

## The Relationship between Motivation and Pronunciation: A case of Iranian EFL learners

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### Abstract

There is no doubt that motivation is one of the most important factors in the field of second language acquisition. This study, based on Gardner's socio-educational model of motivation, seeks to find the relationship between motivation with regard to integrativeness and instrumentality and pronunciation skill of upper intermediate students. To this end, 40 intermediate students who were studying at Alborz English institute were selected based on their score on PET test. Gardner's Attitude and Motivation Test battery (AMTB) was used to measure students' motivation and their orientation i.e., integrativeness and instrumentality. The statistical analysis indicated that motivation and both types of it correlated significantly with pronunciation skill of students. Moreover regarding the distinction between integratively and instrumentally motivated groups and their pronunciation skill, the study demonstrated that as Gardner & Tremblay (1994) state "these two motivational components are not antagonistic counterpart but are often positively related." The Instrumental and Integrative orientations have shown to be positively correlated with one another. This seems reasonable since someone who is oriented to learn a language for integrative reasons might well recognize the instrumental value of learning the language and vice versa. It is hoped the result of this study coupled with other studies put an end to simplistic classification in literature and research.

**Keywords:** integrative motivation, instrumental Motivation, integrative orientation, instrumental orientation, total articulation

### INTRODUCTION

Dornyei (1998) argues that "Motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the second language and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process". Over the years consistent relationships have been demonstrated between language attitudes, motivation and L2 achievement, with strongest

relationships obtaining between motivation and achievement (Masgoret & Gardner 2003). A distinction also has been made between integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Integrativeness has been defined as open and accepting orientation toward the other language community and other communities in general (Gardner 2010, p 202), in combination with motivation it has steadily shown to be high powered predictor of L2 learning success. Instrumental motivation reflects the belief that language learning will bring concrete and tangible benefits such as a better job or higher salary. Integrativeness and instrumentality and their potential effect on language achievement has been topic of numerous research over the years. Gardner (1972) believed language learners who have open, inquisitive and unprejudged orientation (integrative orientation) toward foreign language might find themselves becoming acculturated member of new linguistic and cultural community, thus, develop a mastery of other groups' sounds. Moyer (2007) found that experience with and positive orientation to the language appears to be important factors in developing native-like pronunciation. Finegan, (1999) states "integrative motivation typically underlies successful acquisition of a wide range of registers and a native like pronunciation"

Griffiths (2008) stated that since accent is a strong marker of cultural identity, it is intuitive to think that learners with internal and integrative motivation would achieve better pronunciation than others. Coates (1986) found no correlation between integrative motivation and pronunciation. Inspired by numerous studies and contradictory results, present study is going to find the relationship between motivation and pronunciation, to compare the effect of integrative and instrumental motivation on pronunciation skill of and to clarify which group is more successful in acquiring perfect pronunciation .

The following three questions guided the present study:

- Is there any relationship between Iranian EFL learners' motivation and pronunciation?
- Is there any relationship between different types of motivation (Integrative and Instrumental) and pronunciation skill of these students?
- Which group is more successful in acquiring perfect pronunciation?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Motivation and language achievement**

A Basic tenet of the socio educational model is that Integrative Motivation facilitates L2 acquisition because it reflects an active involvement in language study. This active component has been demonstrated in studies that, in addition to being more successful in learning a second language, integratively motivated students are more active in language class (Gilksman, Gardner & Smythe, 1982), to interact with members of that community when there, (Desrochers & Gardner 1981) and less likely to drop out of language study in subsequent years (Gardner, Clement & Smythe, 1978). However this

doesn't imply that instrumental motivation would not been effective. Gardner and MacIntyre (1991) investigated the effects of Integrative Motivation and Instrumental Motivation on learning of French/English vocabulary. The results demonstrated that integrative and instrumental motivation can influence second language learning. A major conclusion suggested from these results is that both Integrative and Instrumental Motivation can influence L2 learning. Gardner and MacIntyre (1991) also stated that the major aspect is motivation itself, if an integrative or instrumental orientation is not linked with heightened motivation to learn the second language, it is difficult to see how either could promote proficiency.

In the context of Iran several studies were conducted to investigate the relationship between attitude motivation and language proficiency. The first study was carried out by Dastgheib (1996 cited in SotoudeNama, 2001) on 146 undergraduate medical major Students. They had to answer Gardner's AMTB questionnaire which was modified to suit Iranian context. A TOEFL test was used to check their proficiency. The result indicated a clear link between the total attitudinal/motivational configuration and language proficiency. Moreover, no significant difference in achievement between integratively and instrumentally oriented students was found. Mahmoudian (1997) aimed at finding possible relationship between motivation and oral proficiency. the results indicated that motivation did in fact have relationship with the level of oral proficiency of the subjects, or in other words it was demonstrated that highly motivated students were clearly at higher levels of verbal skills, but regarding the distinction made between integrative and instrumental motivation, instrumentally motivated students performed better than those who learned the language for other reasons. Moshiri (1999) aimed at finding a possible relationship between types of motivation and listening comprehension proficiency in upper intermediate level. The results indicated that the listening comprehension mean score was larger in the integrative group, but according to statistics the difference was not meaningful.

Sadighi and Maghsudi (2000) studied the effect of the two types of motivation namely as integrative and instrumental one) on the English proficiency of the EFL senior students. Their study results showed a significant difference between the means of English proficiency scores of the instrumentally motivated students and the integratively motivated ones.

### **Motivation and pronunciation**

Gardner and Lambert (1972) examined many ramifications of the language learner's motivation, they found that an integrative and friendly outlook toward the other group whose language is being learned can differentially sensitize the learner to the audio-lingual features of the language, making him more perceptive to forms of pronunciation and accent than is the case for learner without this open and friendly disposition. if the student's attitude is highly ethnocentric and hostile , no progress to speak of will be made in acquiring any aspects of the language. Such a student not only is perceptually

insensitive to the language, but apparently is also unwilling to modify or adjust his own response system to approximate the new pronunciation responses required in the other language. Pennington (1986) held that learners who are integratively motivated, may try to attain a native accent in foreign language. In contrast, learners who are not integratively motivated toward the target culture may consciously or unconsciously seek to maintain a distinctive accent, since phonological features are among the most salient linguistic dimensions used by speakers to create sense of identity. Coates (1986) found no correlation between integrative motivation and pronunciation. His subjects of study were German students living in Germany learning English. The difference between integrative motivation and instrumental motivation is matter of degree not kind. Wen (2005) investigated the phonological ability of exceptional second language learners of English and their levels of motivation. He concluded that there was no significant correlation between the scores on pronunciation and motivation.

## **METHOD**

This section introduces the method of the study, more specifically it describes the subjects who participated in the study, the instrumentation, procedures, the scoring method design and data analysis.

### **Participants**

A total number of 100 female students from language institute in Karaj participated in the study. After administration of PET test, students' grades were obtained and the mean score and standard deviation of scores were calculated. The mean score was 33.69 and the standard deviation was 8.28. In order to select homogenous group, all the students that got one standard deviation upper than mean were chosen. The final participants in the present study were thus 40 upper-intermediate female students. Their age ranged from 18-30.

### **Instruments**

Two measuring instruments were used in this study: a pronunciation test and a questionnaire.

#### ***Pronunciation Test***

Pronunciation testing suffers from serious lack of attention, thus a pronunciation test was developed based on different approaches in testing pronunciation (Lado, 1961; Hole, 1983; Madsen & Koren, 1995).

The test consisted of six sections: Reading a word list, Reading some sentence, Reading a written dialogue; Reading a text, Describing pictures; Interview and role playing. The idea behind the test was to assess the testees' pronunciation ability in as many ways as possible and to record them in less and in more controlled situations.

## ***Questionnaire***

In order to measure the level of students' motivation numerically and also classifying them into integratively or instrumentally motivated subjects, Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) was applied (Appendix 2). The reliability and validity of measures used in this test Battery have been supported by a number of researches (Gilksman 1976, 1981; Lalonde & Gardner 1984; Gardner, Lalonde & Moorcroft 1985; Gardner & Lysyncheek 1990; Gardner & MacIntyre 1991; Gardner & Masgoret 2003). The results of these studies showed that the subtests measure what they are intended to measure. The questionnaire comprised of three parts. The first part of questionnaire includes three components of motivation, i.e., desire to learn the language (1-10), motivational intensity (11-20) and attitudes toward learning the English language (21-30) and interest in Foreign languages (31- 40). The second part of the questionnaire included two measures of reason or orientations for learning another language i.e. (instrumental, integrative). The third part of the questionnaire assesses students' attitude toward the target language group. All translated items in this part were used from Dastgheib (1996) and Sotoude Nama (2001) study. The last part of questionnaire was orientation index. This sub tests consists of one item.

Students' score on orientation scale, motivation, interest in Foreign languages, attitude toward target language group constituted their integrative motivation score and for instrumental motivation sum of scores on orientation scale and motivation were computed. It is quite likely that anyone using this battery of tests in some other context would have to adapt the items to take many factors into account (Gardner 2001).

## **Procedure**

After administration of the questionnaire to 40 subjects, All subjects took the pronunciation test in the language laboratory. The location of the test enabled the subjects to enjoy best conditions for hearing their stimuli and for recording their answers. The test took about 20 minutes. Each subjects' responses were recorded and then rated and scored by professional raters. In scoring all subjects' tests each subtest received three scores, one for pronunciation, one for stress and one for intonation by three raters. The reason for scoring these three components was the fact that they are considered as the three major aspects of articulation (Lieberman, 1965; Jansma, 1987 cited in Koren, 1995).

The scoring was based on 1-5 rating scores. A score of 1 was given to "very heavy non-native pronunciation" 2 to "poor", 3 to "reasonable", 4 to "close to Native" 5 to "native-like pronunciation". Since the scoring of the recorded test was subjective, there was a need to establish inter rater reliability. This was achieved by giving the recorded tapes to three different raters.

When the rating was finished, each subject had a considerable number of pronunciation, stress and intonation scores. In order to simplify the statistical analysis, a mean score of each component of articulation was found. So eventually each subject had three distinct

scores, one for pronunciation which was the mean score of all pronunciation scores, one for stress which was the mean score of all stress scores, and one for intonation which was the mean score of all intonation scores. An average of these three scores was computed and was named: Total Articulation

The raters' score were analyzed statistically to determine their inter-rater reliability. The reliability coefficients obtained ranged from .78 to .89 indicating a very high degree of agreement among the individual judge's ratings per subject. Since there was a high degree of agreement among raters the mean scores of three ratings were used for statistical analyses (students' score table 1).

### Data analysis

For finding the relationship between Motivation and different types of it with total articulation, these items were scored separately. Table 4-4 shows students' scores on motivation, integrative motivation, instrumental motivation and their total articulation scores. Two sets of Pearson-Product moment correlations were calculated to determine (a) correlation between motivation and total articulation, (b) correlation between types of motivation and total articulation. Descriptive statistics also was used for scoring pronunciation test and classifying students into integratively and instrumentally motivated groups.

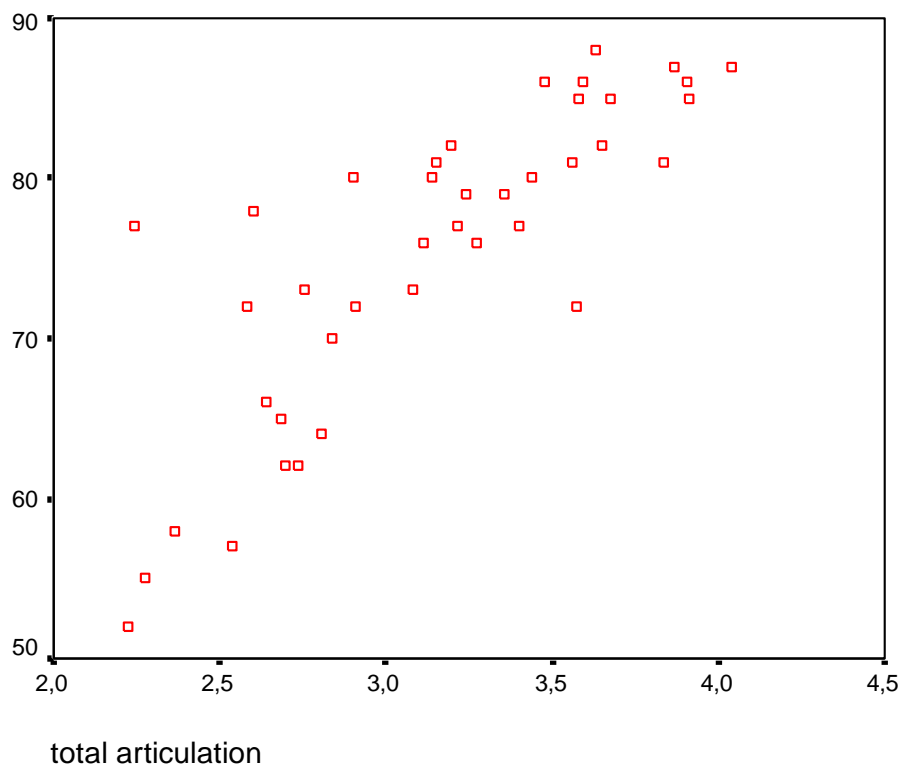
### RESULTS

In the present study in order to find the relationship between pronunciation ability and Motivation, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was applied to the data. The total articulation scores which were sum of students' pronunciation, stress, and intonation scores correlated significantly with motivation scores (see table 1 and figure1). The correlation coefficient turned out to be 0.82. A coefficient of this magnitude indicates that there is strong positive correlation between these two groups of data. In other words, the higher the motivation score the higher the total articulation score.

**Table 1.** Correlation between Motivation and Total Articulation

		motivation	total articulation
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1,000	,825(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,	,000
	N	40	40
total articulation	Pearson Correlation	,825(**)	1,000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,
	N	40	40

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

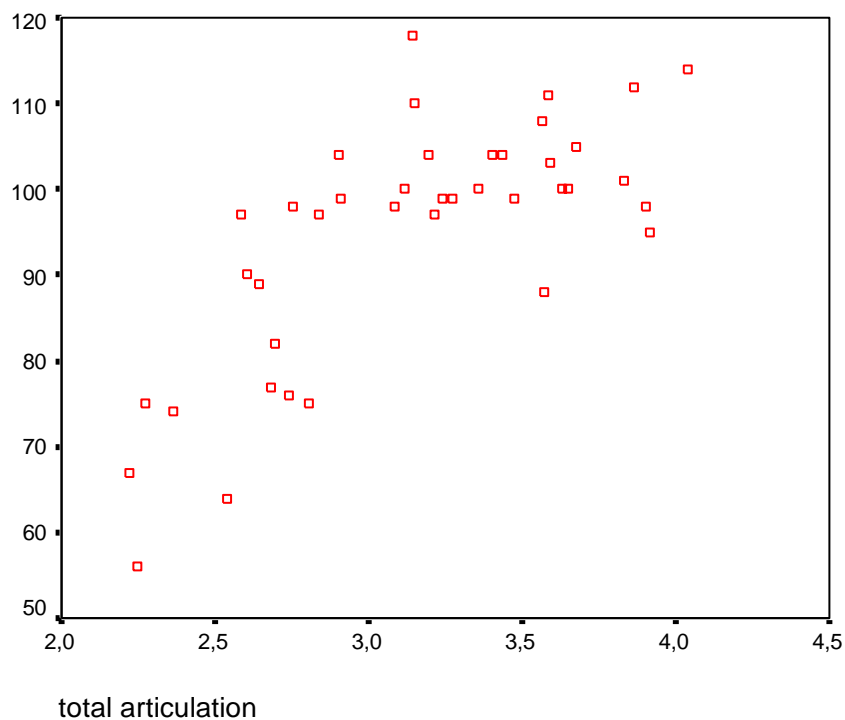


**Figure 1.** Graphic Representation of Correlation between Motivation and Total Articulation

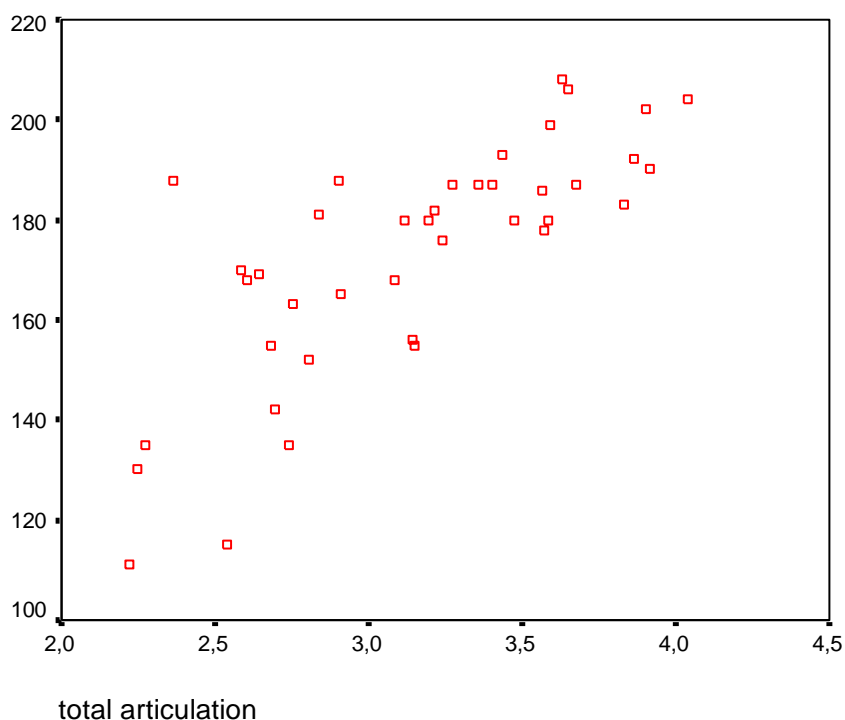
Regarding the second research question the relationship between different types of motivation and total articulation, Pearson product moment correlation were conducted once again. Both types of motivation correlated significantly with total articulation. The correlation coefficient between instrumental motivation and total articulation was 0.73 (see table 2 and figure 2). As Table 3 represents the correlation coefficient between integrative motivation and total articulation turned out to be 0.77 which was slightly higher than correlation between instrumental motivation and total articulation but the difference is not meaningful (see figure 3).

**Table 2.** Correlation between Instrumental Motivation and Total Articulation

		total articulation	instrumental motivation
total articulation	Pearson Correlation	1,000	,733(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,	,000
	N	40	40
instrumental motivation	Pearson Correlation	,733(**)	1,000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,
	N	40	40



**Figure 2.** Graphic Representation of Correlation between Instrumental Motivation & Total Articulation



**Figure 3.** Graphic Representation of Correlation between Integrative Motivation & Total Articulation



**Table 3.** Correlation between Integrative Motivation and Total Articulation

		integrative motivation	total articulation
integrative motivation	Pearson Correlation	1,000	,774(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,	,000
	N	40	40
total articulation	Pearson Correlation	,774(**)	1,000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,
	N	40	40

Another important issue this research aimed at was dividing students into integratively and instrumentally motivated groups, and finding the distinction between the relationship of instrumental and integrative motivation and total articulation. In order to divide students into high, intermediate, and low integratively and instrumentally motivated groups, mean scores and standard deviations of these two sets of scores (integrative and instrumental motivation scores) were computed (table 4 ).

As descriptive statistics showed, most of the students were placed in the intermediate group .72 percent of students were placed in intermediate integratively motivated group and .67 percent of students were placed in intermediate instrumentally motivated group. A fascinating result is that, .55 percent of students who were considered as intermediate students were both integratively and instrumentally motivated. As table 5 represents classifying students into integratively and instrumentally motivated groups is not an easy task. In other words these two items are significantly correlated. Table 6 shows the correlation coefficient between these two items.

**Table 4.** Descriptive Statistics of Integrative and Instrumental Motivation Scores.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
integrative motivation	40	111,00	208,00	172,8250	23,8810
instrumental motivation	40	56,00	118,00	94,6750	14,3427
Valid N (listwise)	40				

**Table 5.** Integrative & Instrumental Motivation Cross Tabulation

		instrumental motivation			Total
		Low	Med	high	
integrative motivation	Low	Count	5	1	6
		% of Total	12,5%	2,5%	15,0%
	Med	Count	3	22	4
		% of Total	7,5%	55,0%	10,0%
	High	Count		4	1
		Count			5

% of Total		10.0%	2,5%	12,5%
	Count	8	27	5
Total	% of Total	20,0%	67,5%	12,5%
				40
				100,0%

**Table 6.** Correlation between Instrumental and Integrative Motivations

		integrative motivation	instrumental motivation
integrative motivation	Pearson Correlation	1,000	,716(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,	,000
	N	40	40
instrumental motivation	Pearson Correlation	,716(**)	1,000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,
	N	40	40

## DISCUSSION

It seems obvious that motivation is a major problem in achieving greater numbers of proficient speakers of second languages. Both research and common sense confirm the importance of motivation in L2 acquisition. This study reaffirmed Guiora et al (1972) study that student's pronunciation accuracy is authoritatively linked to their motivation. According to Marinova-Todd et al., (2000) adults can become highly proficient, even native-like speakers of second languages, especially if motivated to do so.

Regarding relationship between types of motivation and pronunciation accuracy, both types of motivation were positively correlated with pronunciation accuracy, but correlation coefficient between pronunciation and integrative motivation scores was slightly higher than correlation coefficient between pronunciation accuracy and instrumental motivation. This can be in line with other research (Gardner, 1972; Pennington, 1986; Finegan, 1999; Moyer, 2007; Griffiths, 2008). However it doesn't intend to suggest that instrumental motivation's role is insignificant or peripheral in pronunciation accuracy. Both types of orientations are almost equally influential as far as pronunciation is concerned.

Another important issue this research aimed at was classifying students into integratively and instrumentally motivated groups and finding the distinction between the relationship of instrumental and integrative motivation and pronunciation ability. As descriptive statistics showed most of the students were considered as both instrumentally and integratively motivated. The findings can be accounted for in two ways:

First, dividing students into instrumentally and integratively motivated groups is not possible. This can be explained well by Gardner (2003) quotations: “to say this person is integratively oriented and therefore not instrumentally oriented, while that person is instrumentally oriented and therefore not integratively oriented is an oversimplification”. Obviously an individual doesn't have to accept just one or the other type of reasons. Brown (2000) also makes the point that learners rarely select one form of motivation when learning a second language, but rather a combination of both orientations. He cites the example of international students residing in the United States, learning English for academic purposes while at the same time wishing to become integrated with the people and culture of the country.

Second, the study showed integrative motivation is relevant concept in foreign language learning context. This is opposite of (Dornyei 1990) who claimed that the concept of integrative motivation is less relevant for foreign language learners than for those learning a second language since learners rarely have sufficient experience with target language community, and they are therefore uncommitted to integrating with that group. Dornyei proposed that instrumental goals contribute significantly to motivation for foreign language learners but he modified his position in 2001 and stated:

In a large scale nationwide study in Hungary, a language learning environment that is monolingual and mono-cultural and foreign languages are taught primarily as a school subject with very limited direct contact with L2 speakers, Dornyei and Clement (2000) found integrativeness to be the most powerful general component of participants generalized language related effective disposition, determining language choice, and the general level of effort the students intended to invest in the learning process. (Cited in Gardner 2003)

## CONCLUSION

The result of the study proved that motivation is an underlying factor in pronunciation achievement. It is true that in Socio-educational model of second language acquisition integrative motivation is important. It is not seen as paramount, however. The central concept in the model is motivation, Furthermore many studies conducted by Gardner and his associates have shown that there is positive correlation between ratings of the self-relevance of integrative reasons and comparable ratings for instrumental reasons. It is curious therefore why individuals still claim that the contrast between integrative motivation and instrumental motivations is a central feature of the socio-educational model of second language acquisition. It is to be hoped that the result of the study coupled with other discussions will put an end to misleading use of simplistic integrative – instrumental dichotomy as opposite's ends of a continuum. In addition, the findings of study can have direct implications for classroom:

Pronunciation teaching methods should more fully address the issues of motivation by creating an awareness of the importance of pronunciation, moreover Socio-cultural components should be included in syllabus by sharing positive L2 related experiences in

class, showing films or TV recordings, playing relevant music and inviting interesting native speaking guest. In this way, learners will develop integrative outlook toward the group whose language is being studied. Learner's instrumental motivation should also be developed by discussing the role L2 plays in the world and its potential usefulness both for themselves and their community. As a suggestion for further research, the role that motivation plays in the acquisition of L2 phonology among late learners is an area that has not yet been thoroughly researched, and is therefore in need of further study.

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