main theoretical trends and predicting the future direction of L2 motivation studies, the findings have theoretical and pedagogical implications for the broader field of second language acquisition.

Keywords: computer-assisted language learning context; classroom context; second language motivation; nonlinear dynamic L2 motivation system

Introduction

Despite the considerable volume of studies on the second language (L2) motivation, we are still faced with the decline of motivation as a systematic problem that threatens language education in different ways (Gallup, Inc., 2014; Lazowski & Hulleman, 2016). The argument is that the current motivation theories fail to match motivation as a complex concept which differs from one learner to another because of its nonlinearity and dynamicity. To address this problem, the present study traced for reported inconsistencies in L2 motivation studies from 2010 to 2018. Given the implicit or explicit overlap of the current L2 motivation theories in classroom and computer-assisted language learning (CALL) contexts (i.e. virtual classroom or CALL-inclusive classroom) as well as increasing calls for revisiting them because of reported theoretical inconsistencies (Bahari, 2019a; Boekaerts, Van Nuland, & Martens, 2010; De Brabander & Martens, 2014; Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008), a rigorous comparative review was conducted. Highlighting the reported inconsistencies and deficiencies of the mainstream theoretical trends over the last decade contributes to the field of L2 acquisition in several ways. First, it gives voice to the overlooked calls for reforming and revisiting the current mainstream theories. Second, it shows us the direction towards which the L2 motivation study is moving or needs to move. Third, it shows us the commonalities and points of departure

in the mainstream theoretical trends in classroom and CALL contexts and their implications for future L2 motivation studies.

The present review observed Creswell's (1994) guidelines to summarize the current state of L2 motivation theories in two educational contexts (i.e. classroom and CALL contexts) and to highlight overlooked issues that have yet to be fully resolved. To this end the following research questions were addressed:

- Research question 1 (RQ1): What is the main theoretical trend of L2 motivation studies conducted in classroom and CALL contexts from 2010 to 2018?
- Research question 2 (RQ2): What are the commonalities and points of departure in the mainstream theoretical trends? Are they moving towards convergence or divergence?
- Research question 3(RQ3): What theoretical inconsistencies are reported as the evidence to revisit the mainstream L2 motivation theories in classroom and CALL contexts?
- Research question 4(RQ4): What theoretical direction can be predicted for future L2 motivation studies in classroom and CALL contexts?

Methodology

To capture the significant trends and directions of L2 motivation studies, the publication dates of empirical and conceptual papers published by related journals (i.e. under e-learning, education, and applied linguistics categories with a focus on L2 motivation) were set to the years 2010 to 2018. One hundred fifty-eight peer-reviewed articles (e.g. research articles and review articles) conducted in a classroom context ($n=94$) and in CALL context ($n=64$) and for different age groups (i.e. primary school students–college students) were included in the review to ensure the inclusion of all different adopted theoretical frameworks. To this end, major-related databases (e.g. PsychINFO, Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts, MLA International Bibliography, and Education Resource Information Center) were searched (using search terms such as L2 motivation, motivation in second language acquisition, motivation in computer-assisted language learning, etc.) to the point of saturation (i.e. nothing new was revealed). To sort and categorize the studies on L2 motivation between the years 2010 to 2018, the following major theoretical concepts (see Fig. 1) which have directly or indirectly developed studies elaborating on L2 motivation were used as the rubrics; however, the Attribution theory (Weiner, 1985) was excluded since it was not adopted as the major theoretical framework in the selected articles.

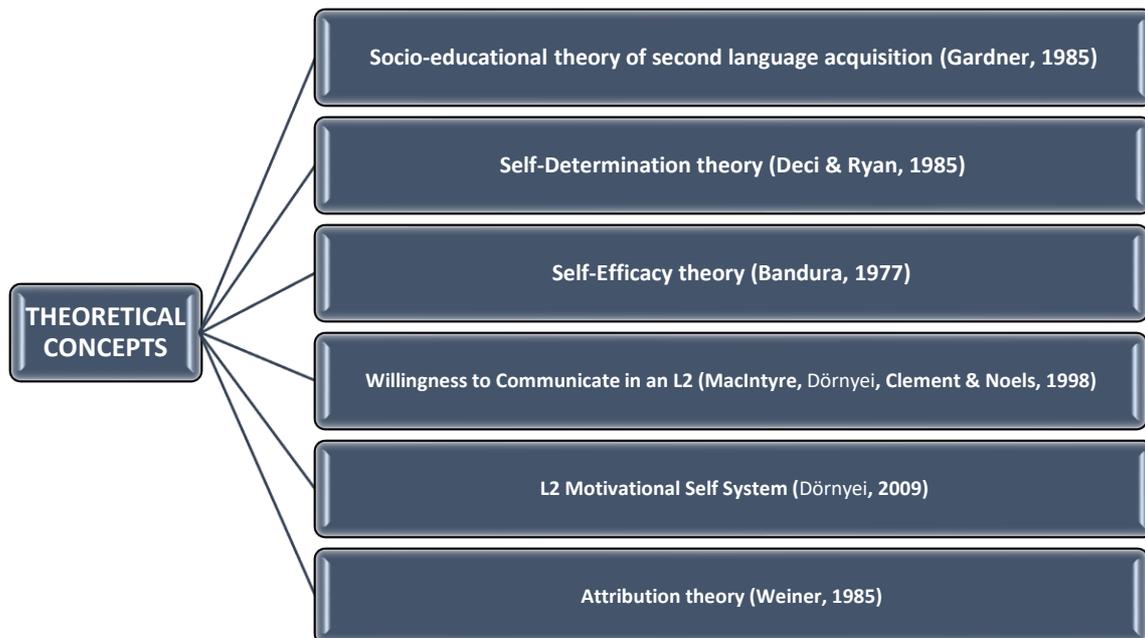


Figure 1. Theoretical Concepts used as the Rubrics

The socio-educational theory of second language acquisition (Gardner, 1985) mainly emphasizes the role of affective variables and their impact on second language learning. L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2009) is an attempt to reconceptualize previous notions and consists of three basic constituents: Ideal L2 self, Ought-to L2 self, and L2 Learning experience. Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1977) is concerned with people's judgments of their capabilities to organize the course of actions. Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) is concerned with universal competence, innate autonomy, and psychological relatedness as evolved inner resources of humans for personality development. Attribution theory (Weiner, 1985) is concerned with the perceived causes of failure and success. Willingness to Communicate in an L2 (MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clement & Noels, 1998) is concerned with proximal and distal influences on willingness to communicate in the L2. During the data collection process, studies using two or some of the above theoretical concepts were categorized under the label of *Eclectic Theoretical Framework* and studies using theoretical frameworks other than the above six were labeled as *Other Theoretical Framework*.

Results and Discussion

RQ1

To find the main theoretical trend of L2 motivation studies conducted in the classroom context, 94 studies conducted from 2010–2018 were reviewed and the results revealed that L2 Motivational Self System proposed by Dörnyei (2009) was the most frequently adopted L2 motivation theory in a classroom context (see Figure 2).

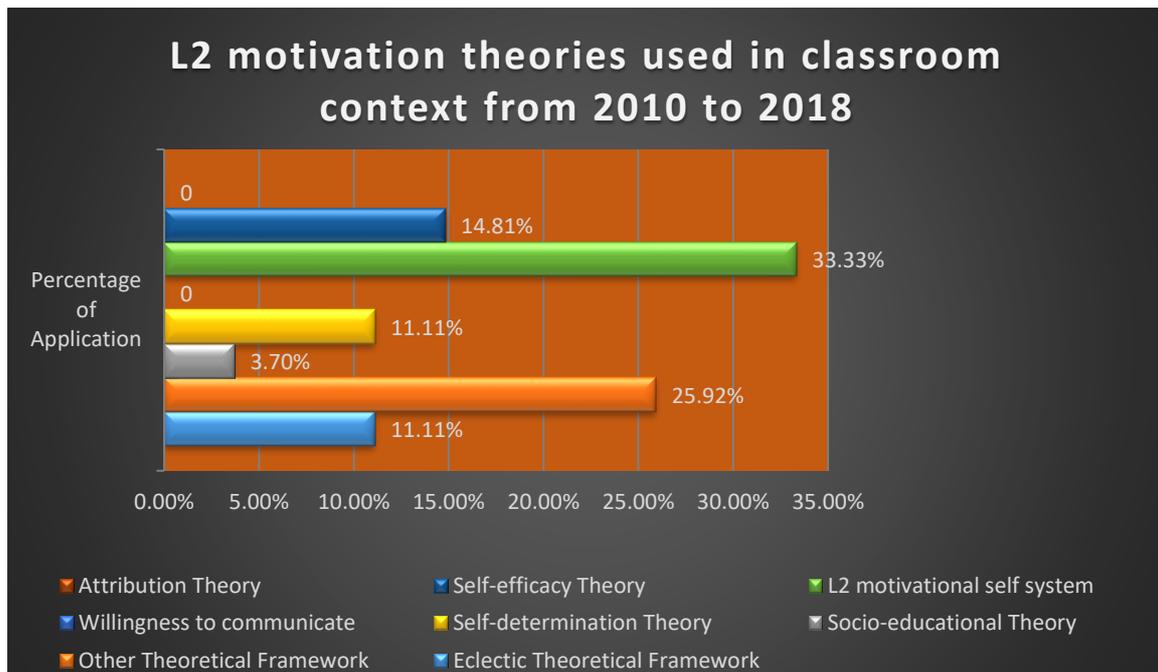


Figure 2. L2 Motivation Theories used in Classroom Context from 2010 to 2018

Applied Theories in Classroom Context

The reviewed studies frequently reported that learners were poorly and instrumentally motivated and they had no choice but to comply with the educational expectations (Lanvers, 2017, 2016; Bahari, 2019b; Taylor & Marsden, 2014), which mostly ends up in lower self-efficacy among the learners (Bahari, 2019c; Graham, Macfadyen, & Richards, 2012). Another frequently reported finding by the studies was the inconsistency of the trajectory of learner motivation (Courtney, 2017) which was attributed to the deficiency of the current L2 motivation theories which fail to encompass all factors at work in forming motivation or causing demotivation.

Proposed Theories to Replace/Revisit Previous Theories in Classroom Context

The rigorous review of the articles in the present study revealed several significant issues (see Table 1). Among them is the study conducted by Sasaki (2011) to examine the effect of overseas experiences on motivation. At that time, Sasaki (2011) rightly reminded scholars of the significance of the dynamicity of language learning and the environment and its impact on motivation (see the second part of the conclusion in her article). However, this call was not heard and the theoretical trend was pushed towards reinforcing and expanding self-oriented theories of L2 motivation. However, after a decade from Sasaki's study, we observe that scholars who have adopted self-oriented theories (in particular, L2 Motivational Self System) reemphasize the significance of addressing the dynamicity of individual differences. For example, Nagle (2018, p.213) in his concluding remarks, stated that "This finding highlights the importance of adopting a more dynamic definition of individual differences by situating them within the individual learner". It is

quite clear that the current unidirectional L2 motivation theories lack the potential to address the dynamicity and nonlinearity of individual differences and unless this gap is bridged with a multidirectional L2 motivation theory, we should expect the same calls for change in the coming decades.

In an attempt to unify the proliferation of current theories on L2 motivation, De Brabander and Martens (2014) suggested a four-fold classification of affective/cognitive and positive/negative valences with respect to intrinsic/extrinsic motivation. They introduced feasibility expectation, autonomy, and relatedness as important factors that influence the above valences which can be distinguished from one learner to another. Doenyas (2017, p.695) reports the significance of motivation as a factor which “guides the behavioral outcomes of high mentalizing abilities” and proposes the need to address the divergence of motivational characteristics that end up in behavioral divergence.

Highlighting the significance of the socio-contextual perspective, Poupore (2015) reported that a positive group work dynamic energizes L2 motivation. He argued that this process can harmonize cognitive, motivational and emotional responses on the part of the learners and called for creating conditions for group work dynamics to occur. The significance of social climate and socio-contextual perspective in the language learning process was previously confirmed (Murphey, 2013) which serves as evidence to include the social aspect of L2 motivation in future L2 motivation theories. In the same line of thought, Muñoz & Ramirez (2015) emphasized the significance of establishing the right social conditions to promote autonomy and competence and ultimately motivation.

In an attempt to propose a revision of the L2MSS (L2 motivational self-system), Papi, Bondarenko, Mansouri, Feng, and Jiang (2018, p.9) failed to update the theory for the purpose of contemporary L2 motivation studies, but rightly confirmed the dynamicity of L2 motivation and the need to make reevaluations in addressing individual differences. They reported that “If learners are motivated by motives that match their regulatory focus, prescribing one-size-fits-all strategies (e.g. Moskovsky, Alarabi, Paolini, & Ratcheva, 2013; Papi & Abdollahzadeh, 2012) to motivate everyone should be reevaluated” (p.9). This evidence confirms the argument that L2 motivation is not a static concept that is under the preset impact of a factor or a few factors.

Table 1.
Overview of Studies on L2 Motivation in Classroom Context

| Author(s) | Adopted Theoretical framework | Methodology | Participants | Theoretical implication | Purpose |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|---|--|
| Fenyvesi (2018) | Eclectic Theoretical Framework | Mixed Methods Approach | 276 | Participants' reliance on significant others as motivators for FL learning decreased significantly with | Examining the attitudes toward English lessons and the motivation for learning English as a foreign language |

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| | | | | time, and high achievers, as opposed to low achievers, were motivated by engaging in gaming and watching YouTube videos in English | |
| Doiz & Lasagabaster (2018) | L2 Motivational Self System | Qualitative | 28 | The ideas of identity, investment, and imagined communities resonate well with English-medium instruction | Examining the participants' perceptions and opinions on L2MSS |
| Nagle (2018) | L2 Motivational Self System | Quantitative & Qualitative | 26 | Individual patterns suggest that learners were aligning their effort with their emerging linguistic, personal, and professional goals | Tracking developments in L2 Spanish learners' motivation |
| Parsons et al., (2018) | Other Theoretical Framework (Expectancy value theory) | Survey | 1104 | Girls are more motivated than boys to read fiction. | Exploring upper elementary students' motivation to read fiction and nonfiction |

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| Papi et al., (2018) | L2 Motivational Self System | Quantitative | 257 | Individuals with different regulatory orientations pursue their goals in qualitatively different manners | Proposing a revision of the L2MSS |
| Pladevall-Ballester (2018) | L2 Motivational Self System | Quantitative & Qualitative | 287 | Motivation is promoted and maintained over time by adding content and language integrated learning to the language experience of young learners | Examining how language learning motivation develops over the course of two academic years in two types of instruction setting |
| Ro (2018) | Other Theoretical Framework (Ethno-methodological Perspective) | Qualitative | 4 | Reading motivation is related to different kinds of identity work and the moral responsibilities associated with certain identities | Examining how participants use their talk for interactive purposes in the focus group |
| Thompson (2017a) | L2 Motivational Self System | Quantitative & Qualitative | 195 | Students in the United States do not feel pressure to study a language | Analyzing the relationship between motivation, language choice, and multilingualism |
| Courtney (2017) | Eclectic Theoretical Framework | Longitudinal mixed method | 26 | Abrupt shift in pedagogy may negatively influence learner attitudes and motivation | Examining the primary and secondary foreign language curricula and pedagogy along with the development of motivation |
| Graham, Kiuahara, Harris, & Fishman (2017) | Other Theoretical Framework (Model of Domain Learning) | Mixed method | 227 | Supporting the proposition and the role of motivational forces, as applied to writing | Examining the relationship between motivation and writing quality |

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|------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|----------------|---|---|
| Doenyas (2017) | Other Theoretical Framework (Theory of Mind and Moral Motivation) | Meta-analysis | Not applicable | Motivation, and not ability, guides the behavioral outcomes of high mentalizing abilities | Examining motivation and its impact on social interactions |
| Muñoz (2017) | Self-Efficacy Theory | Longitudinal Study | 14 | The need to ensure continuity, in particular across transition from primary to secondary school, through appropriate liaison between teachers and schools | Examining participants' outcomes in relation to their language-learning aptitude and motivation |
| Lee, Yu, & Liu (2017) | L2 Motivational Self System | Questionnaire survey | 1395 | It is necessary to make concerted efforts to enhance students' motivation in English writing | Developing our understanding of student motivation in Hong Kong EFL writing classrooms |
| Wang, Shim, & Wolters (2017) | Self-Efficacy Theory | Survey | 1096 | Mastery self-talk and efficacy enhancement self-talk were related to positive patterns of engagement while extrinsic self-talk was related to maladaptive patterns of engagement. | Investigating the mediating role of motivational self-talk strategies |
| Yashima, Nishida & Mizumoto (2017) | L2 Motivational Self System | Qualitative & Quantitative | 2631 | The L2 Motivational Self System theory needs to be differentially applied in each context | Investigating how beliefs influence the formation of Ideal and Ought-to L2 selves |
| Yuan, Sun & Teng (2016) | Eclectic Theoretical Framework | Qualitative Case study | 15 | Teachers might experience dissonance between different selves and lose | Examining teachers' motivations derived from external |

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| | | | | | their research motivations due to conflicting school policies | encouragement and contextual challenges |
| Zarrinabadi & Tavakoli (2016) | Other Theoretical Framework (Directed Motivational Currents) | Qualitative | 2 | Directed motivational currents accounted well for motivational experience | Providing empirical data on systematic way to substantiate the validity of the directed motivational currents | |
| Protacio & Jang (2016) | Self-Efficacy Theory | Focus Group Methodology | 13 | Teachers must be provided guidance on how to motivate students to read | Examining the role of motivation in engaging students in reading activities | |
| Henry & Cliffordson (2015) | L2 Motivational Self System | Quantitative | 116 | The Ideal L2 Self accounted for substantially less of the explained variance on a criterion measure | Investigating ways in which out-of-school encounters impact on motivation | |
| Muñoz & Ramirez (2015) | Self-Determination Theory | Qualitative & Quantitative | 65 | To promote autonomy and competence, it is important to establish the right social conditions | Examining teachers' conceptions regarding student motivation | |
| Poupore (2015) | Other Theoretical Framework (Group Dynamics) | Qualitative & Quantitative | 10 | Adding support to socio-contextual perspectives in L2 motivation | Examining the relationship between group work dynamic and learners' state-level motivational responses | |
| DeBrabander & Martens (2014) | Other Theoretical Framework (Theory of Task-Specific Motivation) | Review | Not applicable | Restoring the importance of relatedness is the main finding of the present study | Proposing a fourfold classification of affective/cognitive and positive/negative valences | |
| Busse & Walter (2013) | Self-Efficacy Theory | Longitudinal Mixed Methods Approach | 94 | Outlines pedagogical suggestions for how to counteract decreasing motivation of | Examining the time- and context-sensitive nature of motivational attributes. | |

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| | | | | | modern foreign languages students during their first year university studies. | |
| Kormos & Csizer (2013) | Socio-educational theory of second language acquisition & L2 Motivational Self System | Qualitative & Quantitative | 638 | We found empirical support for the importance of the self-regulatory strategy of opportunity control. Strong learning goals and positive future self-guides without effective self-regulation are not sufficient to promote autonomous learning behavior. | operationalize motivation as consisting of goals, future self guides, and intended learning effort, which correspond to ideals and conduct in Zimmerman and Schunk's definition | |
| Hummel & Randler (2012) | Self-Determination Theory | Meta-analysis | 599 | Correlations were found between situational motivational variables and achievement scores | Examining associations between motivational variables and achievement | |
| Sasaki (2011) | Self-Determination theory | Longitudinal Study | 37 | Students who spent more than 8 months abroad became intrinsically motivated and voluntarily practiced to improve their L2 writing. | Examining the effects of overseas experiences on motivation | |

To find the main theoretical trend of L2 motivation studies conducted in CALL context, 64 major studies conducted from 2010–2018 were reviewed and the results of the study revealed that Self-Determination theory proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985) was the most frequently adopted L2 motivation theory in CALL context (see Figure 3).

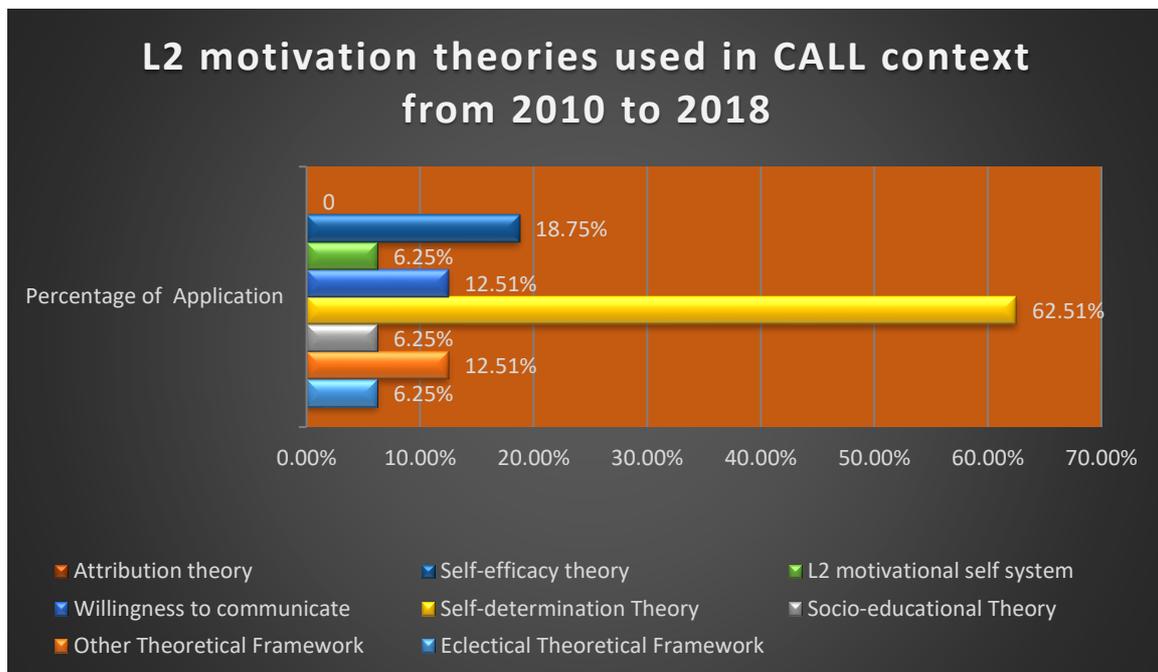


Figure 3. L2 Motivation Theories used in CALL Context from 2010 to 2018

Banegas and Manzur Busleimán (2014) suggest “future research should explore how age, and probably gender, may constitute an influential factor in motivation in online teacher education” (p.141). Given the unidirectional and limited scope of available L2 motivation theories, it is almost impossible to address these factors as well as several other critical features of individual differences (e.g. nonlinearity and dynamicity of motivation) when only one aspect of L2 motivation is prioritized over the other factors (see further discussion in the *Implication for Theory* of the present article). Eshet, Grinautski, and Peled (2012) reported that CALL learners enjoy more intrinsic motivation as a result of selecting online courses as opposed to traditional classrooms which reduces their propensity to engage in academic dishonesty. This finding can serve as evidence on the significance of the need to cater to dynamic and nonlinear motivational factors that differ from one learner to another which reportedly reduces oppositional behavior on the part of the learner (Bahari, 2018b).

Applied Theories in CALL Context

Table 2.

Overview of Studies on L2 Motivation in CALL Context

| Author(s) | Theoretical Framework | Adopted | Methodology | Participants | Theoretical implication | Purpose |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---------|
| van Roy & Zaman (2018) | Self-Determination Theory | Experimental Case Study | 125 surveys (n=40) | The results show the ambivalent motivational power | Gaining an in-depth understanding of | |

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| | | | and focus group interviews (<i>n</i> =7) | 2 | of game elements in technology- supported learning environments | the power of gamification as shaping motivation based on the principles of basic psychological need satisfaction |
| Lai, Hsiao & Hsieh (2018) | Self-Efficacy Theory | Qualitative & Quantitative | 169 | | Supportive flipped teaching resources to interact to perpetuate flipped teaching in the higher education context | Examining the relationship between motivational factors and flipped teaching |
| Henry (2018) | Other Theoretical Framework (Grounded Theory Approaches) | A grounded ethnography case study of technology use | 16 | | As language learning continues to move into digital environments, so too do opportunities for media production in online communities. | Developing a theoretical account of the emergence of motivation in online media creation |
| Fryer & Bovee (2018) | Self- Determination Theory | Qualitative & Quantitative | 642 | | Variable-centered results highlighted the essential role of teachers in supporting students' ability, value and effort related motivations for studying online | Providing variable and person- centered Longitudinal perspectives on students' motivations to e- learn |
| Crowston & Fagnot (2018) | Other Theoretical Framework (Social Movement Theory) | Survey | Not applicable | | The proposed framework provides an explanation of the motivations behind those who join user- generated content projects and their existing efforts | Developing and testing a theory of motives for contribution to user-generated content projects |
| Buckley, DeWille, Exton, Exton, & Murray (2018) | Self- Determination Theory | Survey | 107 | | Informing system designers who would like to leverage gamification of the game elements they would need to employ as motivational affordances | Formalizing the relationship between game elements and motivation, toward making gamification's use more systematic |

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|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------|----------------|--|--|
| Lin, Zhang, & Zheng (2017) | Willingness to Communicate in an L2 | Survey | 466 | Online learning strategies operated at a moderate level in the process of foreign language-learning | Examining students' motivation and learning-strategy use across a number of online language courses |
| Butler (2016) | Self-Determination Theory | Mixed Methods Approach | 82 | Learners' affective engagement in tasks may depend on both task implementation conditions as well as task-intrinsic characteristics. | Identifying motivational task elements based on what children respond to positively in games and incorporate into their own L2 vocabulary learning game designs |
| Barak, Watted, & Haick (2015) | Self-Efficacy theory and Self-Determination theory | Mixed Methods Approach | 325 | Regardless of the language of instruction, participants were driven to learn by similar goals, emphasizing <i>intrinsic motivation</i> and <i>self-determination</i> . | Examining participants' motivation to learn and effective methods for social engagement |
| Banegas & Manzur Busleimán (2014) | Self-Determination theory | Mixed Methods Approach | 71 | Social engagement and asynchronicity and personal time management, are crucial motivators | Examining motivating factors in online education |
| Magnifico, Olmanson & Cope (2013) | Eclectic Theoretical Framework | Qualitative | Not applicable | Motivation matters, and it is imperative that we are clear about the forms of motivation we are supporting in the choice of learning spaces. | Examining how constructions of motivational elements in designed learning technologies might help us better understand their fit in different educational contexts |
| Erhel & Jamet (2013) | Self-Determination theory | Experimental | 46 | A serious game environment can promote learning and motivation, providing it | Identifying the conditions under which digital game-based |

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|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|------|--|--|
| | | | | includes features that prompt learners to actively process the educational content | learning is most motivating |
| Eshet, Grinautski & Peled (2012) | Self-Determination theory | Survey | 1574 | Students in face-to-face courses are more likely to engage in acts of academic dishonesty than their counterparts in online courses | Examining motivation for academic dishonesty |
| Freiermuth & Huang (2012) | Willingness to Communicate in an L2 | Qualitative | 39 | Electronic synchronous chat represents one more valuable tool for language teachers to facilitate interaction in the target language | Examining the motivation of participants who chatted electronically using online synchronous chat software |
| Hartnett, St George, & Dron (2011) | Self-Determination Theory | Case study | 21 | Both intrinsic and extrinsic types of motivation were found to co-exist and were highly sensitive to situational influences | Exploring the motivation to learn of pre-service teachers in two online distance-learning contexts |
| Kim & Frick (2011) | Self-Determination theory | Survey | 368 | The best predictors of <i>motivation to begin</i> self-directed e-learning were perceived relevance, reported technology competence, and age | Investigating how learner motivational levels change as they go through self-directed e-learning courses |

The reviewed studies (see Table 2) frequently reported that their findings confirm the complexity and dynamicity of motivation. For example, Hartnett, St George, and Dron (2011) reported that their findings showed that motivation is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. Accordingly, Kim and Frick (2011) reported that motivation increases in the CALL context when there is the relevance between the content and learner's life. In other words, what might be motivating for one learner might not be motivating for another learner and should not be imposed for instructional reasons to other learners. The social perspective is another aspect of L2 motivation which is approached in studies conducted in the CALL context (Henry, 2018; Mercer, 2015). For example, Henry (2018) introduced the desire to engage in social networking as a genesis for motivation, a finding which has

significant pedagogical implications for L2 learners with extensive access to CALL tools and affordances.

Psychological perspective is another aspect of L2 motivation which was approached by some studies in the CALL context. For example, van Roy and Zaman (2018, p.10) addressed motivation in gamification and suggested further elaboration on personal differences by reporting that “the data showed some indications of personal characteristics also playing a role in the way gamification could support students in their basic psychological needs”. This can be interpreted as the lack of comprehensive L2 motivation theory in the CALL context which is capable of addressing the dynamicity and nonlinearity of factors influencing L2 motivation.

Proposed Theories to Replace/Revisit Previous Theories in CALL Context

Magnifico, Olmanson, and Cope (2013, p.508) reported the dynamicity of motivation in CALL context and proposed taxonomy to address this complexity: “Our findings have demonstrated the enormous variation possible in the forms of motivation, and the complex association of multiple motivations in a single learning space”. This study, the same as several other studies, reemphasized the complexity of L2 motivation and called for a multifaceted and comprehensive L2 motivation theory capable of addressing different aspects of L2 motivation in CALL context (Barak et al., 2015; Kizilcec & Schneider, 2015; Onah, Sinclair & Boyatt, 2014).

Studies undertaken in the CALL context suggested that online discourse with respect to broader psycho-socio-cultural relations, connections, and cognitions requires a revisited CALL-oriented L2 motivation theory. For example, Henry (2018, p.3) stated that “In order to develop understandings of motivational processes involved when learning takes place in digital environments, L2 motivation research needs to broaden its conceptual horizons and to draw on theorizing in epistemologically divergent fields”. This signals both the complexity of motivation and the need to integrate different theoretical frameworks to approach this complex aspect of individual differences (Mercer & Ryan, 2016) in the CALL context.

RQ2

To find out the commonalities and points of departure in the mainstream theoretical trends in classroom and CALL contexts, 158 major studies conducted from 2010 to 2018 were rigorously reviewed and the results revealed that despite some fluctuations observed in the last decade (see Figure 4), it seems that both classroom and CALL contexts studies of L2 motivation are moving towards divergence in terms of the adopted theoretical framework as part of a general theoretical trend. Figure 4 categorizes L2 motivation theories used from 2010 to 2018 into four categories: the original theory used, the adapted theory used, an eclectic theory used, other theories used. According to the results, a variety of categories have been used at different rates but it is evident that the use of adapted and eclectic L2 motivation theories have been on the rise which betokens the move towards divergent L2 motivation theories instead of convergent ones. This major finding serves as evidence in support of the need to revisit the current L2 motivation theories towards a comprehensive and multifaceted theory.

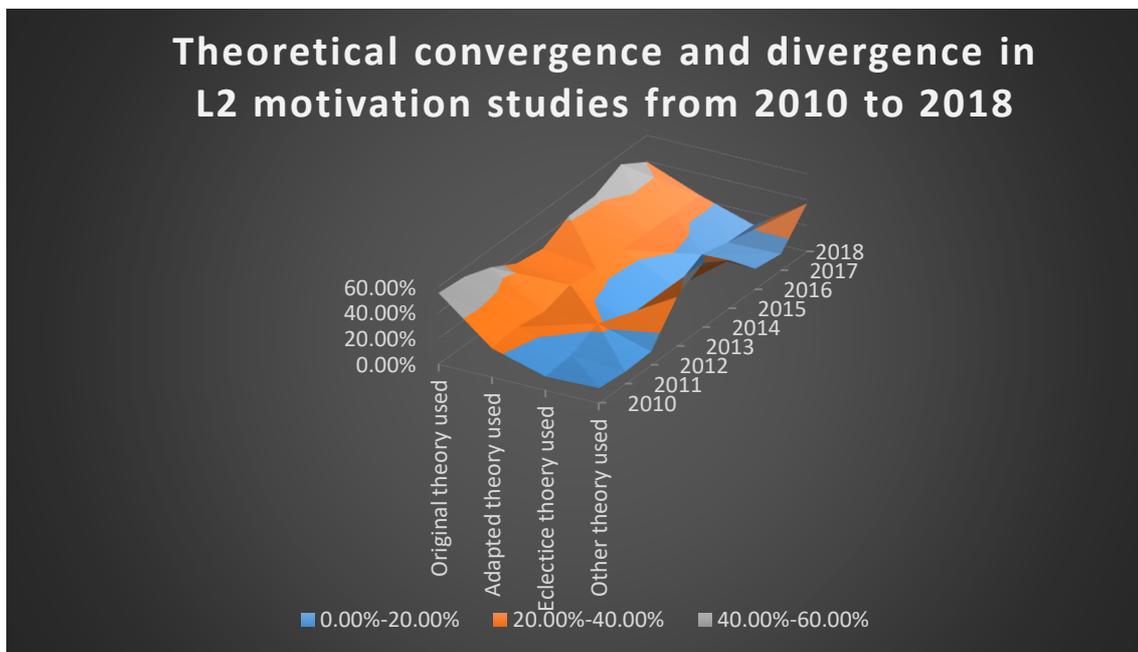


Figure 4. Theoretical Convergence and Divergence in L2 Motivation Studies from 2010 to 2018

RQ3

Inconsistent results reported by the studies on the most adopted L2 motivation theory (i.e. the L2MSS) despite Dörnyei's (2009, p.31) argument that "all these studies found solid confirmation for the proposed self-system" served as the reason to focus on this theory in response to the third research question. All of the reviewed studies either examined one component out of three components of the L2MSS or examined three components, but provided sound evidence for one component. Therefore, without a single study with sound evidence on all three basic components, it is a baseless assertion to confirm a theory with so little sound evidence available. Under the L2MSS, the multiplicity of motivational factors in L2 learners is narrowed down to three basic Self types (drawing on self-concept theory) which barely include the variety of dynamic and nonlinear motivational factors at an individual level. Table 3 displays a number of studies reporting inconsistencies of the L2MSS.

Table 3.

Studies Reporting Inconsistency of the L2MSS

| Studies Reporting Inconsistency of the L2MSS | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|--|
| Author(s) | Theoretical Perspective | Methodology | Participants | A statement referring to the inconsistency of the L2MSS |
| Bahari (2019b) | Dynamic Systems Theory | Mixed Methods Approach | 67 | "L2MSS were not consistently correlated with learners' achievement" (p.56) |
| Subekti (2018) | Motivation-achievement relationship | Quantitative | 56 | "could not be a strong predictor of their (i.e. learners') achievement" (p.17) |

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| Moskovsky, Racheva, Assulaimani, & Harkins (2016) | L2 Motivational Self System | Qualitative & Quantitative | 360 | “L2MSS components were not consistently associated with achievement” (p.6) |
| Lamb (2012) | L2 Motivational Self System | Qualitative & Quantitative | 527 | “Ideal L2 Self in this study only marginally influenced participants achievement” (p.13) |
| Simpson (2012) | L2 Motivational Self System | Action Research Project | 34 | “as the results show (at least for this group of learners), some activities appeared to provide very little motivation to the students, at least in terms of the L2 Motivational Self System” (p.19) |
| Taylor, Busse, Gagova, Marsden, & Roosken (2013) | Educational psychology | Quantitative & Qualitative | 4000 | “criticize the model for not paying due attention to actual self and believe that in practice it is not possible to reduce the distance between the actual and ideal selves” (p.44) |
| Driver (2017) | Lacanian ideas of clinical psychoanalytic practice | Qualitative | 51 Purposeful sampling | “any motivation discourse, whether focused on the self or otherwise, is not as totalizing as it might seem” (p.712) |
| Taylor (2010) | Relational analysis (between classmates and teachers) | Quantitative | 1045 Teenager EFL learners | “the correlations between the public selves and the private selves were very low” (p.12) |
| Kaplan & Garner (2017) | Complex Dynamic System | Theoretical Perspective | Not applicable | “current prominent models of identity face challenges in bridging across divergent perspectives and apparent dichotomies such as personal or social-collective, conscious or unconscious, and epigenetic or discursive-relational, and affording pursuit of research questions that allows integrative answers” (p.1) |

According to the reviewed studies (see Table 3), there is a critical need for revisiting the L2 motivation theories and, in particular, Dörnyei’s (2009) L2MSS. Despite the argument that L2 MSS has received “the most thorough overhaul” (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015, p.72), the overview of the studies revealed several inconsistencies and weaknesses which calls for a fundamental theoretical reevaluation. Under the L2MSS, the multiplicity of motivational factors in L2 learners is narrowed down to three basic Self types which barely include the variety of dynamic and nonlinear motivational factors at the individual

level. The main point is that the L2MSS, the same as the formerly-proposed L2 motivation theories, has emphasized one aspect of L2 motivation (e.g. Self types) and failed to address other aspects (e.g. nonlinearity and dynamicity of L2 motivation) in a comprehensive and multidimensional system. The main contradictory aspect of the L2MSS which makes it impossible to be used in CALL context studies is that it draws on the rationale of lack of intercultural and interlinguistic contact between the target language community and the second language learner. The emerging CALL tools and affordances (e.g. WhatsApp, Skype, Viber etc.) have provided online intercultural and interlinguistic contact and made the L2MSS theoretically baseless and redundant.

Drawing on self-determination theory, the L2MSS focuses on the autonomy of people as the source of regulating behavior (Grolnick, Deci, & Ryan, 1997; Noels, Pelletier, Clément, & Vallerand, 2000) and fails to cater to the dynamicity and nonlinearity of self. It mainly emphasizes the significance of future goals as a tool to motivate L2 learners by activating learner autonomy and recruiting the potential behind *Self* types and misses the critical features of dynamicity and nonlinearity of L2 goals. The following extract taken from the concluding part of a study carried out by Simpson (2012) clearly shows the dynamicity and nonlinearity of future selves in the eyes of L2 learners during the learning process: “students were able to perceive a variety of ways in which their L2 self-image changed over the course of the enhancement program” (p. 333).

Drawing on the self-discrepancy theory introduced by Higgins (1987), the L2MSS introduces discrepancy as to the main genesis of L2 motivation. The argument is that, according to the recognition of discrepancy/discrepancies, the L2 learner tries to reduce the recognized discrepancy. The counter-argument is that we do not usually look around with such deep negativity which can serve us as the source of motivation for L2 learning. In other words, the mere existence of difference(s) cannot be considered as the only motivating power behind L2 learning. We sometimes simply become motivated by an interesting aspect of a language (e.g. mellifluous sounds, great authors, great literary works, etc.) without paying attention to the differences. Thus, we are positively influenced by a positive factor which will serve us as the rationale to keep learning a particular L2 without either considering the negative factor (i.e. difference) or seeing a particular *self* in a future state.

Another instance of the limited scope of the L2MSS is that it is not applicable/appropriate for all L2 learners, except for late adolescents (Dörnyei, 2009; Mercer & Williams, 2014) who have developed enough to recruit the potential behind the possible selves. This limited scope stems from the discrepancy-oriented definition of motivation in the L2MSS, according to which only those who can identify their possible selves and see the discrepancy between present and future selves will be motivated. What about the rest of the learners who have not reached this level? This argument is unacceptable for two reasons. First, there is no evidence on the significance of age as a significant predictor and relevant factor in forming L2 motivation for learners with dynamic L1 self-concepts. Second, by introducing age factor as a defining factor in L2 motivation among other reportedly significant factors (e.g. gender), the L2MSS fails to address and clarify the L2 motivation process among a large group of L2 learners, who have not reached the sixth stage of self-development (i.e. late adolescence) and do not make sense of the possible selves, as described by Harter (1981). This limited scope of the L2MSS is implicitly confirmed by Boo, Dörnyei, and Ryan (2015) who reported that primary school pupils are absent from systematic research compared to secondary school

students. The argument is that those pupils are excluded from studies because of the deficiency of the most popular L2 motivation theory which fails to include all age groups. Another deficiency was the lack of validity which was reemphasized in a recent study by Papi et al., (2018, p.2) who contended that “ought-to L2 self has not even emerged as a valid construct”. This deficiency was previously reported (e.g. Csizér & Lukács, 2010; Kormos & Csizér, 2008; Lamb, 2012) and attributed to the ‘age’ factor (Csizér & Lukács, 2010).

Another instance of the limited scope of the L2MSS is the failure of the *Ought-to L2 Self* to serve as the self-guide in motivational practices which Dörnyei (2009) contended:

Because the source of the second component of the system, the Ought-to L2 Self, is external to the learner (as it concerns the duties and obligations imposed by friends, parents and other authoritative figures), this future self-guide does not lend itself to obvious motivational practices (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 32)

This can be implied as the deficiency of this component at forming L2 motivation via socially-induced selves for future goals (e.g. academic achievement, school persistence, etc.). This is confirmed by studies reporting its correlation with less internalized motivational factors as well as motivated learning behavior (Kormos, Kiddle, Csizér, 2011). Another deficiency of the L2MSS is that it fails to address gender and gender differences which are reportedly significant and central factors in learner’s self-concept and learners’ motivation (King, 2016). This is in contrast with the theoretical basis of the L2MSS (i.e. self-concept theory) which addresses the individual differences, in particular, sex-specific differences. Even Dörnyei himself admits that “the amount of systematic sex-specific research has been meagre” (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002, p. 427). The L2MSS introduces clashing theoretical bases as the sources of motivational power to ensure its generalizability. At one point, discrepancy (as a negative motivator which originates from difference/loss) is put forward as a motivating power and, at another point, Ideal L2 (as a positive motivator which originates from hope/desire). In another clashing theoretical basis, Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) described the aspect of integrativeness (i.e. the affective or interpersonal aspect of L2 motivation) as a psychological/emotional identification with a defined/located L2 community. Given the rise of globalization as well as the spread of international culture, such an identification/association with a particular cultural/geographical L2 community is less likely to happen (Lamb, 2012). We also observe that the third component of the L2MSS (i.e. the L2 learning experience) belongs to a different category from that of the first two components which are self-oriented in terms of theoretical basis. This is contended by Dörnyei (2009, p.29) who admits that the L2 learning experience “is conceptualized at a different level from the two self-guides” and suggests future studies to elaborate on the Self aspects of this component. Lack of theoretical interconnectedness between the components might be one of the reasons why they have rarely been addressed simultaneously. The Ideal L2 Self has been the most frequently examined component (Kormos & Csizér, 2008) and the L2 learning experience has been the least examined component of the L2MSS.

RQ4

Based on the review of the studies in both classroom and CALL contexts, it can be predicted that L2 motivation studies move towards a revisited theoretical framework based on the nonlinearity and dynamicity of individual differences. Since L2 motivational factors vary from one learner to another (Bahari, 2018a), either in order (i.e. nonlinearity) or in type (i.e. dynamicity); therefore, it is wrong to classify them into a limited number of *Self* types (ideal self, etc.) and keep scholars busy finding a new label (e.g. anti-ought-to-self) from the infinite list of possible Self types. Given the reported limitations of the L2MSS, particularly when Dörnyei (2009) contends that “the Ideal self is only likely to motivate if certain conditions are met” (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 14), pushing L2 motivation research trend towards introducing such new Self types serves for the expansion of a deficient theory. A theory that is incompatible with contemporary CALL context (where psycho-socio-cultural interpersonal and intrapersonal interactions totally differ with that face-to-face context). A theory that fails to address the critical features of dynamicity and nonlinearity of L2 motivation cannot guide the L2 motivation studies towards a comprehensive and multidimensional theoretical basis where all critical aspects are coherently addressed.

It is very important to note that the obsession of advocates of the L2MSS has led to a misguided trend in L2 motivation studies, which has confused anti-ought-to-self with a form of psychological reactance (e.g. incivility, dissent, resistance). Adding anti-ought-to-self (Thompson, 2017b) as a psychological concept to other Self types introduced by the L2MSS takes the L2 motivation studies to nowhere. Under this unpredictable trend, we should expect the next scholar to introduce another self type (e.g. jealousy self, revenge self, biased self, etc.) which gives momentum to some of the learners to learn an L2. The point is that we need to look from afar and see that the variety of Selves implicitly confirms the nonlinearity and dynamicity of L2 motivation. Unfortunately, this poorly-reasoned subject has been widely advocated by a few journals (e.g. *System* and *Modern Language Journal*, Liu & Thompson, 2018; Thompson, 2017a) which confuses the behavioral expressions of a psychological reactance with anti-ought-to-self. While the former inspires the learner to do something negative (e.g. obstruct learning), the latter refers to a type of self, which serves to negatively motivate the learner to proceed with L2 learning (Bahari, 2019c).

Therefore, a theoretical revisit of the L2MSS as an inconsistent and deficient L2 motivation theory which has failed to address several critical issues (e.g. dynamicity and nonlinearity of motivation, all-age-groups applicability, contemporary CALL-context applicability, etc.) is a critical requirement for scholars of the field. Limiting L2 motivation as a complex and dynamic concept to three Self types (with several deficiencies discussed above) which barely include the dynamic and nonlinear features of L2 motivation which reportedly exist among L2 learners at the individual level (Bahari, 2018b) leads us to a misguided research trend.

Conclusions

Motivation in existing CALL context research is either considered as a static personal characteristic (i.e. intrinsic motivation) or a product of CALL context (i.e. activated by CALL tools and affordances). Similar to classroom context research, CALL context research from 2010–2018 fails to acknowledge and adopt an L2 motivation theory that

addresses the nonlinearity and dynamicity of L2 motivation at the individual level which varies from one learner to another. Pedagogically, CALL context develops motivation via tools and affordances which facilitate developing learner autonomy, catering for individual-learning-style differences, and establishing instant access between different psycho-socio-cultural communities at an infinite scale. According to the overviewed studies on CALL context, teacher's motivating role is very important at facilitating teacher-student interaction and exchange of personalized feedback (Baran, Correia, & Thompson, 2011; Legg & Knox, 2012; Murphy, Shelley, White, & Baumann, 2011; Nunan, 2012; Xiao, 2012). The reviewed studies also highlighted the significance of psycho-socio-cultural accessibility which is facilitated via interactive CALL tools and affordances (Gakonga, 2012; Simpson, 2012), despite some concerns about isolation (O'Bannon, Lubke, & Britt, 2013).

Taking a unidirectional approach to L2 motivation study seemed to be the main cause of inconsistency in theoretical trends reviewed from 2010 to 2018. Each study emphasized a particular aspect of motivation and overlooked other aspects. Looking at a complex concept, such as motivation from the lens of a limited theoretical framework, such as L2 motivational self-system leaves Ushioda (2013, p.235) with no choice but to confess that "it is becoming ever more difficult to characterize interrelations between context, motivation, and pedagogies in any general sense". The diversity of learning context which becomes more diverse by the development of technology is not to be blamed for this problem. The same inconsistency of L2 motivational self-system is also reported by Henry and Cliffordson (2015):

The current study suggests that, in settings where English has become a part of everyday cultural practices and experiences, the strength of individuals' current L2 selves can mean that the idealized version—the English-speaking future self—lacks the power to align motivated behavior in a manner consistently demonstrated in other contexts (2015, p. 21)

The limited scope of the theory not only makes characterizing L2 motivation a challenging task but also negatively affects the validity of the results obtained by studies drawing on it.

Any theory with partially sound evidence on contextualization of its basic components (as discussed earlier) cannot be introduced as a criterion to measure a complex factor such as L2 motivation. Theories need to be examined and reexamined by scholars beyond the field of the theorist of a theory. In other words, confirmatory reports by a theorist's student(s) or co-author(s) alone cannot serve as reliable and solid evidence to support the consistency and contextualization of a theory. For example, reading articles using Dörnyei's (2009) L2 motivational self-system (either by his students or by his co-authors) gives the reader an impression that nothing went awry during the application of the theory and the results were perfectly in keeping with the theory without any notable weaknesses and deficiencies. After a decade of delay in the rigorous revisiting of L2 motivation theories, it is time to respond to the frequent calls of revisiting in the literature as reviewed in the present study and propose a multifaceted and comprehensive L2 motivation theory with respect to the critical features of nonlinearity and dynamicity as well as contemporary CALL context.

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