Motivation and Language Learning Narratives: A Case Study of Indonesian Students

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Abstract

Motivation is a foremost aspect in language learning and has been extensively studied in the field of SLA due to its important contribution to pedagogical implications. However, SLA scholars/researchers have overwhelmingly preoccupied specifically with Asian students such as Japanese and/or Chinese (Gong et al, 2020; Kikuchi, 2019). This ignores the unique individual differences that Indonesian students have which contribute to their learning trajectories. The present study investigated the factors of individual differences influencing their motivation in learning English as foreign language and how the ideal L2 self is expressed through their language learning narratives. A total of two Indonesian students studying abroad in one of the research-integrated universities in the US participated in this study during the Fall semester. Through three stages of open-ended interviews and the researcher's observations, the data were collected and analyzed using narrative analysis and the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) proposed by Dörnyei (2009) as framework. The analysis revealed that factors such as family background and socioeconomic status, education system inequality, and access to the target language contribute to their perception of their ideal L2 self. Additionally, this study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of Asian immigrant students as a whole and helps to avoid stereotypical identities of Asian students based on previous research.

Keywords: L2MSS, motivation, narratives, individual differences, Asian immigrant students

Studying abroad experience has become an interesting topic to discuss. Franklin (2010) and Stroud (2010, in Anderson et al., 2015) argue that students and parents believe studying abroad could enhance career prospects in relation to securing interviews, receiving job offers, and accelerating career progression. Apart of the economic benefits, it is also believed that this experience can greatly enhance students' acquisition of a second or foreign language. Yahsima (2009) argues that the learners need to have an embodied experience of using the language or having the feeling of mediating one's thoughts or interpersonal relations using the language. Studying abroad highlights the creation of the feeling that an individual need to use the language as a matter of communication and survival in the native speakers' country. Additionally, questions pertaining to the factors that contribute to one learner's success over another, the motivations that drive them, and the strategies they employ to attain their objectives in language learning are undeniably compelling and noteworthy. Various variables come into play that influence learners' performance, encompassing cognitive, environmental, and cultural factors.

One of the variables to examine here is motivation. Ushioda (2009, as cited in Thompson et al., 2015) asserts that motivation has garnered substantial attention from researchers in Second Language Acquisition due to its crucial role in determining whether learners acquire language skills, the level of effort they invest in their learning, the duration of their persistence in learning, and the overall success of their language acquisition endeavors. Additionally, mastering a second or foreign language, such as English in this context, especially for Indonesian, is regarded as a fundamental aspect, particularly for students studying abroad, as they must utilize the language both academically and in their daily lives. Motivation is usually understood to refer to the desire to initiate L2 learning, and the effort employed to sustain it, and in lay terms we all understand it to be a matter of quantity, as in the everyday observation that some learners are highly motivated, and others have little or no motivation (Ortega, 2009). Gardner (2001) believes the highest and most facilitative form of motivation is what he called the integrative motivation, which is attained only when three conditions are met: (1) the antecedent of integrativeness itself is high, (2) motivation quantity (that is, the combined amount of effort, enjoyment, and investment) is also high, and (3) attitudes towards the learning situation (teachers, curriculum) are positive.

Relating to Gardner's (2001) socio-educational model of second language acquisition focuses on language learning taking place in the classroom and stresses that motivation is one variable important in second language acquisition, it is proposed that motivation is supported by two other affective components, integrativeness and attitudes toward the learning situation, and that the complex of such attitudes and motivation reflects an integrative motive that promotes language learning (Gardner, et.al., 2004). Dörnyei (2009) reflects the changes of Gardner's motivation construct and suggests that motivated behavior is determined by three major motivational dimensions; integrativeness, instrumentality, and attitudes toward the learning situation, which corresponds closely with L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS).

The L2 Motivational Self System represents a major reformation of previous motivational thinking by its explicit utilization of psychological theories of the self, yet its roots are firmly

set in previous research in the L2 field (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). L2MSS is a combination of the self-dimensions in Higgins's (1987) self-discrepancy theory and the conceptual content of Markus and Nurius' (1986) possible selves' theory. The concept of L2 motivation was framed as an outcome of how a learner perceives the relationship between his or her current and future concepts of self (Papi, 2018). The L2MSS proposes that language learning motivation is primarily composed of three facets: the ideal L2 self, the ought to L2 self, and the learning experience. The ideal L2 Self is a powerful motivator for who a learner would like to become in learning the L2 because of the desire to reduce the discrepancy between the actual and ideal selves. The ought-to L2 self emphasizes learner's belief in achieving the expectations and avert negative outcomes. Whereas L2 learning experience concerns about the influences of the environment such as the teachers, the curriculum, and peer groups. Below is the definition of each facet in L2MSS proposed by Dörnyei (2009):

Table 1

The L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei (2009) in Thompson & Vasquez (2015)

Component	Definition
Ideal L2 self	The ideal L2 self is the person one would like to become regarding a second language. Powerful imagery helps language learners reach their ideal L2 selves with the language in question.
Ought-to L2 self	The ought-to L2 self is the person one should become to meet external/societal expectations and to avoid negative consequences of not learning the language in question.
L2 learning experience	This aspect of the L2MSS does not correspond to a previous theoretical model, but instead focuses on the very real impact of past and current language learning experiences. These can include interactions with instructors and peers, curricular design, and experiences of successes or failures.

As previously mentioned, the L2 self is the most powerful motivator in terms of learning a new language. In other words, a learner who has developed her/his ideal L2 self will most likely succeed in learning the language. According to Markus and Nurius (1986) cited in Al-Shehri (2009), possible selves 'represent individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming, and thus provide a conceptual link between cognition and motivation. A comparative study conducted by Taguchi et al (2009) on the validation of L2MSS in three important Asian contexts (Japan, China, and Iran) shows that there is correlation of the L2MSS and the integrativeness which can be relabeled as the ideal L2 self. The authors confirm instrumentality is classified into two constructive aspects: promotion and prevention which have strong impacts on the development of the self, depending on the internalization of external stimuli. This implies that learners' motivation is context-specific and influenced by many factors in learners' surrounding. This corroborates with Papi's (2010) study on Iranian learners' motivation using L2MSS and its contribution to their anxiety and learning effort. It shows that all variables in L2MSS contribute to learners' intentions and ideal L2 self minimizes their level of anxiety. Furthermore, a study conducted by Lamb (2012)

investigating 527 Indonesian junior high school students in three distinct contexts: a metropolitan city, a provincial town, and a rural district. The study shows positive L2 learning experience was the strongest predictor of learning effort and L2 proficiency. He also argues, since ideal L2 self only marginally influence participants' achievement, this might be explained by the fact that during early adolescence, ideal selves often leaned towards being idealistic and vague and it became less likely to stimulate actual learning behaviors.

Several studies using L2MSS framework also investigate motivation with the lens of individual differences such as language aptitude (Stenberg, 2002), learner attrition (Olsen, 2017), anxiety and self-efficacy (Ueki & Takuechi, 2012) help to provide insights for further studies. Thus, the present study investigates the motivation and the construction of ideal L2 self, or possible selves added with the perspective of L2MSS framework proposed by Dörnyei (2009) and seeks to answer these questions:

1. What are the factors of individual differences drawn from the participants' narratives?
2. How the ideal L2 self is expressed in the participants' language learning narrative?

Methodology

Setting and Participants

The study was conducted in a research-integrated state university in Arizona, United States with two Indonesian study abroad students as the participants. During the Fall 2022 semester from September–December, I reached out to approximately five Indonesian students who were currently studying abroad to participate in this study. The invitation with the selection criteria was sent out to mailing group of Indonesian students. Only three out of five participants replied and agreed to participate in the study. However, one participant decided to withdraw from the study due to health problem. Therefore, John and Nick (pseudonym) became my primary participants in this study. Although, their participation was considered foremost and beneficial as they represented two distinct parts of Indonesia.

John

Throughout the study, John was second year MTESOL student. He came from eastern part of Indonesia, specifically Flores Island. He earned his bachelor's degree in English education from an accredited University in Yogyakarta, Central Java. He considered himself as multilingual since he spoke several local languages such as Ngada, Bahasa Indonesia, and English as foreign language. John grew up with diverse cultural and linguistic background. The primary language used in his schools was native language—Ende-lio—which was his mother first language. His exposure to Bahasa Indonesia was rather limited.

Nick

Nick was a third-year undergraduate student studying construction management. He came from western part of Indonesia, specifically Tangerang. Before coming to Arizona, Nick studied and lived in Taiwan for three years, then moved to Seattle and stayed for two years. He also considered himself as multilingual since he came from a diverse cultural family background. His father was a native speaker of Sundanese, while his mother was a native speaker of Javanese. He went to school where the primary language was Bahasa Indonesia and English as second language. Because of his Chinese blood, his parents sent him to Taiwan and had him to learn Chinese/Mandarin. He spent a year to work on the language before he could use the language in classroom and daily interaction.

Data Collection and Analysis

To collect the data, I conducted three stages open-ended interviews and field notes taken during the interviews. The objective was to seek (1) the participants' demographic information and life history, (2) the participants' learning trajectories and how they use English as foreign language in academic setting and daily social interaction before and during their time studying abroad, and (3) the participants' struggles of learning and utilizing English as FL as well as their investment in increasing their motivation to utilize the English as FL. To maintain its flexibility and comfortability, the interviews were conducted either in-person or online depending on the participants' availability, and the choice of language used during the interview. Both participants chose and agreed to use Bahasa Indonesia for practical reason and to avoid any misunderstanding.

To analyze the data, I employed narrative analysis approach with Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) as the framework. As a matter of research ethic in social behavior, I applied for IRB approval before conducting the interviews and had the participants to sign the consent form. Next, I transcribed and coded by adopting Lichtman's (2013) 3C's of data analysis: codes, category, and concept. First, I read and analyzed each transcription and field notes, the codes emerging from the data were noted and compiled into appropriate groups. These steps built themes and once all codes were created I began to analyze them qualitatively through narratives. Moreover, Barkhuizen (2016) discusses one of the importance of narrative research is that narrative has acquired as a resource that individuals draw upon in the construction of their identities and the stories that they tell help researchers understand the ways in which they situate themselves and their activities in the world. In other words, narrative research goes beyond surface-level descriptions and seeks to understand the deeper meanings and cultural contexts embedded within narratives. It recognizes that narratives are not just about transmitting information but also convey cultural, social, and personal significance. This approach allows researchers to explore the complex interplay between individual experiences and broader sociocultural contexts. Additionally, I also provided my reflection and positionality for having similar identity with the participants as Indonesian and EFL speaker.

Findings and Discussion

Factors of Individual Differences

This study uncovers three primary factors related to individual differences that contribute to the motivation and expression of the participants' ideal L2 selves. The first factor revolves around the influence of family and socioeconomic status, followed by the impact of educational system inequality as the second factor, and finally, the significance of access to the target language as the third factor. These factors align with the concept of regional distinctions, reflecting the specific backgrounds and circumstances of the participants' respective origins.

A. *Family and Socioeconomic Status*

John comes from a family that places a high value on education, with both of his parents working in the field of education. His father holds the position of a vice principal in one of the state schools in Flores. Reflecting on his journey, John begins his narrative by highlighting how his father played a pivotal role in his initial exposure to the English and opens doors to learn the language. John goes on to express his aspiration of becoming a multilingual individual proficient in English, envisioning his ideal L2 self. His parents serve as his role models, having already achieved the same goal, even though they may not have had the opportunity to study abroad. Nonetheless, they have guided and inspired John on the path towards personal growth and becoming a better individual.

> "So, actually. I have been learning English since I was a kid. I think I was 6 years old when I was used to it. because my father often liked to play music. when I was a kid. Played some western songs." (2nd interview).

> "Coincidentally, my mother and father are teachers. so I already have the reading habit. Father often brought some English story books. Even though I didn't understand, my curiosity had appeared. There was an English dictionary that my father brought for us. Those opportunities have shaped me to become who I am today." (2nd interview).

In Dörnyei's framework (2009), the individual's competence serves as a significant motivational factor that drives them to become a successful language learner. John's fortunate circumstance of having parents who genuinely care about his education and personal development as well as provide diverse opportunities to immerse himself in the target language, serves as a powerful source of motivation. This was particularly crucial as he recognized that the likelihood of success as a language learner was quite low due to the challenging environment in which he lived, where access to resources was limited. Nevertheless, the dedication of his parents and the experiences they afforded him ignites his own determination to achieve proficiency in a foreign language.

Figure 1

Factors of Individual Differences
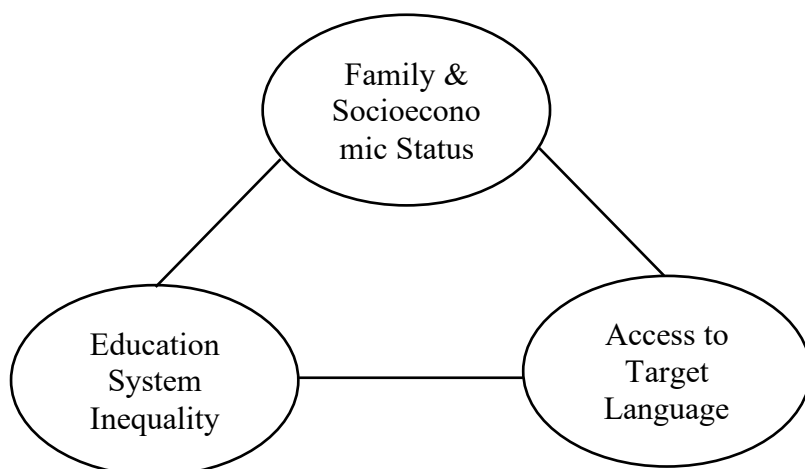
"They never forced me to learn. But I always remember they used to say they have hope that I can change the family. They did not have opportunity to study abroad, and they always hope I could be the son who gains degree from abroad. Even if everything is limited, my parents never give up their hope. And here I am studying in the US because of them." (3rd interview).

John acknowledges that their decision was not solely influenced by their family's strong educational background. The public discourse surrounding also had an impact on their choice to pursue studies abroad. Despite coming from a family with a solid educational foundation, the external tensions and discussions within the public sphere also influence their decision to seek higher education opportunities overseas. Despite his parents' occupations as a vice principal and a teacher in a state school, they could only support him in obtaining a diploma degree, which would make it easier for him to find a job upon graduation. However, upon graduation from high school, John decided to pursue his bachelor in Yogyakarta, Central Java and studied English education. He acknowledges that although his parents were facing financial difficulties at the time, he was able to contribute by working part-time to manage the situation.

"I wanted to study accounting, but my parents could not afford to pay for the college. So, I decided to study English education and that way I can also work part-time. My parents had to finance four children and colleges were expensive. I also think it was not really bad idea after all. I mean I love English, and I know my parents also want us to be able to step forward." (2nd interview).

John openly acknowledges that it was challenging to pretend to have an interest in a subject of study. He reveals that he experienced various fluctuations in motivation and moments of self-doubt, questioning whether he would be able to utilize the degree he would eventually obtain. Nevertheless, John consistently reminded himself and would not give up or lose motivation in completing his studies, while also ensuring his proficiency in the English language remained on track. This corroborates with finding from Taguchi and colleagues (2009), the representation

of L2 Ought-to-Self shown in his learning trajectory to meet his and family's expectations and avoid undesirable outcomes.

> "I didn't want to feel insecure or anything. I tried every opportunity. After college, I started to think that English is required for many job opportunities. At work, some of my friends came from abroad which required us to be able to communicate in English. From that, I started to apply to some YSEALI programs. The training was held overseas. The most recent was in 2018 where I went to the US. So, those opportunities shaped my identity in speaking English." (3rd interview)

Compared to John, Nick comes from a family with high socioeconomic status who also value education. For generations, his family has embraced the belief that pursuing goals through studying abroad is an excellent pathway to achieve success. His parents are both entrepreneurs, his brother pursued high school in Taiwan and earned his bachelor in US university. Unlike John who had to rely on scholarship, Nick has been provided access to pursue education abroad.

> "My parents believe education is number one. I think they sent us to bilingual schools ever since we were in kindergarten. They want us to learn English formally and informally. I remember they used to tell us to pick any activities that involved foreign languages. They also would hire private tutor to teach us English after school." (2nd interview).

His admiration towards English grew since he exposed to English movies and attached to his brother's reflection of studying abroad in English speaking country. However, as he entered high school, his parents sent him to Taiwan that made him a little bit of disappointed as he had to start a year before his class studying Mandarin. He describes that he went through many silent periods and demotivated to study. This opposed Noels' (2001) argument that motivation is internally related as opposed to external motives. Nevertheless, Nick's narrative provides a clear view that motivation is socially and culturally constructed.

> "They sent me to Taiwan for my high school. I felt down for a while. I like Mandarin but I like English more, and I wanted to be like my brother, studying in the US. He used to tell me that he wanted to go to the US and work here because the opportunity is big to earn more money and that is why the US is known as the land or country of opportunity. So, that is why I am motivated to be able to speak English. I think my brother has opened a way that brings me here and pursue my study here." (2nd interview).

Nick views his brother as his primary role model to learn language. He emphasizes how his brother's own learning experiences greatly influenced his desire to become proficient in both Mandarin and English. Despite his difficulty in learning Mandarin, he receives big support from his brother to keep his motivation to graduate from high school and pursue his higher education in English speaking country. When asked about his investment, he mentions the hours he put into learning both foreign languages and his willingness to communicate (MacIntyre, 2007)

indicate that there is balance between his motivation to learn and investment which contribute to his success in acquiring both languages.

> "My family always gives us everything we need when it comes to education. In Taiwan, they provided me with best tutors and activities so that I could keep up with the language and school. However, sometimes it comes within yourself whether you liked it or not. I honestly at first failed many times and had to try again and again. I also must maintain my English that time. I talked to my brother who was in New York, and he helped with my English. So I used to juggle between Mandarin and English because I don't' want to lose one of them." (3rd interview).

Learning two foreign languages at the same time was not easy for Nick. He dealt with numerous challenges such as a demanding environment, and anxiety. He felt uncomfortable and often disconnected. Even if it took him a while to participate fully in his communities, his level of intercultural awareness (Mirzaei et al, 2013) equals to his communicative competence as a result of his investments. He explains that he intentionally distanced himself from fellow Indonesian native speakers to ensure he had ample opportunities to improve his proficiency in Mandarin. Prior to that, he isolated himself from almost everyone and dedicated his time to self-study in his dorm. He states that his focused efforts on studying from books would be sufficient to pass the language proficiency exam, and supported by his willingness to communicate and associate with Mandarin native speaker. Nick has big desire to finish high school quickly and move to an English-speaking country for his higher education. His story reminds me of Ortega's (2009) argument that the influence of immediate learning environments on learner's motivation and the development of his possible L2 self.

B. Education System Inequity

John and Nick come from two distinct regions in Indonesia. John comes from Flores, eastern part, while Nick comes from Tangerang, western part of Indonesia. Relating to education and region disparity in Indonesia, Suryadharma (2016) explains that there are two types of region segregation in Indonesia which consist of Java and Bali versus outside Java and Bali, and Western Indonesia versus Eastern Indonesia. Both of the participants' narratives help to distinguish the inequity on the basis of education system and facilities.

John learned English formally for the first time in high school with limited resources. In John's school and most public school in Flores had limited human resources – English teacher – which contribute negatively to the development of the language in Eastern part of Indonesia. This was also mentioned by Azzizah (2015) that the disparity of education is seen from the teachers and textbooks used as well as medium of instruction in Eastern part of Indonesia do not provide sufficient knowledge compared to the facilities, textbooks, and teachers' resources in Western part of Indonesia. John specifically describes in his narrative that the medium of instruction

used in his English class was local language. Due to this, the impact was seen from his friends facing challenges in acquiring Bahasa Indonesia and English.

> "English was taught formally for the first time in high school. The teachers were non-native speakers. We didn't necessarily learn the skills; it was mostly learning vocabularies. Most of my friends who had difficulty in speaking Bahasa Indonesia, they thought English was not necessary to learn. I remember it was hard to find partners to develop my English. I mean everything is limited there. So, pursuing my master's degree abroad also have me thinking that the education system should be revised especially in Eastern Indonesia. I mean we should get equal opportunity to learn languages or any other subjects." (3rd interview).

Meanwhile, in the Western Region, English has been introduced since kindergarten. Nick's parents provided him with the opportunity to learn the language formally from an early age. The division of educators and resources are considered equal in private and public school, even though the medium of instruction in private school is English compared to public school whose goal is promoting Bahasa Indonesia. Nick emphasizes that English is commonly used in everyday conversations, and the majority of books used in schools are written in English. Additionally, many instructors – specifically in private schools – are native English speakers. The education system in the western region has experienced rapid growth compared to the eastern region. This growth has both directly and indirectly influenced the students' performance in language proficiency.

> "I think it wasn't because the the limitation of English tutors or schools that provide English as medium of instruction or English subjects. In fact there were many many native speakers and schools' systems are about English as medium of instructor. My parents were confused for which school I should attend. Even at school, for particular days, we weren't allowed to speak language other than English. (3rd interview).

The comparison of education system in western and eastern regions could visibly be seen from the use of English and local language as medium of instruction. Azzizah (2015) argues that it is challenging for the students to get accustomed to using and absorbing study materials explained and written in Bahasa Indonesia and English, because the local languages are still used predominantly by the majority of students in eastern region. In correlation to Csizér and Lukaćs' (2010) study on students attending well-equipped schools have more opportunity to study their preferred second language (usually English) as early as elementary school in contrast to students attending less well-resourced schools who usually have to wait until secondary school, resulting in a substantial difference of 2 or 3 years versus 8 years of English instruction. This disparity in

program design had a detrimental effect on the language learning motivation of students who had to start learning English at a later stage.

C.   *Access to Target Language*

The third factor found in the participants' narratives is accessibility of learning the target language. This factor can also be regarded as the effect of education system inequality between both regions. John describes his challenges in learning the language due to inadequate facilities such as limited access of internet connection. Consequently, he could not optimally study for his language proficiency exam as part of his scholarship application.

> "I feel like I have a big responsibility for what I want to achieve. So, I always want to pursue my master's degree because I want to reflect on what I have accomplished and done for 4 years in my undergraduate degree. When applying to Graduate school we need to have an IELTS certificate, and when I learned IELTS, the biggest challenge was COVID-19. Because in NTT (East Nusa Tenggara), the internet connection was always down, and I was left behind. So, I learned by myself. I downloaded some exercises on the website because my time was limited, and I should get 7 out of 9. I almost never slept. I remember it was 10 to 14 hours a day." (3rd interview).

In his narrative, John shows his dedication and investment to study for his IELTS exam despite having trouble with network connection. This shows a correlation between doing well on English standardized tests and his personal aspirations (Du & Jackson, 2018). John's investment helped him to succeed obtaining the perfect score and received the scholarship to study abroad. In contrast, Nick explains that he did not face any issues with access or infrastructure. In fact, he had unlimited internet connection and access to private tutors. Nick reveals that he experienced motivational shift when his parents sent him to Taiwan, but upon returning to Indonesia, he improved his commitment to learn English by hiring several English tutors in preparation for his educational journey to the US. In addition, Nick's confidence on his ability in learning the language was framed by the access provided.

> "I always knew I would pass the IELTS test. Well, to get back on track, learning English from the beginning after the Taiwan experience was difficult. So, I took IELTS intensive private class for 2 months, approximately 6 hours per week. My first overall IELTS score was 6.5 and the second was 8, and then I continued to Shoreline Community College at Seattle before I transferred to Arizona State University." (2nd interview)

However, his confidence dropped when he entered community college in Seattle. This happened specifically because after spending years in Taiwan, as well as the objective of learning English was only to achieve perfect score on the language proficiency tests. However, upon reflecting on his past experiences, he believes that no matter the difficulties he faced, he always had a set of effective strategies to overcome obstacles. One of the strategies was practicing to communicate with native speakers. Even though he acknowledges that he may still encounter

difficulties with English pronouns like he/she and it, which could be influenced by his native or first language, he focused in learning the language through social interaction (Lee, 2014) which also helped to restore his language learning investment.

Expression of Ideal L2 Self

The participants' narratives on their experiences in learning English envision themselves to become their ideal L2 self. Despite the various factors that have influenced their individual experiences, they had their own strategies to keep their motivation and investment in learning the target language. Moreover, Mendoza and Phung (2018) argue the Ideal L2 Self is an L2-specific aspect of the ideal self a person aspires to become. That person visualizes his or her future self as proficient in the target language. For John, his region of origin serves as the barrier in attaining his ideal L2 self, as limited access and his family's financial situation motivate him to succeed in his target language and pursue his goal of studying abroad. Additionally, John faces a motivation challenge related to his ethnicity. Being born in the eastern part of Indonesia, some people doubt his potential for success. However, John's dedication to do self-study and immerse himself in the target language exemplifies his determination to succeed, even in the face of societal norms that may push against his aspirations (Brehm, 1966, as cited in Thompson & Liu, 2018).

Moreover, it is also related to dynamic systems theory (Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2007), which takes into account how motivation is impacted by time, material resources, opportunities to learn, developing relationships with speakers of the target language, and access to target communities. In Nick's account, he was fortunate to have unlimited access since his family's financial situation and his region of origin support his development in learning the target language. However, unlike John who views his parents as his biggest motivation and as the figure to shape his ideal L2 self despite the obstacles, Nick views his brother as the person who paved the way to achieve his language learning goals. Nick's aspiration to achieve proficiency in a foreign language shape his ideal L2 self, which is interestingly constructed and influenced by his brother's ability to envision himself as a successful language learner.

Looking at attribution theory proposed by Weiner (1992, as cited in Martinović & Burić, 2021), the narratives provided by my participants describe the assumption that individuals to understand the causes of their success and failures. This attribution will somehow affect their emotional reactions and behaviour in the future. John and Nick were fully aware of his struggles to achieve a certain proficiency in language, and to reach their goal pursuing higher education in English speaking country. In addition, the awareness of being successful or failure is considered prominent variable for the expression of ideal L2 self.

Researcher's Reflexivity

The participants' motivation shift and their expression of the ideal L2 self have demonstrated a dynamic and intricate nature, as they projected their learning trajectories to become proficient language speakers in their envisioned future. As a researcher, I am fully aware of the

preconceptions surrounding the factors that contribute to my participants' motivational shift and the expression of their ideal L2 selves. As the researcher shares the same regional background as Nick, there is a deep understanding of the factors that can influence an individual's proficiency level compared to others. Additionally, during the interviews and observations, I relate to my own personal story, recognizing the similar journey of experiencing a series of motivational shifts to express my own ideal L2 self.

Conclusion

The participants helped to unpack the factors of individual differences that significantly contribute to the motivation and expression of ideal L2 self in learning target language. The disparity between participants' region of origin became a major point of any inequities such as socioeconomic status, education system, and accessibility of infrastructure to sustain the language learning. The participants' motivational trajectories have implications for National education to further assess and offer equity in terms of medium of instruction, educators, and accessibility to help students in eastern region better adapt to the environment.

The analysis of the participants' narratives afforded fresh insights into why motivational shifts contributed most to the participants' ideal L2 self as shown in their aspiration of becoming who they want to be and the investment they put into becoming the aspired individual. The continuous interactions between the participants' perceptions of the changing learning and social context (Du & Jackson, 2018) influenced their sustain enhancement in motivation to learn the target language.

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