

Motivational orientations and their effect on English Language Learning: A Study in EFL Saudi Context

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Abstract The aim of the present study is to explore integrative and instrumental orientations and their influence on foreign/second language acquisition. Then, it investigates Saudi students' motivation to learn English and the correlations between their motivational outlooks and their English achievement scores. A modified 18-item survey, adopted and modified from the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) developed by R. C. Gardner (1985), was administered to two groups of non-English major EFL students at two technical colleges from two different cities, Dammam and ArRass, in Saudi Arabia. Data were collected simultaneously and were subjected to some basic statistical analyses, such as "mean" and "standard deviation". Overall, findings indicated that although Dammam group obtained higher English achievement scores, they were similar to ArRass group in respect of their motivational outlooks, which means that achievement scores were affected by other variables. In this study, the attitude toward English variable was examined and the results showed significant difference between the two groups.

Keywords: attitudes, motivation, integrative, instrumental, orientation, EFL, ESL, achievement

Cite This Article: Ahmad Mousa B. Altasan, "Motivational orientations and their effect on English Language Learning: A Study in EFL Saudi Context." *American Journal of Educational Research*, vol. 4, no. 16 (2016): 1131-1137. doi: 10.12691/education-4-16-2.

1. Introduction

Some learners may study English language for utilitarian goals and others may learn it to assimilate into the English community. Motivation, particularly in English as a foreign language (EFL) settings, is the essence of language teaching because all of the factors that lead to successful second language acquisition are lacking in most EFL contexts: there is not enough exposure to English in the community, there probably are limited opportunities to interact with English speakers, and there may not be widespread enough social acceptance for the notion of becoming proficient in English [19].

Teaching a foreign language in a monolingual environment like Saudi Arabia remains a great challenge due to lack of opportunities to practice English outside classrooms. Many Saudi English teachers are very aware of the fact that motivation is an essential aspect of learning a foreign language but when they are asked which is better to have instrumentally motivated students or integrative motivated ones; many might be hesitant to answer the question. Hence, it is crucial to understand what our students' orientations are and their role on English language learning process.

1.1. Objective

Targeting Saudi technical college students, the present study sought to identify their English-learning motivation types and their relationships with the students' achievements

in English, hoping to shed some light on the role of motivation in the process of teaching-learning English which might be helpful for instructors and students in EFL contexts.

1.2. Study Questions

To achieve the aim, the research questions to be addressed are:

- (1) What are Saudi technical college students' attitudes towards learning English?
- (2) What are the English-learning motivation types of Saudi technical college students?
- (3) Is there any relationship between students' motivation types and their achievement in English?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Psychological Perspectives on Motivation

Research on motivation in second language learning has been greatly influenced by the work of Canadian psychologist R. C. Gardner and his associates [4]. Gardner and Lambert [6] said "we looked at the language-learning process with the eyes of social psychologists. From that perspective, learning a foreign language takes on a somewhat special significance" (p. 132). Hence it is crucial to present the concept of motivation in a psychological view.

According to McDonough [15], the study of motivation was controlled by the notion of drive. He pointed out that psychologists such as Hull and Thorndike defined the

drive as an energy, aroused from the bodily needs, directed toward a given goal. For example, in animal experiments, the reward given to the animal for successful learning was food, which is a primary need. Thus, people might be driven to learn because learning provides them with rewards which have been associated in the past with the satisfaction of homeostatic needs. However, McDonough [15] argued that human values and attitudes play a major role in the effect of any reward of knowledge so that the concept of drive is not particularly useful in analysing complex human learning problems because the drive originates automatically from the mechanical development of a need without any reference to the more complicated set of values.

Another psychological view of motivation is the 'level of aspiration' theory, which has received a great attention in the late 1930s and the 1940s. It was based on Kurt Lewin's 'Field Theory'. The level of aspiration is identified by the interaction between the person's prospect of succeeding in the task and the importance of success for him in that task, which Lewin called a valence. In Lewin's theory, motivation depend on two variables, valence and chances of success, and they were not always independent [15].

The concept of 'need for achievement' is one of the three types of motivational need that was proposed by David McClelland. The strength of this need was considered by Atkinson (as cited in [15], p. 152) to be the net result of two inclinations, motivation toward success and motivation toward avoidance of failure. These motives consist of three factors: the person's expectations of success, the value of the task as a stimulus, and the orientation toward success or toward prevention of failure.

Finally, McDonough [15] indicated that the most cognitive and non-automatic theoretical approach on motivation is the Attribution theory. It describes motivated behavior as the reason to which the individuals ascribe their own and other people's performance: their own ability, effort, intent, or others' ability, effort, or intent, and so on. This concept tries to elaborate the three component theory just mentioned and include perceptions, motives and ideas which affect learners' performance – which may be called 'cognitions'.

2.2. Types of Motivation

According to Gardner [7], motivation in SLA consists of the goal, which represents the orientation toward second language learning and the effort. The type of motivation answers the question of why the person is studying the language. It refers to the goal. He proposed that in order to understand why learners were motivated, it is necessary to understand the learners' ultimate goal or purpose for learning the language. He made a distinction between orientation and motivation as orientation refers to the class of reasons for learning a second language while motivation refers to attitudes toward learning the language, desire to learn it and motivational intensity.

Gardner and Lambert [16] introduced the notions of instrumental and integrative outlooks. Instrumental orientation refers to the learner's need to learn a language for practical purposes (such as employment or travel or exam purposes). On the other hand, integrative orientation refers to the desire to learn a language to assimilate

successfully into the target language community. Another dichotomy that emerged was the distinction between extrinsic motivation, which comes from outside factors (such as passing an exam, getting a job, and so on), and intrinsic motivation, which comes from within the individual (such as the enjoyment of the learning process itself) [10].

Since the 1950s, when Gardner and his colleagues conducted their motivation research, many motivation researchers have argued over the priority of integrative or instrumental orientation, and reported conflicting outcomes [11].

For example, Gardner and Lambert [6] asserted that success in a foreign/second language could be attributed to integrative orientation rather than instrumental. They proposed that it is integrative motivation that maintains better long-term motivation when learning a second language. By contrast, Belmechri and Hummel [1] have demonstrated that although researchers' taking for granted that integrative orientation is the one associated with successful L2 learning, instrumental motivation could also have positive effects on L2 learning.

Moreover, as Gardner and Lambert [6] widened their studies in different contexts, they found that instrumental motivation worked very well for French-speaking children living in Maine and attending an American high school and also in their study in the Philippines, instrumental motivation has been found to be more powerful. Gonzales [9] also reported a similar finding in a study on 150 Filipino FL learners from three universities in Metro Manila. He argued that his subjects are instrumentally motivated which is consistent with Gardner and Lambert [6] earlier study on Filipino learners. They are highly motivated to learn English for practical purposes and pragmatic gains and that was a powerful factor in learning English language.

Some studies showed the priority of integrative over instrumental motivation. For example, in a study of foreign students at US universities, Spolsky (as cited in [13], p. 173) found that students' great drive to join the society was a positive predictor of English proficiency. He concluded that integrative orientation is a key factor in learning L2. Moreover, in a study in Canada, Gardner and Smythe (as cited in [15], p. 158) still find that an integrative motive is more powerful among learners. However, they found that an integrative motive consists of both integration and affiliation and also general attitudes toward both the language and the French Canadian.

On the other hand, many studies indicated that instrumentally orientated students will show high levels of motivation. For example, the results of a study conducted by Lukmani [14] on 60 Marathi speaking high school students in Bombay showed that the students were more highly motivated to learn English for instrumental than for integrative reasons. In other words, they showed little desire to identify with English speaking Indians. Choosri and Intharaksa [2] investigated the relationship between motivational orientations and achievement in English for 140 EFL Thai students at Hatyai Technical College, Thailand. They found that Thai students were more instrumentally than integratively motivated to learn English and their instrumental motivation was associated with high achievement in English. Kurum [12], in a study on 50 Turkish students at Turkish Military Academy, also

reported a positive correlation between the Turkish students' instrumental orientation and their achievement in English as a foreign language.

However, it has been found that these two motivational components are not opposite ends of a continuum [1,5]. Instead, they are positively related and both are affectively loaded goals that can sustain learning. They both may be in return improved by better proficiency and higher achievement in the target language [5,17]. Gardner and MacIntyre [8] hypothesized that both integrative and instrumental motivation can influence second language learning. They argued that this seems rational 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. They pointed out that the main difference between them is that an instrumental motive is tied to a specific goal and its effect would tend to be sustained only until that goal is achieved. On the other hand, if the goal is continuous it seems possible that an instrumental motivation would also continue to be effective.

In a study on Turkish students, Öztürk & Gürbüz [18] found that although the learners demonstrated a high level of instrumental orientation, the data showed that both instrumental and integrative were positively and moderately correlated in a Turkish context. Also by examining EFL Libyan students' orientations, although their integrative orientation was higher than their instrumental, the results showed that there was no correlation between Libyan students' motivational outlooks and their achievement in English [21]. In a study of Japanese learners in four universities across two countries, Kato, Yasumoto and Aacken [11] found that integrative is not always a better predictor of language success than Instrumental and vice versa, arguing that either one can/should not be identified as a better predictor to language accomplishment than the other. The effect of each differs depending on the institution. Wan-er [20] contends that motivation is affected by the learning setting. In China, as an EFL context, many students mainly have instrumental motivation. Then, he argued that if they are well guided, they will attain high levels of proficiency in English.

Observing the above studies it is clear that there is a difference in type of motivation between ESL contexts versus EFL context. Dornyei [4], in a study on learners of English in Hungary, investigated the components of motivation in foreign language learning (FLL) environment, which involves learning the target language in academic situations without interacting with the target language community. He found that the results obtained from second language acquisition (SLA) contexts are not directly applicable to FLL settings. Dornyei hypothesized that, in such contexts, the instrumental orientation may acquire a special importance. Also he found that Need for Achievement (nAch) and attribution about past failures was shown to play a major role in motivation for FLL.

According to Belmechri and Hummel [1], motivation is determined by a set of orientations, the definitions of which are context-dependent. They concluded that an instrumental is generally prominent in foreign language contexts. Larsen-Freeman and Long [13] pointed out that researchers such as (Clement & Kruidenier, 1983; Cooper, 1981; Genesee, Roges & Holobow, 1983) have argued that differences in contexts between SLA and FLL are

significant. For example, Clement and Kruidenier suggested that an EFL learner would less likely aspire to integrate with the target-community than an ESL learner.

It appears from the literature review above that the influence of motivational variables on learners' rate of success tended to vary from one context to another. The social situation helps to determine two things: what types of orientation learners have and what kind is most important for language learning. Following a series of studies, Gardner and Lambert [6] stated that learning language success is not attributed to certain integrative or instrumental reasons. The value of these two orientations depends on contexts, whether learning language functions more as a foreign language or as a second language. Moskovsy and Alrabai [16] also argued that EFL setting is more affected by instrumental orientation whereas integrative orientation is a key factor in ESL context.

3. Background

Due to its strategic and economic role in the world, Saudi Arabia has paid close attention to English language learning to ensure that Saudi citizens are able to communicate with other nationalities in workforce diversity and tap into far more of the world's intellectual resources. To that end, English programs have been implemented in all school levels (elementary, intermediate, and secondary). In addition, King Abdullah scholarship program was launched in 2005. It is funded by the Saudi government and is implemented by the Ministry of Higher Education. It is the largest national scholarship program worldwide, which aims to send Saudi men and women to study abroad. In 2014, about 200,000 Saudi students were overseas to acquire higher education. English speaking countries such as United States, Britain, Canada and Australia were the target destination for most Saudi students. Also, English language is the medium of instruction for some postgraduate studies in Saudi Arabia such as computer science, engineering, and medicine. Moreover, English language is required to get a better job at big and pioneer companies in Saudi Arabia. However, English language is rarely spoken in Saudi community and is one of the most failed classes in schools. Many students have no motive to learn English and wonder why they have to study it, and this has created a negative attitude towards English language classes.

3.1. Significance of Study

Although much research on motivation have been conducted in English as a foreign language (EFL) setting which may shed light on English language learning in Saudi Arabia, the Saudi context still needs to be investigated because it differs not only culturally, but also traditionally and socially. Furthermore, this study focuses on native Arabic speakers, and, thus, provides data on EFL learners whose native language is very different from English in phonology, syntax, and orthography. The research is focusing on a population that has not been included in previous research on FL learning motivation type and achievement.

Moreover, the present study provides quantitative data on the relationship of student motivation and achievement in FL setting from the student's perspective. It might help

Saudi instructors in their efforts to increase student motivation in and out of the EFL classroom by triggering learners' integrative and instrumental interests in designing language learning activities.

4. Methodology

4.1. Participants

The participants were 200 non-major English EFL Saudi students from two technical colleges in different cities, 100 students from ArRass Technical College and 100 students from Dammam Technical College. All of them had finished the first term of their college and already had taken a common-first term level course of general English language as part of their college requirements. According to the students' profiles records at the two colleges, subjects were very homogeneous in respect of age, nationality, mother tongue and both cultural and educational background.

4.2. Instruments

The instruments of this study consist of a motivation survey and an English achievement scores. A copy of the survey is given in the Appendix.

4.2.1. The Motivation Survey

The motivation survey has been adopted and modified from the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) developed by R. C. Gardner [7]. To conform to this study, only items about students' learning motivations and their attitudes toward learning English were maintained.

The scale of this orientation index provided the student with the same 8 alternative reasons for studying English. Each reason was preceded by the phrase, "Studying English can be important for me because _____." The students were asked to rate each reason on a Likert-type 7-point scale anchored at one end by "strongly disagree" and at the other by "strongly agree". The higher the scores will be the more the subjects are considered to be motivationally oriented (both instrumentally and integratively) in their learning of English as a foreign language.

4.2.1.1. Rating of Integrative Motivation

The first four-item scale determines the extent to which respondents believe that studying English is important because it enables them to converse and participate in cultural activities with the English speaking community. The higher a student's score on this index is, the more he is identified as being integratively oriented.

4.2.1.2. Rating of Instrumental Motivation

The second four-item scale measures the degree to which subjects perceive utilitarian purposes for studying English. The higher a student's score on this index is, the more he is identified as being instrumentally oriented.

4.2.3. Attitudes towards Learning English

A 10-point scale was used to indicate students' extent of agreement or disagreement with the benefits of English language learning. They were asked to respond to five

positively worded items and five negatively worded items. Each item was answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strong disagreement to strong agreement.

4.2.4. English Achievement Records

The student's final examination marks were used as an indicator of English achievement. Exams consist of a multiple choice reading comprehension test, a multiple choice grammar and vocabulary test, a multiple choice listening test and a free composition test. However, exams do not include any test of oral fluency.

4.3. Procedure

The survey items were translated into Arabic and were conducted at the end of last year. The survey was completed under my supervision at two technical colleges, maintaining the same conditions for all the students, the principal settings required were: (a) time spent for the completion not to exceed 20 minutes and (b) no communication between students during the completion of the survey.

5. Validity and Reliability

It obvious from the literature review above that the type of motivation (instrumental or integrative) answers the question of why the person is studying the language. According to Gardner, [7] it refers to the goal or purpose for learning the language. Hence, students who have negative attitudes towards learning English were not used in the correlation analysis, the relationship between students' motivation types and their English proficiency, because they do not have a desire to learn English. In other words, they do not have a goal, which represents the orientation toward second language learning.

In addition, the reason for choosing two groups of students from different cities is to make sure that motivational and attitude variables are different. Dammam city is located in the eastern province of Saudi Arabia where there are industrial and oil companies and people are likely to interact with English native speakers and have integrative orientation, on the other hand ArRass is located in the central province where there are no opportunities to meet speakers of English in the community.

6. Delimitations

One of the boundaries is that this survey measures only orientations and attitudes towards learning English while there are others factors that affect motivation. According to Dornyei ([4], p.66), Need for Achievement (**nAch**) and attribution about past failures was shown to play a major role in motivation for FLL.

7. Data Analysis

The results of the survey and the achievement scores were computed in terms of mean and standard deviation and then a descriptive analysis was used to examine the students' attitudinal and motivational outlooks and the relationship between the students' motivation and their

English achievement scores. Students who scored less than 15 in the attitudes towards learning English survey were excluded. Descriptive Statistics are shown in the table below.

Table 1.

variables	Minimum	Maximum	ArRass College sample		Dammam College sample	
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Instrumental	4	28	24.84	3.09	25.12	2.73
Integrative	4	28	15.78	4.27	17.24	3.82
Att. to Eng.	10	70	33.85	7.11	58.97	5.54
Achievement	0	100	62.40	10.66	79.33	7.12

Interestingly, both groups tend to have more instrumental orientation, with mean of 25.12 and 24.84, than integrative orientation, with mean of 17.24 and 15.78, which is against the hypothesis of this study that Dammam students are said to be more integrative motivated. This supports the view that instrumental orientation is more predominant than integrative in foreign language contexts. Moreover, the statics for the motivational variables showed that both groups have attained a somewhat similar mean score for the integrative and instrumental orientations towards learning English.

The mean score for the attitudes towards English shows that Dammam College group tends to be more positive, with mean of 58.97, than ArRass College group with mean of 33.85. The only explanation for such a significant difference is that ArRass is a rural city and the students tend to be more culturally conservatives and reject anything that is foreign whereas Dammam students are less conservatives because Dammam is an industrial city and the students are likely to interact with foreigners in their community. This might develop their command of English to learn more about the foreign cultural patterns.

The mean score of the Dammam group' achievement is significantly higher than that obtained for the ArRass group. In fact, the mean score of the latter group is around the passing score of 60. Thus, the majority of the ArRass College sample can be considered low achievers.

The correlation between the motivational variables and English achievement variable revealed that there is no relationship between the students' achievement and the type of their motivational outlooks. This lends support to some studies in the literature review above which argued that both motivational components are positively related and they are accompanied by higher achievement in the target language.

The correlation between the attitudinal variable and English achievement variable showed that there is a relationship between the students' attitudes towards learning English and their English achievement. Although both groups showed similar finding in motivational orientations statics, Dammam college students significantly obtained higher achievement mean score than ArRass College students. This leads us to suggest that other variables such as attitudes towards English may largely affect English language achievement.

8. Conclusion

Findings suggested that instrumental and integrative motivation each play a significant role in language

learning. This finding supports several studies in the literature. However, the results of the present study showed that Saudi learners tend to have more instrumental motivation than integrative, which was due to their perception of learning a foreign language in Saudi Arabia. Saudi learners of English as a foreign language are not necessarily identical with respect to their motivational outlooks towards learning English. Teachers can enhance English learning environment by triggering their students' integrative and instrumental interests to engage them more effectively in the learning process of the language. They should use teaching techniques that suit the needs of their students. Practitioners should be aware of the factors that motivate and those that demotivate learners for whom English language is only a prerequisite subject.

Learners' attitudes towards English play a major role in learning the language. The findings of this study indicated that the learners with positive attitude towards English Language learning are high achievers and highly motivated both instrumentally and integratively. Moreover, learners' attitudes towards the learning situation could be influenced by many variables such as the teacher, the textbook, the classroom activities, lesson plans and so forth. Positive attitudes toward these variables will likely enhance the language learning process. Teachers can develop their students' positive attitude towards English by creating a positive learning environment in their classroom to make them more comfortable. They can bring authentic materials into the classroom and arrange meetings with English-speaking expatriates inside the classroom. The learning climate should be fun and relaxing. In addition, they can encourage their learners to interact and be more open with foreigners in their community.

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Appendix

Following are a number of statements with which some people agree and others disagree. There are no right or wrong answers since many people have different opinions. We would like you to indicate your opinion about each statement by circling the alternative below it which best indicates the extent to which you disagree or agree with that statements.

The motivation survey

Integrative orientation

1. Studying English can be important to me because it will allow me to be more at ease with fellow native speakers who speak English.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree

2. Studying English can be important for me because it will allow me to meet and converse with more and varied people.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree

3. Studying English can be important for me because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate English art and literature.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree

4. Studying English is important because I will be able to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree

Instrumental orientation

5. Studying English can be important for me only because I will need it for my future career.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree

6. Studying English can be important for me because it will make me a more knowledgeable person.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree

7. Studying English can be important to me because I think it will someday be useful in getting a good job.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree

8. Studying English can be important for me because other people will respect me more if I have knowledge of a foreign language.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree

Attitudes toward learning English

Circle the alternative below the statement which best indicates your feelings:

Positively worded items

1. Learning English is really great.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly

Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree
2. I really enjoy learning English.						
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree
3. English is an important part of the school programme.						
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree
4. I plan to learn as much English as possible.						
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree
5. I love learning English.						
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree
Negatively worded items.						
6. I hate English.						
(7)	(6)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree
7. I would rather spend my time on subjects other than English.						
(7)	(6)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree
8. Learning English is a waste of time.						
(7)	(6)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree
9. I think that learning English is dull.						
(7)	(6)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree
10. When I leave school, I shall give up the study of English entirely because I am not interested in it.						
(7)	(6)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree