

Impact of Globalization and Technological Advancement on EFL Learners' Motivation and Attitude

Ali Suleiman Awwad¹

Siti Hamin Stapa²

Tengku Nor Rizan Tengku Mohd Maasum³

Pusat Pengajian Bahasa dan Linguistik

FSSK

Abstract: *Globalization refers to the expanding connectivity, integration, and interdependence of economic, social, technological, cultural, political, and ecological spheres across local activities. In an increasingly globalized society, empowered individuals communicate across cultural and national boundaries as citizens of the world. They have access to new technologies that afford them unprecedented ways to reinterpret, appropriate, contest, and negotiate mass distributed texts in multiple forms. This article presents an overview of the EFL learners' motivation and attitudes to learn English with respect to the impact of globalization and technological advancement. This current situation has led to a paradigm shift of learners' motivations and attitudes in order to cope with the demands of English as a global language. Hence, this article will review studies in motivation and attitude among EFL learners on the effect of technological variable such as internet and satellite television programs and social issues willingness to migrate and to study and work overseas. This review will contribute to the literature of the role of English as a global language.*

Key words: *globalization, attitudes, motivation, foreign language.*

1.1 Introduction

Nowadays, many researchers investigate how globalization changing our understanding of students' attitudes and motivation to learn English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and if it effects on how understand students as well as teachers in an international world. Although several authors have put forward teaching suggestions based on today's international perspective (e.g. Cates, 2004; Tanaka & Fukada, 2007 cited in Wadell & Shandor, 2011).

Since globalization making and creating a worldwide and global society, the use of English as a global language becomes more and more common to people all over the world. Consistent with Warshauer (2000: 512) stated that the people will be in "a new society, in which English is shared among many groups of non-native speakers rather than dominated by the Americans or British" in the twentieth century. As these individuals used English as a global language to communicate with one another, they will act as intercultural speakers to share the social reality within the host culture (Byram, 2008) or perhaps the world culture (Dornyei, 2006). Globalization effects within the fields of politics, communication, social science, education and

technology (Graddol, 2006). These changes which caused by such global effects have led to the increasing numbers of people learning English more because they want, travelling abroad, working. In fact, pursuing advanced information during a study abroad context has become one among the world phenomena urged by economic desires, cultural interaction, political issues or the easiness of travel (Byram&Feng, 2006). Consistent the statistics shows that there are more than 1,000,000 students and students learning abroad around the world (Graddol, 2006).

1.2 Attitudes and Motivation toward Learning English as a Foreign Language

It is argued that language learning is regarded as the corner stone of human existence. Knowing the language can help us to express our opinions, hopes, and even our dreams. In foreign language learning context, there are various factors that influence the learning process such as motivation and attitudes (Tavil, 2009). The matter of learner's attitude and motivation is acknowledged as one of the most important factors that impact on learning language (Fakeye, 2010).

Kara (2009) stated that attitudes towards learning besides opinions and beliefs have an obvious influence on students' behaviors and consequently on their performance. It is argued that those students who possess positive attitudes and beliefs about language learning have a tendency to increase their ability in language learning.

One of the main aspects of research on attitudes related to second/foreign language learning has been on the orientation of the learner towards the speakers of the target language (Hakuta, 1986). Research in this area has been established by Gardner and his associates. Gardner and Lambert (1972) found that success in language attainment was dependent upon the learner's affective predisposition towards the target linguistic-cultural group. Gardner and Lambert (1972) were instrumental in the conceptualization of "integrative motivation" which "reflects a high level of drive on the part of the individual to acquire the language of a valued second language community in order to acquire the language and communication with that group.

Gardner's socio-educational model Gardner (1985) considers motivation and attitudes to be important because they influence how active the individual will be in learning the second language. In Krashen's monitor model, motivation is seen as a component of the passive cognitive filter that screens incoming language based on the learner's motives, needs, attitudes and emotional states.

In his model, Gardner talked about two kinds of motivation, the integrative and the instrumental, with much emphasis on the former. The integrative motivation refers to learners' desire to at least communicate, or at most integrate (or even assimilate), with the members of the

target language. The instrumental motivation refers to more functional reasons for learning the language such as getting a better job, a higher salary or passing an examination (Gardner, 1985).

Vaezi (2008) conducted a study to describe and examine a group of Iranian's undergraduate students' integrative and instrumental motivation toward learning English as a foreign language. The results of the study revealed that the participants had very high motivation and positive attitudes towards learning English and were more instrumentally motivated.

Shaaban and Ghaith (2003) investigated the attitudes of college students in Lebanon towards Arabic, French and English. The results of the study showed that students perceived the foreign languages, French and English, as more useful than the native language, Arabic, in the domains of science, technology and business. The study had also shown how English is the language of future by most Lebanese, a language whose mastery would open wide the gates of education, global trade and communication.

Karahan (2007) carried out a study in the Turkish EFL context. The motive of his study arose from the complaints raised by learners, teachers, administrators, and parents about why Turkish EFL students cannot attain the desired level of proficiency in English. Therefore, he conducted a study to investigate the relationship between language attitudes and language learning which is a missing point of discussions on the problems of teaching English in Turkey. More specifically, Karahan tried to identify the interlaced relationship among language attitudes, the starting age of language learning, and the place where the individual started to learn English within Turkish EFL context. The only method of inquiry used was a questionnaire adopted from previous studies on language attitudes. The sample included (190) females and males eighth grade students of a private primary school in Adana, Turkey, where English was intensively taught. The findings indicated that although the students were exposed to English in a school environment more frequently than other students at public schools, they had only slightly positive attitudes; especially female students had higher rates. In addition, the subjects recognized the importance of the English language but interestingly did not reveal high level orientation towards learning the language. On the other hand, the results revealed that the subjects had slightly positive attitudes towards the English based on culture, but however, they were not tolerant to Turkish people speaking English among themselves.

Dwaik and Shehadeh (2010) conducted an exploratory study to identify the motivational orientations of Arab college learners in the EFL context of Southern Palestine. The sample of the study comprised 127 English-major and Engineering students from Hebron University and Palestine Polytechnic University respectively. The purpose of the study was to determine the influence of the subjects' gender, their English language proficiency, level of education and their major field of study on their motivational orientations. The findings of the study revealed that the subjects had strong extrinsic motivation for learning English while their intrinsic motivational orientation such as their attitude towards English and English speakers was not very positive.

The researchers suggested that the English language faculty should try to inculcate intrinsic motivation to ensure sustained and long lasting learning.

1.3 Attitudes and Motivation in a Globalized World

A significant amount of research has been conducted in the study of motivation and attitude in foreign language learning ever since. But very few studies have ever dealt with the effects of globalization or technological aspects on EFL learner's motivation and attitude.

The world itself has changed greatly since Gardner and Lambert first introduced the notion of integrative and instrumental motivation and attitudes in the late 1950s. Their ideas were predicated based on the social groups associated with particular languages, with some contact between them. One may argue whether the relative status of the languages matter (e.g. Clement and Kruidenier, 1983), or how much contact there is between the groups (e.g. see for example Gardner, 2001a); but in the case of English, the arguments may possibly be redundant.

Warschauer (2000: 512) points out that globalization has brought about "a new society, in which English is shared among many groups of non-native speakers rather than dominated by the British or Americans." In the minds of learners, English may not be associated with particular geographical or cultural communities but with a spreading international culture incorporating (inter alia) business, technological innovation, consumer values, democracy, world travel, and the multifarious icons of fashion, sport and music.

Yashima (2002: 57) was puzzled to find integrative motivation among her male students, because she did not expect the average Japanese male to identify closely with American or British culture. However, she found that for Japanese university students "English symbolizes the world around Japan" and proposed that some learners may have an 'international posture' that motivates them to learn and communicate in the language more than others.

In a study of Indonesian middle school students, Lamb (2004) found that aspects of instrumental and integrative motivation were combined in the learners' developing "bicultural identities." While the learners saw themselves as connected to a global, English-speaking culture, they simultaneously maintained the aspects of the identity in which they were firmly rooted, that is the local Indonesian culture. Another way to look at this globalize identity is through Dörnyei's (2005) concept of the "L2 motivational self-system," which integrates theories of motivation with a psychological approach toward identity, considering learners' "ideal selves," or idealized self-representations, as an integral part of their language learning experiences. Interested in the self-representations of Japanese high school students, Yashima (2009) found that many learners had "international posture;" i.e., they envisioned themselves as

future members of an international community and saw English as the tool for gaining access to that community.

In another study, Lamb (2004) investigates the effects of globalization and global forces on integrative motivation of Indonesian children aged 11 - 12 years old, as they begin formal English in an urban junior high school. His main idea revolves the notion of “integrativeness” which he believes to have greatly changed since the emergence of globalization process. He argues that as English loses its association with particular Anglophone cultures and is instead identified with the powerful forces of globalization, the desire to integrate loses its explanatory power in many EFL contexts and therefore, the individuals learn English to develop a bicultural identity of their local culture. At the same time as a member of the “global culture”. Knowing English gives Indonesian young generation a sense of belonging to a worldwide culture and awareness of information, style and events of that. It is speculated that changes in individuals’ motivation to learn the language may therefore be partly explained by reference to ongoing processes of identification which, in turn, may change through some social processes like globalization.

Dörnyei, Csizér, and Németh (2006) conducted L2 motivation survey, involving over 13,000 language learners on three successive occasions: in 1993, 1999 and 2004. The survey took place in one particular country, Hungary, and the sample represents young teenagers from the whole cross-section of the nation. The examined period covers a particularly prominent time in the country’s history, the transition from a closed, Communist society to a Western-style democracy during which the country finally became a member of the European Union in 2004. The study presents a good example of an overall change in language learning motivation due to globalization process in an EFL context. It describes how sociopolitical changes and globalization process introducing English as the global language has affected the various language attitudes prevailing amongst Hungarians and their motivation to learn five different target languages: English, German, French, Italian and Russian. Their study, with respect to the third phase of the data (gained in 2004), showed that Hungarians tend to take up the study of English increasingly as a self-evident part of education. Therefore, the global English is becoming increasingly associated with a cosmopolitan and technologically advanced “imagined community” and thus with the pathway to career success among Hungarians.

Alqahtani (2011) explored 35 Kuwaiti learners’ perceptions of the relationship between English and globalization by interviewing them. The findings indicated that despite recognizing and appreciating the establishment and identity of English as a global language, learners did not seem to have a clear and complete understanding of the “essence” of this global era.

Mehrpour and Vojdani (2012) investigated the globalization and its impact on the students' motivation and attitudes toward learning English as a foreign language. The findings of the study present a consistent picture which establishes the idea that new waves of motivational variables have emerged among Iranian EFL learners. Language and language learning motivation have been affected by the increasing connectedness of today's world due to globalization and its technological advances. The study of English in Iran as an EFL context where English is an international language today, more than ever before people from different scientific and social backgrounds to be more motivated to learn English. Huge expansion of technological devices for scientific and entertainment purposes such as computer soft wares and games, the internet and cyber communication, satellite TV channels, and acceleration of migration tendencies to English-speaking countries due to competitive standards of lifestyle all seem to have brought about tempting instrumental motivations for Iranians, especially the young generation, to learn English. The results of the survey showed that technological, sociological and scientific aspects created or intensified through the process of globalization have affected Iranian EFL learners' motivation to learn English and have made them more instrumentally motivated.

These studies represent a need to consider the changing role of motivation and attitude in lieu of the existence of the global village, globalization requirements and technological innovations. As a result, new constructs may be identified in the study of motivation and attitude in English language learning.

1.3 Conclusion

From the literature, we can say that motivation and attitudes for language learning had changed greatly since Gardner and Lambert first introduced the notion of integrative and instrumental motivation and attitudes in the late 1950s. One of the major factors is the impact of globalization. Globalization creates a new society, in which English is shared among many groups of non-native speakers. Learners of English recognize that English may not be associated with particular geographical or cultural communities but with the spread of international culture incorporating business, technological innovation, consumer values, democracy, world travel, and the multifarious icons of fashion, sport and music. We need new studies to examine students' motivation and attitudes with the effect of the technological advancement in this globalized world.

References

- Algahtani, A. A. (2011). The significance of English language learning in contemporary Kuwait: Some empirical insight for economists of knowledge and educational planning. *College Student Journal*.
- Byram, M. & Feng, A. (2006). *Living and Studying Abroad—Research and Practice*. Clevedon:

Multilingual Matters.

- Cates, K. (2004). Becoming a global teacher: Ten steps to an international classroom. *The Language Teacher*, 28 (7), 31-36.
- Dörnyei, Z., Csizér, K., & Németh, N. (2006). Motivational dynamics, language attitudes and Language globalisation: A Hungarian perspective. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Dwaik, R., & A, Shehadeh. (2010). "Motivation Types among EFL College Students: Insights from the Palestinian Context" *An-Najah University Journal of Research* 24:1, pp. 333-360.
- Fakeye, D. (2010). Students' Personal Variables as Correlates of Academic Achievement in English as a Second Language in Nigeria. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 22(3), 205-211.
- Graddol, D. (2006). *English Next*. London: British Council.
- Gardener, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. (1972). *Attitudes and motivation in second-language learning*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publishers.
- Gardner, R. C. 1985. *Social psychology and second language learning: the role of attitudes and motivation*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Karahan, F. (2007). Language attitudes of Turkish students towards the English language and its use in Turkish context. *Journal of Arts and Sciences*, 73-87.
- Lamb, M. (2004). Integrative motivation in a globalizing world. *System*, 32, 3-19. doi:10.1016/j.system.2003.04.002
- Mehrpour, S & Vojdani, M. 2012. Globalization and EFL Learning Motivation: A New Perspective on Integrative vs. Instrumental Motivation among Iranian Learners of English. *Journal of Modern Linguistics*. Vol.2, No.2, 43-50.
- Shaaban, K. & Ghaith, G. (2003). Effect of religion, first foreign language, and gender on the perception of the utility of language. *Journal of language, Identity and Education*. 2(1), 53-77.
- Tavil, Z. (2009). Parental Attitudes towards English Education for Kindergarten Students in Turkey. *Kastamonu Education Journal*. 17(1), 331-340. [Online] Available: www.kefdergi.com/pdf/cilt17_no1/331.pdf (August 9, 2011)
- Vaezi, Z. (2008). Language learning motivation among Iranian under-graduate students. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 5, 54-61.
- Wadell & Shandor. (2011). *Changing Views on Motivation in a Globalizing World*. THE language teacher. <jalt-publications.org/tlt>.
- Warshauer, M. (2000). The changing global economy and the future of English teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34, 511-525.
- Yashima, T., 2002. Willingness to communicate in a second language: the Japanese EFL context. *The Modern Language Journal*, 86, 54-66.