Gender differences in second language motivation: An investigation of micro- and macro-level influences

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The present article is part of a large-scale study conducted in Ontario that investigated gender differences in motivation to learn French. However, for this particular article second language (L2) motivation theory is the primary focus. Over the past 30 years of research, the study of L2 motivation has evolved. There appears to be a definite shift away from the societal (macro-level) approaches that dominated the research of the 1970s and 1980s toward an approach that emphasizes the influence of the L2 classroom. The researcher calls into question this evolution in research. A mixed methodology was used to determine if gender differences in a variety of motivational factors exist among Grade 9 French as a second language (FSL) students. Approximately 500 students in Grade 9 completed a questionnaire. The significant findings of the questionnaire were then explored in interviews with students and teachers. Quantitative results indicated significant differences in regard to several motivational factors. However, the qualitative data emphasized that at the root of these differences were societal influences.

Cet article fait partie d'une étude à grande échelle menée en Ontario sur la motivation comparée des garçons et des filles à apprendre le français en 9ième année. Le présent article porte surtout sur la théorie de la motivation à apprendre une langue seconde. Au cours des 30 dernières années, l'étude de la motivation à apprendre une langue seconde n'a pas cessé d'évoluer. Les recherches des années 1970 et 1980 qui soulignaient l'influence de la société font maintenant place à une approche qui insiste sur l'influence de la salle de classe. Le chercheur remet en question cette évolution. Une approche mixte a été employée pour déterminer s'il existe des différences entre les garçons et les filles de 9ième année en Français langue seconde. Environ 500 élèves de 9ième année ont rempli un questionnaire. Ensuite, on a approfondi les résultats significatifs du sondage par le biais d'entrevues avec des élèves et des professeurs. L'analyse des données quantitatives a mis en évidence une différence importante entre les deux sexes par rapport à plusieurs facteurs de motivation. Cependant, les données qualitatives indiquent que ces différences trouvent leur origine dans l'influence de la société.

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Introduction

Numerous studies have demonstrated motivation to be one of the main determinants of second language learning achievement (Gardner and Smythe, 1975; Crookes and Schmidt, 1991; Oxford and Shearin, 1994). Motivation has been reported to influence use of language learning strategies, frequency of interaction with speakers of the target language and general language proficiency (Oxford and Shearin, 1994). In fact, one of the most prominent researchers in the area of L2 acquisition, Gardner (1985), identified motivation as the single most influential factor in learning a new language. Cohen and Dörnyei (2002, p. 172) added: "Motivation is often seen as the key learner variable because without it, nothing much happens."

Given the importance of motivation, there is a growing concern amongst L2 educators in Canada that our male students are lacking the motivation to learn French. Several Canadian studies have in fact provided evidence to suggest that males are less motivated to learn French than females (Massey, 1994; Netten, Riggs and Hewlett, 1999; Pagliaroli, 1999). The study by Netten *et al*. (1999), for example, raised concern about male involvement and achievement in French programs. The results of the study indicated that boys were less likely to study French after Grade 9. While 59% of the 380 participants indicated a desire to continue studying French in Grade 10, the majority of these participants were female by almost a 3 to 1 ratio. Of the 155 students dropping French, approximately two-thirds were male.

Although the above-mentioned studies are all of Canadian origin, male disinterest in learning French does not appear to be a problem that is unique to this country. A British study conducted by Williams, Burden and Lanvers (2002) further supports the notion that males are less motivated to learn French than females. In this study involving 228 students in Grades 7 to 9, motivational differences were investigated between adolescent males and females toward the study of French and German. The results of this study indicated that girls expressed a significantly higher degree of desire to learn French than did the boys, and they also put forth more effort to learn the language.

A study by Csizér and Dörnyei (2005a) involving over 8000 13- and 14-year old Hungarian students provided more recent evidence that male students are less motivated L2 learners. The goal of the study was to describe motivational profiles of L2 learners through cluster analysis. By means of a questionnaire, student attitudes were assessed in regard to five different languages, including French. Four broad motivational profiles were uncovered. The first group consisted of the least motivated learners. Students in clusters two and three were progressively more motivated, and the fourth cluster consisted of

the most motivated students. The results further indicated that males dominated the least motivated clusters. The more motivated clusters, on the other hand, were largely populated by females.

In response to these concerns and due to his own experiences as a male French immersion teacher, the researcher set out to investigate if and why adolescent males are, in fact, less motivated to learn French than their female counterparts. The study used both quantitative and qualitative methods to identify and explore gender differences in various factors that influence L2 motivation, so that educators may be better equipped to deal with unmotivated male students. For more detailed information specific to gender differences in motivation to learn French, see Kissau (in press).

While conducting a thorough literature review of the topic, a definite evolution was noticed in the research on L2 motivation over the past 30 years. The focus of such research during the 1970s and 1980s on societal or macro-level factors influencing L2 motivation shifted in the 1990s toward a more comprehensive approach that incorporated both societal (macro) and classroom-related (micro) factors. Second language motivation researchers in the twenty-first century have continued to shift their attention away from societal factors, placing even greater emphasis on the L2 classroom. Researchers have in fact begun to further narrow their focus on classroom-related factors by investigating the motivational influence of specific language learning tasks. Based on the findings of the study investigating gender differences in motivation to learn French, in the present article the researcher calls into question this narrow focus on micro-level factors and the resulting neglect of societal influence.

Literature review

Much of the research on L2 motivation has been built on the work of Gardner (1968, 1975, 1985, 1996, 2001). Gardner hypothesized that an individual learning a L2 must adopt certain behaviour patterns characteristic of another cultural group, so attitudes toward that group partly determine success in learning the L2 (Gardner, 1985). Students were classified as either integratively or instrumentally oriented. They were considered integratively oriented if they had a positive outlook on the L2 community and L2 culture, to the extent that they wanted to integrate themselves into the L2 culture and become similar to the L2 speakers. On the other hand, students were considered instrumentally oriented if they emphasized that they were learning the language for practical reasons, such as in order to obtain a job.

As used by Gardner, attitudes, orientations and motivation were distinct concepts. Positive attitudes toward the L2 and the L2 community were thought to be antecedents of an integrative orientation. If individuals have positive attitudes about French people, for example, they are more likely to want to

immerse themselves in French culture. In the context of L2 learning, motivation was seen as the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so. Orientation, on the other hand, referred just to the goal. Oxford and Shearin (1994) distinguished between orientation and motivation with the analogy of registering to take a language course with the goal of learning a L2 (orientation), and then actually working hard to learn the L2 when in the course (motivation).

In a study by Gardner, Smythe, Clément and Gliksman (1976), the researchers found integrative orientation to be especially important in the acquisition of L2 skills for the development of communicative skills. Measures of integrative orientation were found to correlate more highly with speech measures than grades. It was also reported that those students who dropped out of L2 programs were not simply less able students. The primary reason for staying in the program appeared to be an integrative orientation. These findings were later supported by the work of Clément, Gardner and Smythe (1980), who suggested that individuals who possess an integrative orientation are more likely to speak with target language users, which in turn would improve their self-confidence with the target language.

The importance attached to integrative and instrumental orientation has, however, met with criticism. A number of studies have found that significant correlations between type of orientation and language proficiency disappeared when other influences such as age were statistically controlled (Au, 1988; Crookes and Schmidt, 1991).

Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) have taken issue with Gardner's definition of integrative orientation. According to Gardner (1985), an integratively oriented individual was one who wished to better get to know or communicate with members of the target language community. Following this line of thought, Dörnyei (1994) suggested that an integrative orientation might be of little use to foreign language students who have little opportunity to communicate with members of the target language community. However, a powerful integrative orientation has been detected in foreign language learners, such as Chinese learners of English in China who had little or no contact with any English-speaking people (Dörnyei, 2003). Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) have contended that an integrative orientation may not relate to an actual desire on the part of the learner to integrate with the target language community as described by Gardner (1968, 1985, 2001), but rather to an identification with attributes associated with that community.

The results of a more recent study by Csizér and Dörnyei (2005b) provided further evidence that Gardner's view of integrative orientation is too narrowly defined and does not include all language learning contexts. The researchers made frequent use of the term "ideal L2 self" in order to explain the desire to integrate with the L2 culture in diverse learning contexts, even in the absence

of contact with native speakers of the target language. Looking at the concept from this perspective, if one's ideal self is associated with learning the L2, one could be described as integratively oriented.

In 1985 Gardner published the Socioeducational Model, a revised version of his theory on motivation. This model continues to stress the link between orientation and L2 achievement. However, the link is now mediated by motivation. In other words, the fact that a language learner is integratively or instrumentally oriented is not sufficient. According to Gardner, in addition to possessing an integrative or an instrumental orientation, the learner must also be motivated (Gardner, 1985). Motivation in this context refers to the combination of effort and desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language.

Tremblay and Gardner (1995) further revised the Socioeducational Model, placing even less stress on the role of L2 orientation. The researchers asserted that attitudes toward the target language and its speakers influence valence, the value attached to learning the language, as well as goal setting and self-efficacy, all of which are believed to influence motivation. In other words, a number of other variables are believed to mediate the relationship between attitudes and motivation.

In his most recent version of the Socioeducational Model, Gardner (2001) continued to downplay the significance of an integrative orientation. An integrative orientation and attitudes toward the learning situation are now considered correlated variables that influence motivation, and that motivation in turn, along with language aptitude, have an influence on achievement. Gardner stated that an integrative orientation is a complex of attitudes that involves a favourable attitude toward the target language community, as well as an openness to other groups in general. In this latest model, Gardner (2001) emphasized the role of motivation, not integrative orientation. The researcher stated that integrativeness and attitudes toward the learning situation are supports for motivation, but it is motivation that is responsible for achievement. The researcher also acknowledged that the Socioeducational Model is not comprehensive and does not account for many other variables that influence a learner's L2 motivation: "The model is silent with respect to other attributes of the motivated individual" (Gardner, 2001, p. 6).

It is in regard to this last point that Gardner's work has received the greatest amount of resistance. Following the numerous and influential studies conducted by Gardner and his associates throughout the 1970s and 1980s, in the 1990s researchers began to question the narrow approach of Gardner's Socioeducational Model (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford and Shearin, 1994; Johnstone, 1995). Factors influencing L2 motivation are thought to exist at two levels. There is the societal or macro-level that Gardner focused on, but there is also the micro- or classroom-level of factors. Johnstone

(1995) argued that Gardner's model, incorporating instrumental and integrative orientations, is grounded in the social milieu rather than in the foreign language classroom. While recognizing the influence of Gardner's research, it must also be acknowledged that for the past decade researchers (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991; Oxford and Shearin, 1994; Dörnyei, 2001, 2003) have been calling for a broader, more classroom-friendly approach to L2 motivation research, one that allows for greater input from the classroom teacher.

Recent trends

Recent studies involving the L2 student's willingness to communicate (WTC) represent an attempt to design a more comprehensive and classroom-friendly approach to L2 motivation research. As defined by MacIntyre, Baker, Clément and Donovan (2002), WTC refers to an individual's readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person. The WTC construct is composed of a variety of linguistic and psychological variables, including self-confidence, desire to affiliate with a person, interpersonal motivation, intergroup attitudes, motivation, communicative competence and a number of other personality traits. Thus, the model attempts to incorporate a number of well established classroom and societal influences (Dörnyei, 2001).

Another recent trend that focuses on the temporal nature of learner motivation in the language classroom also represents a broader and more classroom-friendly approach to L2 motivation research. This line of research acknowledges the fluctuating nature of motivation. As any experienced L2 teacher will attest, student motivation in the L2 classroom can change not only from one year to the next, but even from one activity to the next. Such research also brings to light concerns raised by Peirce (1995) in regard to Gardner's Socioeducational Model. Peirce felt that Gardner (1985) portrayed learners unidimensionally and incapable of change. They were either integratively or instrumentally oriented, motivated or unmotivated.

The temporal dimension of motivation was thought by Dörnyei (2001, 2003) to be of particular importance in an area such as language learning that can take place over a number of years. In response, Dörnyei (2001, 2003) developed a process-oriented model of L2 motivation which organizes the various motivational influences along a sequence of events in initiating, enacting, and sustaining motivation. This model emphasizes the influence of a wide variety of both classroom and societal factors, such as expectancy for success, attitudes toward the L2 community, goal setting, parental, teacher and peer influences, and appraisal of the learning experience.

Most recent research on L2 motivation has continued to stress the importance of the micro- or classroom-level, only with a more narrow focus. Instead of looking at various course-specific factors influencing L2 motivation, such as the influence of the teacher, several researchers now appear to be

directing their attention to task-specific factors (Dörnyei, 2003). The growing interest in task-specific motivation appears to be due in part to the practical classroom implications of such research. While certain motivational attributes are generalized across learning situations and are relatively fixed, thus difficult to change, learner motivation varies considerably according to different learning tasks (Dörnyei, 2001). As a case in point, Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant and Mihic (2005) investigated the possibility for change amongst 197 university students enrolled in a year-long intermediate level French course in regard to a variety of variables believed to influence L2 motivation, such as integrative and instrumental orientations, language anxiety, motivation and attitudes toward the learning situation. While the researchers found that the possibility for individual change was not great in regard to any of the variables, the greatest likelihood for change was found amongst variables associated with the learning environment. The motivational factor the least likely to change was reported to be integrative orientation, and the factor offering the greatest possibility for change was attitudes toward the learning situation.

Methodology

A comprehensive approach to L2 motivation was employed in the study investigating gender differences in motivation to learn French. Despite the recent trend focusing specifically on classroom-related factors, a model was designed that included both micro- and macro-level factors found to influence L2 motivation. In the data analysis, a number of these factors were composed of sub-scales (in brackets). As a result, a total of 18 different variables were investigated. These variables include desire, motivational intensity, integrative and instrumental orientations, self-efficacy, anxiety, self-determination (effort, luck and context), intrinsic/extrinsic motivation (challenge, mastery, curiosity), perceptions of French, encouragement to study French (parental, teacher and peer), goal salience (goal frequency, goal specificity) and tolerance of ambiguity. A mixed methodology was then employed to identify and explore gender differences in regard to the various motivational factors included in the model.

Participants

All Grade 9 students from a southwestern Ontario school board enrolled in core French were invited to participate in the study. In total, 490 students participated. Of these students, 254 were females and 236 were males. The age of the students ranged from 13 to 18, but most were 14 years old (74%) at the time of the study. Of the 490 students, 122, or approximately 25%, indicated that they planned to study French in Grade 10. Two hundred and two students had not yet decided (41.2%), and 166 students (33.9%) stated that they did not intend to continue studying French after Grade 9.

The student-participants came from urban and rural areas, from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, and possessed a wide variety of cognitive abilities and attitudes to L2 study. This large and diverse group of participants provided a fairly representative cross-section of Grade 9 students in Ontario.

From the 490 student-participants, eight students (four females and four males) were selected to participate in interviews. Stratified random sampling was used to select these students in order to ensure that males and females were equally represented. The eight students were selected from urban, rural, inner-city and suburban high schools in an effort to ensure the sample was more representative of the population.

Grade 9 FSL teachers whose students took part in the study were also asked to participate in interviews. These teachers were chosen in order to help explain and elaborate on the results obtained from the student questionnaires. The six teachers (three females and three males) who were interviewed represented a very diverse sample of professionals. Not only were they diverse in their work locations, but also in their ages, experiences and responsibilities. Total teaching experience among the six teacher-participants equaled 93 years of teaching French, and individually ranged from as little as three years experience to over 30 years. Three of the teachers were head of the Language Department at their respective schools, and one of the teachers also taught German.

Instrument

Questionnaire

Quantitative data were collected from the student-participants with the use of a questionnaire (see Appendix). Although a brief section of the questionnaire sought demographic information from the participants (age, sex and future plans for studying French), the primary goal of the questionnaire was to evaluate student perceptions toward the motivational factors. Students were required to circle a number on a 7-point Likert scale that best represented their response to a number of items pertaining to the motivational factors. An answer of 7 would indicate strong agreement and an answer of 1 strong disagreement. For the purpose of this article, items in the questionnaire were organized under headings to clarify the relationship between the items and the motivational factors being measured. The questionnaire was an adaptation of a variety of instruments. Information pertaining to each instrument, including reliability coefficients (in parentheses), is provided below.

The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) The AMTB, designed by Gardner, Clément, Smythe and Smythe (1979), provided the measure for Motivational Intensity (.82), Desire to Learn French (.89), Integrative Orientation

(.86), Instrumental Orientation (.83), French Class Anxiety (.77) and Parental Encouragement (.89).

Causal Attribution Measure The Causal Attribution Measure designed by Tremblay and Gardner (1995) is associated with the concept of self-determination. It assesses students' feelings of control (internal or external) over events in the language classroom. The three scales used to measure self-determination are Effort (.73), Context (.70), and Luck (.78). A high score in regard to Effort would indicate an individual who ascribes failure in French class to a lack of effort, and thus displays an internal locus of control. High scores on the measures for Context and Luck would indicate someone who attributes success and failure in French class to external sources such as the level of difficulty or luck.

Goal Salience Measure The Goal Salience Measure was also designed by Tremblay and Gardner (1995) and is used to measure Goal Specificity (.73) and Goal Frequency (.78). High scores on this measure would indicate the establishment of specific goals with respect to the French course and the use of frequent goal strategies to learn French.

Self-Report Scale of Intrinsic Versus Extrinsic Orientation This scale designed by Harter (1981) measures intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Three sub-scales, Challenge (.86), Mastery (.73) and Curiosity (.69), were used as part of the measure. A high score in these sub-scales is revealing a preference for challenging work, motivation to learn for one's own satisfaction and an internal curiosity.

Grade 9 French Survey The sub-scale, Peer and Teacher Encouragement (.72), originated from the Grade 9 French Survey (Netten *et al*. 1999). The sub-scale assesses the degree of encouragement students perceive themselves to receive from teachers and peers to study French.

The sub-scale, Self-efficacy (.84), also originated from the Grade 9 French Survey (Netten *et al*. 1999). The sub-scale assesses student judgment of capabilities in FSL.

Student Perceptions of the French Language (.82) This scale was designed by the researcher to uncover differences between genders in how the French language is perceived. A high score would indicate a more negative perception of the language.

Second Language Tolerance of Ambiguity (.90) The Second Language Tolerance of Ambiguity Scale (Ely, 1995) was designed to measure individual differences in a L2 learning environment. A high score on this measure would indicate a low tolerance of the ambiguity often found in L2 classrooms.

Interviews

Following the quantitative phase of the study, qualitative data were collected via interviews. The eight student and six teacher interviews lasted 30–45 minutes each. Due to time limits on the interviews imposed by the participating school board, motivational factors in the quantitative phase of the study where male and female responses were quite similar were not pursued in the interviews. During the interviews, a number of open-ended questions were asked. Questions pertaining to each motivational factor investigated followed a very similar format. Without informing the participants of the quantitative results, they were initially asked what gender differences, if any, they noticed in regard to the motivational factor in their FSL classroom. They were then asked to speculate why, in their opinions, possible gender differences may exist in regard to this area, and what they felt could be done to address such possible differences. The data provided by the interviews were intended to not only help validate the quantitative findings, but also to elaborate upon these findings, to explore the reasons behind these gender differences and to provide possible solutions.

Data analysis

A Discriminant Function Analysis (DFA) was performed on the data obtained from the questionnaires using 18 variables as predictors of membership in two groups (Males and Females). This analysis helped to determine (1) which variables discriminate males from females, (2) the relative importance of each independent variable when examining gender differences and (3) the ability to successfully classify males and females based on these variables. Overall, the findings allow for the building of a profile of male and female students with respect to French language studies.

The data provided by the interviews were then analyzed. In a manner consistent with data analysis procedures in grounded theory (Glaser, 1992), the researcher compared the data, looking for themes to emerge.

Quantitative results

The correlations for each variable with the standardized canonical discriminant functions are provided in Table 1. The variables were ranked from the strongest predictor of the sex of the student to the weakest. The loading matrix of correlations between predictors and discriminant functions, as seen in

Table 1, suggests that the best predictor for distinguishing between males and females in Grade 9 core French is their Desire to Learn French. In other words, a student-participant's sex could be most accurately predicted by his/her responses to the items that pertained to Desire to Learn French. This variable had a loading in excess of .75. The female students responded much more favourably to items pertaining to Desire to Learn French than did the males. Student responses to the items that dealt with Integrative Orientation (.641) and Motivational Intensity (.508) were also relatively accurate predictors of the sex of the student and contributed to this discriminant function. Again, the female students responded much more positively than did the male students. On the other hand, the Discriminant Function Analysis showed Mastery (−.001), French Class Anxiety (−.017) and Tolerance of Ambiguity (−.081) to be the least related to the sex of the student. A student's sex could be least accurately predicted based upon his/her responses to the items that pertained to these three independent variables. This analysis allowed for the construction of a profile of the male and the female student. Male students are characterized by less desire to learn French, a lower sense of integrative orientation and lower motivational intensity. In fact, all but a small number of the 18 variables investigated had a loading in excess of .30, and as such, contributed to the profile of the male student and the female student. Although the weightings reported were lower than those previously mentioned for Desire to Learn French, Integrative Orientation and Motivational Intensity, males and females still did respond quite differently in regard to all variables except those pertaining to Challenge, Context, Tolerance of Ambiguity, French Class Anxiety and Mastery.

Qualitative results

The qualitative data obtained during the interviews, while successful in validating the quantitative findings for the variables where significant gender differences were reported, seemed to highlight one particular area. During discussions of possible gender differences in a variety of factors influencing L2 motivation, students and teachers alike were frequently commenting on macro-level factors, specifically societal perceptions of French.

The message that French is perceived by boys as a female domain was not only conveyed by the students while completing questionnaires, but also by 11 of the 14 individuals interviewed. Large discrepancies in the number of males and females enrolled in senior French courses, and also in the number of males and females that teach these courses, were routinely provided by teachers and students as reasons for these gender differences. Another frequently mentioned reason by both teachers and students was that of traditional views of what is appropriate for a boy as compared to what is appropriate for a girl. The words of an experienced male French teacher summarized this point: "There's still a lot of sexist thinking that a man doesn't learn languages. A man does math

Table 1: Standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients

Variable	Coefficient
Desire	.759
Integrative Orientation	.641
Motivational Intensity	.508
Goal Frequency	.496
Self-efficacy	.476
Peer and Teacher Encouragement	.473
Luck	−.472
Perceptions of French	.462
Goal Specificity	.406
Parental Encouragement	.391
Curiosity	.366
Instrumental Orientation	.307
Effort	.301
Challenge	.240
Context	−.236
Tolerance of Ambiguity	−.081
French Class Anxiety	−.017
Mastery	−.001

or engineering, or whatever. Sexist behaviour still plays a great role. Learning French, it's not perceived as a man's job."

The above quote cannot be emphasized enough because its repercussions were felt throughout the study. Student perceptions of French were deemed by teachers and students to be mere reflections of societal perceptions of French, and societal perceptions were mentioned in interviews as an underlying reason behind gender differences in every variable investigated in the student and teacher interviews.

Discussion

The quantitative analysis of the data would seem to support the comprehensive view of L2 motivation employed in the study. Statistical analyses revealed that every factor incorporated in this model was functionally related to a student's decision whether or not to study French the following year. Students who reported more positive scores on items pertaining to Goal Specificity, for example, were more likely to study French in Grade 10 than those whose responses were more negative. The same could be said for every other factor incorporated in this broad approach to L2 motivation research. The need for L2 motivation research to look beyond Gardner's model, which focused on societal influence, was further supported by the qualitative data. Students and

teachers alike were in agreement that the many classroom-related factors incorporated in the study, such as goal-setting, encouragement, self-determination, self-efficacy and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, were all influencing student motivation to learn French.

However, while acknowledging the need for a broad approach to L2 motivation research, one that incorporates both macro- and micro-level factors, underlying themes in the qualitative data seemed to be drawing attention back to Gardner's model. After careful analysis of the qualitative data, it became evident that societal factors were significantly influencing classroom-related factors.

As the study progressed, it became apparent that traditional, societal views of what is appropriate for a male and what is appropriate for a female were weighing significantly on the results. Boys were reporting that they felt less capable than girls in French because society has told them in no uncertain terms that they are not supposed to be as capable. Boys reported being less interested in learning about French culture because society has made it clear that that is more of a female concern. They felt that they had to be lucky to do well in French, once again, because society has let it be known that it is not "normal" for a boy to do well in French. Instead of admitting to be different, or unlike other "real" boys, males attribute their successes in French to external sources like luck. In the end, societal perceptions were found to influence all 13 of the 18 variables where gender differences were reported in the Discriminant Function Analysis.

The fear of negative societal appraisal as a possible explanation for male disinterest in French class lends further support to Gardner's concept of integrative orientation and more specifically, the previously mentioned research by Csizér and Dörnyei (2005b) involving ideal selves. An important aspect of one's ideal self is not only what one would like to become, but more to the point here, what one is afraid of becoming. Aspiring to become their "ideal selves", boys steer clear of activities, such as French class, that may come with negative associations for males.

Although these findings lend some support to Gardner's Socioeducational Model that emphasizes the role of societal factors, they also point out its inherent weaknesses. Social-psychological models like Gardner's give the false impression that individual learners can choose whether or not they wish to "integrate" into the target language culture. Tollefson (1991) stated that social-psychological models in L2 acquisition imply that learners are free to make choices about why they interact with speakers of the target language or why they are motivated to learn the language. It became increasingly clear during the student interviews that many boys were not truly free to make choices. The stigma attached to the French language was preventing even those boys who may have been interested in learning French from pursuing their studies in the

language. Tollefson criticized these models for ignoring the power of societal factors that often dictate the language learner's decision.

Flaws in Gardner's model may in fact extend to include its emphasis on learner attitudes toward the target language community. While positive student attitudes are undeniably an important component of L2 motivation, negative societal perceptions were actually found in the study to override positive attitudes. Male students who wanted to learn French, who liked French and who were good at it, were bowing to societal pressures and abandoning their pursuit of learning the language. A comment made by a department head at one of the participating schools clearly demonstrates this message: "I've got Grade 9 male students who like French and who are doing really well, but who are thinking, you know, 'Why am I going to pursue something, if there is going to be some negative backlash?"'

Limitations of the study

It must be acknowledged that while it was a stated goal of this study to broaden the concept of L2 motivation beyond Gardner's Socioeducational Model, one component of Gardner's model was actually omitted from the study. Gardner's influential model has three main components: motivation, integrative/instrumental orientation and attitudes toward the learning situation (Gardner, 1985). The third component of this model, attitudes toward the learning situation, was not included in the present study. The researcher was required to remove this component due to reticence on the part of the participating school board. Elements related to this third, and smallest component of Gardner's model, deal specifically with student attitudes toward their French teacher, as well as toward various French class activities (Gardner *et al*., 1979). The school board involved in this study did not wish to have its students appraising its teachers or its classroom activities. In order to obtain permission to conduct this study, the researcher was required to remove the items pertaining to attitudes toward the learning situation, which were deemed inappropriate by the school board.

In this researcher's opinion, the removal of the third component of Gardner's definition, while unfortunate, did not adversely affect the outcomes of the study. One of the study's strongest findings was that classroom experiences and student attitudes are of relatively less significance than societal perceptions. Male students involved in this study who had positive attitudes toward French culture and French class were nevertheless reporting that they were not motivated to learn French, for fear of social repercussions.

Implications and applications

In a period of time when L2 motivation research is growing more and more interested in micro-level or classroom-related factors, this study has drawn attention back to the importance of societal influence. While classroom-related factors were also found to be influential, the pervasive influence of society on the study's results was undeniable. Societal perceptions were discouraging even those students who enjoyed French from studying the language. In light of this finding, researchers need to re-open the debate over macro- and micro-level factors in L2 motivation. When designing research models of L2 motivation, researchers should not overlook the influence of society.

Although factors existing at the societal level were found to be highly influential, it is not this researcher's intention to minimize the influence of classroom factors influencing L2 motivation or to present micro- and macro-level factors in a binary opposition. In fact, another contribution of this study is the realization that classroom, or micro-level factors, and societal (macro-level) factors are mutually influential. Comments made during student and teacher interviews suggested that elements of the micro-level, the FSL classroom, are, in fact, helping to uphold many of the societal perceptions of French that are negatively influencing students. Modifications made at the classroom-level, for example, may help to change societal perceptions of French, which in return may have a beneficial impact on other classroom-related factors. For instance, it was thought by several student participants that if more males were seen in the textbooks, and if more traditionally male topics were discussed in the classroom, French may no longer be perceived by society as a female domain. A classroom-related consequence of this societal change in perception could be that male students have greater desire to learn the language and exhibit more confidence in doing so.

The study's results demonstrating the influence of both macro- and micro-level factors also help to further validate the work of a growing number of researchers (Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford and Shearin, 1994; Siegel, 2003). Dörnyei, for example, suggested analysis of factors influencing L2 motivation at the language status level (macro-level), as well as at the learner and learning situation level (micro-level). In fact, recent research involving task-specific motivation, that has attempted to move away from societal factors and focus narrowly on classroom-related factors, seems to have actually reinforced the notion that one level of factors cannot be separated from the other. Researchers (Dörnyei and Kormos, 2000; Dörnyei, 2001; Julkunen, 2001) have found task-specific motivation to be a combination of trait and state motivation. State motivation is thought to be influenced by classroom-related factors such as task demands and the emotional state of the learner prior to the task (anxiety, satisfaction). Trait motivation, on the other hand, is said to be a combination of numerous factors,

many of which are societal in nature, including integrative orientation, the desire to meet and get to know members of the L2 community. Thus, even at the most narrowly focused level of the classroom, both micro- and macro-levels of influence are present.

Conclusion

Building upon the traditional and widely-used model of L2 motivation introduced by Gardner (1975), the present study used a broad approach to L2 motivation, one that included a number of societal and classroom-related factors that have been found to influence L2 motivation. In so doing, the study has responded to a growing demand in the research community for a more classroom-friendly approach to L2 motivation (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford and Shearin, 1994; Johnstone, 1995).

Although the findings do strengthen the argument for a broad, more classroom-friendly approach to L2 motivation, the data, particularly in the qualitative phase, clearly revealed factors at the societal or macro-level to be highly influential. While gender differences were consistently found in regard to a number of classroom-related factors, the qualitative data often suggested that the impetus behind such gender differences was societal in nature. It appeared that how French is perceived by society at large not only influences how students perceive French, but also influences a number of other classroom-related factors that have been found to influence L2 motivation.

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Appendix:
Student Questionnaire

Section I

Your sex: ____ Male ____ Female

When were you born? Month: _____ Year: _____

Sex of your present French teacher: ____ Male ____ Female

Do you intend to continue studying French in Grade 10?

1. ____ Yes 2. ____ Unsure/Undecided 3. ____ No

Section 2

For each of the following statements circle the number which best represents your answer.

strongly disagree	moderately disagree	slightly disagree	neutral	slightly agree	moderately agree	strongly agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**

Motivational Intensity

1.	When I am studying French, I ignore distractions and stay on task.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	I really work hard to learn French.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	I make a point of trying to understand all the French I see and hear.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	I keep up to date with French by working on it almost every day.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	When I have a problem understanding something we are learning in my French class, I always ask the teacher for help.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	I approach my French homework in a random and unplanned manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	I don't bother trying to understand the complex aspects of French.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	I don't bother checking my corrected assignments in French class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	I tend to give up when a French lesson gets off track.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	I don't pay too much attention to the feedback I get in French class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Desire to Learn French

1.	I wish I had begun studying French at an early age.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	I wish I were fluent in French.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. I want to learn French so well that it becomes second nature to me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. I would like to learn as much French as possible. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. If it were up to me, I would spend all my time learning French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. Knowing French isn't really an important goal in my life. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. To be honest, I really have little desire to learn French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. I sometimes daydream about dropping French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. I haven't any great wish to learn more than the basics of French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. As I get older, I find I'm losing any desire I had in knowing French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Integrative Orientation

1. Studying French is important to me because it will allow me to be more at ease with fellow Canadians who speak French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Studying French is important to me because it will allow me to meet and speak with more and varied people. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Studying French is important to me because it will enable me to understand and better appreciate French Canadian art and literature. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in French class. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. Studying French is important to me because I will be able to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Instrumental Orientation

1. Studying French is important to me because I'll need it for my future career. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Studying French is important to me because it will make me a more knowledgeable person. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Studying French is important to me because it will someday be useful in getting a good job. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. French is important because people will respect me more if I have a knowledge of a foreign language. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

French Class Anxiety

1. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in French class. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. I always feel that the other students speak French better than I do. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in French in class. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. I am afraid the other students will laugh at me when I speak French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Parental Encouragement

1. My parents really encourage me to study French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. My parents try to help me with my French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. My parents feel that since I live in Canada, I should learn French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. My parents feel that I should devote more time to my French studies. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. My parents show considerable interest in my French studies. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. My parents encourage me to practice my French as much as possible. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. My parents have stressed the importance French will have when I leave school. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. My parents feel that I should study French all through school. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. My parents feel that I should really try to learn French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. My parents urge me to seek help from my teacher if I am having problems with my French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Self-determination

Effort–Failure

1. I can overcome the obstacles of learning French if I work hard. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. If I receive a poor mark in French, it is because I didn't study much. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. At times when I don't succeed in French exercises as much as I want to, it is due to a lack of effort on my part. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Context–Failure

1. When I receive a poor grade in French it is because the teacher failed to make the course interesting. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. The reason that my French grades are not higher is because French is a difficult subject. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. When I get a poor grade in French class it is because the teacher presented complicated material. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Luck–Success

1. If I do well in French, it is because I am lucky. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. My success in French is due to destiny. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. My success in French depends on good breaks. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Goal Salience

Goal Specificity

1. I don't have any specific intentions when it comes to French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. I have a clear idea of how much French I want to learn. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. I have a specific goal of how much French I want to learn. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. I don't know what my purpose of studying French is. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. I often think of what I want to accomplish in my French course. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. I don't have any specific plans when it comes to learning French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. When it comes to learning French, my goals change all the time. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. I have planned out well what I want to achieve in my French course. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Goal Frequency

1. When I study French, I rarely follow a plan. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. I sometimes ask for advice on the best way to learn French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. I often make a list of things I have to do in my French course. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. It is of great benefit to me to have a course schedule in French class. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. I don't spend much time thinking about my goals to learn French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. When I study French I often refer to a goal. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. I rarely take the time to think about my French learning plans. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. I rarely follow a time schedule when I study French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Intrinsic/Extrinsic Orientation

Challenge

1. I prefer hard, challenging work. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. I like difficult problems. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. I like to learn as much as I can. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. I do not like new, difficult work. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. I find difficult work interesting. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. I do not like hard school subjects.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Curiosity							
1. I usually read because I have to and not because I am interested.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I sometimes do extra projects to learn.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I like to work to learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I rarely ask questions when I want to learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I enjoy working on solving problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I like learning about things that interest me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mastery							
1. I like to figure things out myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I usually ask my teacher to help me with my mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I prefer to ask for assistance when solving hard problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I usually try to figure out assignments on my own.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I prefer to plan things myself when completing assignments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I often seek out help when completing school work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Peer and Teacher Encouragement							
1. I have been encouraged by my teachers to continue studying French.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I think my teachers feel French is as important as other subjects.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I think my friends feel it is important to learn French.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. My friends make fun of me for learning French.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I feel that I have been encouraged more by my teachers to study other subjects, such as Math, Science and Computers than French.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Student Perceptions of French							
1. I think girls are better at learning French than boys.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. French is a gentle and pleasant sounding language.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I think French is more suitable for girls than boys.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. The French language is for sissies.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I am afraid of what people will think of me if I study French.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Self-efficacy							
1. I expect to do well in French class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. I feel that I can write well enough in French to describe an event, or a person, or tell a story. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. I feel that I can identify the main points in a French conversation or passage. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. I feel that I am able to understand a conversation in French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. I feel that I can speak well enough in French to make myself understood on certain topics. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Tolerance of Ambiguity

1. When I am reading something in French, I feel impatient when I don't totally understand the meaning. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. It bothers me that I don't get everything the teacher says in French. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. When I write French compositions, I don't like it when I can't express my ideas exactly. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. It is frustrating that sometimes I don't understand completely some French grammar. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. I don't like the feeling that my French pronunciation is not quite correct. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. I don't enjoy reading about something in French that takes a while to figure out. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. It bothers me that even though I study French grammar, some of it is hard to use in speaking and writing. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. When I am writing in French, I don't like the fact that I can't say exactly what I want. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. It bothers me when the teacher uses a French word I don't know. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. When I am speaking in French, I feel uncomfortable if I can't communicate my idea clearly. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. I don't like the fact that sometimes I can't find French words that mean the same as some words in English. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. One thing I don't like about reading in French is having to guess what the meaning is. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7