Iranian EFL Learners' Motivational Fluctuation in Task Performance over Different Timescales[*]

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Abstract

Motivation for learning a new language is both self and time-oriented. The language learner's motivation experiences gradual fluctuation over time and the view of oneself is different on each timescale of the study. Interaction among different timescales throughout the Second Language Development (SLD) is a novel area of investigation (de Bot, 2015). In order to probe this interactive nature, the present study tried to examine the motivational dynamics of a group of language learners in longer timescales composed of a number of tasks performed on shorter timescales. To this end, a group of university students were surveyed at the onset, while performing tasks and at the end of the course to better picture the interplay of different motivational themes over time. The results revealed different manifestations of components of L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) over different timescales of the study. Apart from this evolutionary manifestation of L2MSS components, ANNOVA results revealed significant difference between scores of each individual component among all three timescales. In sum, results of the study confirmed temporal and visionary variation in participants' motivation. Finally, some implications were driven from the findings of the study.

Introduction

Second language (L2) research is replete with evidences that language learning is essentially a learner and learning oriented undertaking (Brown, 2001). Therefore, more emphasis has been placed on the role of the learner in teaching and researching L2 learning during the last two decades. Consequently, understanding learner variables and their individual differences has formed a crucial concern for L2 practitioners (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003). There are numerous learner variables contributing to the process of L2 learning (Dörnyei, 2005). Motivation has a big share, if not the lion share, in this contribution. High levels of motivational intensity are natural prerequisites for effective functioning in L2 learning (Bensoussan, 2015; Csizér & Kormos, 2008).

Although past research on L2 motivation has investigated the role of different factors, such as L2 identity (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009), L2 imagery (Dörnyei & Chan, 2013), L2 possible selves (Sakeda & Kurata, 2016; Yang, 2012), L2 self-concept (Mercer & Williams, 2014), and even L2 task motivation (Mozgalina, 2015), less attention has been paid to the combination of these factors along with the role of time and tasks in language learners' motivation.

The primary purpose of this study, therefore, is to fill this gap to some extent. It is, in fact, an attempt to examine L2 learners' motivation in performing L2 tasks and overall motivation over a time period of one semester, to see what changes may happen and what factors may exert an impact in doing so. This way, L2 motivation on short term and long term timescales (de Bot, 2015) is compared and contrasted and the potential interactions and interrelationships are revealed. Apart from this general purpose, it specifically tries to investigate the variation in and interaction of different facets of L2MSS in task performance during an academic semester.

Literature Review

Self-Oriented Motivation Research

The most recent model of L2 motivation is L2MSS proposed by Dörnyei (2005, 2009). This model has drawn on Possible Selves Theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and Self-Discrepancy Theory (Higgins, 1987). The former theory is composed of individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are

afraid of becoming in the future. The latter refers to human's self-regulating his behavior through either promotion or prevention focus. According to Higgins, these two types of focus encompass a reference to an ideal self and an ought-to self, respectively. In order to apply these theories to the field of SLD, Dörnyei proposed a motivation model composed of three constituents: ideal l2 self (the internal desires to become an effective L2 user), ought-to l2 self (the social pressures coming from the learner's environment to master the L2), and l2 learning experience (actual experience of being engaged in the L2 learning process). This model is primarily based on the idea that necessary motivation for learning a language is driven from the learners' impetus to lessen the perceived discrepancy between his/her actual self and future L2 self.

As was briefly mentioned, this model consists of three components, namely the ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self, and L2 learning experience. The ideal L2 self is related to the L2 specific aspects of one's ideal self which represents one's ambitions, hopes, and desires. This self-incorporates elements of integrative and more intrinsic instrumental motives. It has been shown to be a strong determining factor of variance in students' motivated behavior (e.g., Islam, Lamb, & Chambers, 2013; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009). On the other hand, the ought-to L2 self-concerns those characteristics one ought to possess in order to avoid possible negative consequences, including one's requirements, responsibilities, and expectations. Several studies have shown that compared to ideal L2 self, this self exercises significantly less impact on one's motivated behaviors (e.g., Islam et al., 2013; Taguchi et al., 2009). While these two selves are considered general motivational constructs, the third component of the model, i.e. L2 learning experience, is concerned with situated motives essential to the immediate learning environment. Research on this model has shown that, among its constituents, L2 learning experience has had the most significant correlation with instructed L2 learners' motivation (Taguchi et al., 2009).

Several studies aimed to examine L2 motivation from an L2MSS perspective. Within this framework, they investigated the existence and prominence of L2MSS components alongside a number of other

contributing factors in learners' motivation to acquire an L2. Latest literature in this regard lent support to the joint operation of ideal L2 self and English learning attitudes (Csizér & Kormos, 2008), ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience (Islam et al., 2013), attitudes to L2 learning, ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self (You & Dörnyei, 2014), learning experience, ought-to L2 self, and international posture (Peng, 2015), and ideal L2 self and family influence (Lasagabaster, 2016) in L2 motivation.

Visionary Potential of Motivation

Imagination or imagery plays a prominent role in self-oriented motivation research. The relevance of imagination to motivation dates back to the ancient Greeks. Aristotle, for example, claimed that 'There's no desiring without imagination' (cited in Modell, 2003, p. 108). In the literature, we can find modern definitions of visionary which mirror those of ancient times. For example, in Kosslyn, Thompson, and Ganis's words, motivation is 'the ability to represent perceptual states in the absence of the appropriate sensory input' (2002, p. 343). Moreover, Markus and Ruvolo (1989) contended that there is a close connection between imagination and construction of possible selves, which in turn leads to transformation of intentions into actions. In a similar vein, Wenger described the concept of imagination as 'a process of expanding our self by transcending our time and space and creating new images of the world and ourselves' (1998, p. 176).

Few recent studies have exclusively dealt with the visionary element of L2MSS (Dörnyei & Chan, 2013; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Magid & Chan, 2012). Distinct L2-specific visions were reported to be formed for the ideal-self-images associated with different languages studied (Dörnyei & Chan, 2013). In addition, significant correlations have been reported to exist among auditory, kinesthetic, visual styles and ideal L2 self (Kim, 2009), visual/auditory styles and ideal self (Dörnyei & Chan, 2013), visual style, vividness of imagery and ideal L2 self (You, Dörnyei, & Csizér, 2016), and positive learning experiences and ideal/feared self-images (Nakamura, 2016). Moreover, Dörnyei, and Ushioda (2011) recommended that learners' vision has to be activated and strengthened through imagery enhancement techniques. Empirical support for the usefulness of image-enhancing

visualization can be found in the works of Magid and Chan (2012), Sampson (2012) and Chan (2014).

Timescales, Language Development, and Motivation

Language development occurs over the all timescales during the human lifetime. Time is fractal in the sense that it is not dependent upon a particular scale, in other words it is scale free (Mandelbrot, 1982). This simply means that scales as long as a year or as short as a millisecond and all the other scales in between can form the basis of the study, and there is no single scale that is 'the' scale for language development (de Bot, 2012). In de Bot's proposition, it is 'through the methodology used to gather data we define the timescale we are using' (2012, p. 144). A monthly study composed of weekly observations occurs on the month and week timescales and all timescales between them (day, session, and so on). But that doesn't mean that language development happens just at the measured timescale. As this example suggests, even when the focus of the study is on a specific timescale, the whole process of language development is scale free.

Moreover, timescales have complex and interactive relations in the process of language development, and the timescale chosen for a particular study will influence the procedures of data selection and interpretation as well (de Bot, 2012). As a result, in order to have a fuller understanding of the larger process the study of language development should be conducted over a long period composed of data collected and combined on different shorter timescales. Therefore, looking at just one timescale may not well do justice to the overall picture of a phenomenon over different interacting timescales.

Having taken these insights into consideration, MacIntyre and Serroul (2015) and Waninge, Dörnyei, and de Bot (2014) reported evidence for a moment-by-moment variation in L2 motivation and suggested that different types of motivation on different timescales may have an impact on this variation. Long term motivation may result from personal goals, short term motivation from doing an enjoyable task, an even shorter term motivation from learning how to pronounce a new word correctly.

In sum, to get a full picture of motivation in a particular setting different phases of data collection and combination have to be

conducted over different interacting timescales. The existing interaction among different timescales of motivation, particularly the one between the episodic components of the learning experience and the whole motivational profile, has ignited a resurgence of interest among teachers and researchers (Waninge, 2015). Present study is, therefore, tries to take these interactive timescales into account in a study of L2 motivation in the context of Iran.

Based on the review and what was discussed so far, the following research questions are addressed:

1. How are main components of L2MSS manifested during task performance (short timescale) and overall educational semester (long timescale)?
2. Is there any effect of task level motivation on semester level motivation?
3. Is there any significant difference between learners' ideal, ought-to, and L2 learning experience selves on task performance and overall educational semester?

Following research hypotheses are normally drawn from above research questions:

1. There is no effect of task level motivation on semester level motivation.
2. There is no significant difference between learners' ideal, ought-to, and L2 learning experience selves on task performance and overall educational semester.

Methodology

Participants

This study was conducted with 35 tertiary-level EFL learners attending an English language skills course at Kharazmi University, Tehran. Their demographic data (e.g. age, gender, learning experience, etc.) was obtained through the second section of the L2MSS questionnaire (see Table 1). To control for further language interference into the results, it was tried to choose among only bilinguals (Persian-English). To gather rich information concerning participants' previous English experience, they were asked about their living or traveling overseas experience and their family members (both immediate and extended) familiarity with English. For their English ability, they were asked to rate their current

overall proficiency in English by choosing one of these options: upper intermediate level and over, intermediate level, lower intermediate level, post-beginner level, and beginner level.

Table 1. *Participants' Demographic Information (N: 35)*

Category	Subcategory	N.	Percent
Gender	Male	18	51.4%
	Female	17	48.6%
Nationality	Iranian	33	94.3%
	Non-Iranian	2	5.7%
Age	18-22	27	77.1%
	23-27	5	14.3%
	28-32	3	8.6%
Employment status	University student	27	77.1%
	Working professional	8	22.9%
Major	Teaching English as a Foreign	18	51.4%
	Language	8	22.9%
	English Translation	9	25.7%
	English Literature		
Year of Study	First	21	60%
	Second	10	28.6%
	Third	2	5.7%
	Fourth	2	5.7%
English teacher	Native	4	11.4%
	Non-native	31	88.6%
Overseas experience	Yes	3	8.6%
	No	32	91.4%
Family members' familiarity with English	Yes	23	65.7%
	No	12	34.3%
Place of study	At a private institute	3	8.6%
	At university	25	71.4%
	With private tutor	4	11.4%
	On my own	3	8.6%
English ability	Upper Intermediate level and over	4	11.4%
	Intermediate level	19	54.4%
	Lower Intermediate level	4	11.4%
	Post-Beginner level	4	11.4%
	Beginner level	4	11.4%

Instruments

Present study explored the participants' motivational inclination using a questionnaire designed by Taguchi et al. (2009). This questionnaire had three versions, adapted for use in Japan, China and Iran. Each version consisted of two sections: motivation and background information questionnaires. The former was composed of items measuring the learners' motivation concerning English learning. The authors chose the main components of the questionnaire from the L2MSS model (Dörnyei, 2009) and designed some of them by

themselves. All three versions were extensively piloted in and adjusted to each of the three research contexts. The Cronbach Alpha Coefficients was measured as .79 for the Iranian version of questionnaire.

The second section of questionnaire contained questions regarding the learners' background information. The items in this section were some questions about the participants' gender, nationality, age, place of study, years of study, major, employment status, native English teacher experience, overseas experience, and self-rated English proficiency levels. Concerning the last question, they were asked to rate themselves on a scale ranging from beginner to upper intermediate level and over, depending on abilities such as conversation about simple greetings to general daily matters, reading simple sentences to high-level materials, and writing basic sentences to personal ideas.

The third instrument was a number of L2 tasks. The kind of tasks which were used in the present study were taken from the oral argumentative tasks offered by Kormos and Dörnyei (2004). In their study, the tasks were designed as interactive problem-solving activity in order to elicit arguments regarding everyday school matters. Based on an imaginary situations, students work in pair to choose among and rank order a list of items. For example, they are asked to imagine that they are a member of school student committee. They are told that their school wants to participate in the district's social life and asks students to offer help. They are required to read 10 suggestions (e.g. helping out in the library, providing tourist information, etc.) and rank 5 of them based on their preference. Then, they are supposed to compare their preferences with those of their partner and through negotiation come to a compromise. Their final duty is to prepare 3 best activities that they together will recommend to school management. Kormos and Dörnyei believed that in uttering and comparing their preferences with those of their partners, the participants reveal different manifestations of their possible L2 selves.

Data Collection and Analysis
All the data collection processes were carried out during participants' regular English classes. The data were gathered in three rounds. In the first session of the semester, the questionnaires were distributed to measure participants' initial motivation to take the course. Around the

middle of the course and right after implementing the tasks, the second sets of the questionnaires were distributed to assess participants' ongoing motivation and the possible changes to their motivational level during this period. Final assessment of the participants' motivation was done in the last session. This way, participants' motivation on different components of L2MSS was compared and contrasted and potential influence and interrelationship of these components were revealed.

All the data were computer-coded and analyzed with the help of SPSS version 21.0 for Windows. First, all the categorical variables involved in the demographic information questionnaire went through sets of descriptive statistics to yield frequencies and percentages of each subpart of the variable in question. Second, another set of descriptive statistics were used to calculate the motivational level of the sample with respect to each component of the L2MSS questionnaire. Third, in order to investigate the effect of task level motivation on semester level motivation, paired sample T-test was conducted. Finally, since the main purpose of the study concerned finding significant difference among learners' ideal, ought-to, and L2 learning experience selves on task performance and overall educational semester, the major part of the analysis contained repeated measures ANNOVA.

Results and Discussion

Results Concerning the First RQ

As it can be observed in the following table L2MSS components had different manifestations in various phases of the study. Early in the semester, ought-to L2 self, L2 learning experience, and ideal L2 self-dominated participants' motivational inclinations (24.42, 16.40, and 15.57 mean scores, respectively). As is shown in the Table 2, scores related to ought-to L2 self-way override those of the other two factors, which have received roughly similar scores.

This finding showed the fact that at the onset, students were more externally oriented toward their course. In other words, they were heavily influenced by external factors, such as meeting their family or peers' expectations, rather than their internally fueled factors or contextual attractiveness of their learning situation. In the literature on this issue, findings similar to (e.g. Cambell & Stortch, 2011) and different from (e.g. You & Dörnyei, 2014) this finding can be found.

However, while participants were engaged in motivational tasks these components were manifested differently (22.57, 17.54, and 18.94 mean scores for L2 learning experience, ideal L2 self, and ought-to L2 self, respectively). Here, a sharp decrease in students' ought-to L2 self-scores (6 minus scores) and a considerable increase in their L2 learning experience scores (6 plus scores) were revealed. Their ideal L2 self-scores improved, though not that much noticeable (2 plus scores). What can be inferred from this finding is that the contextual contingencies of the tasks and their motivational capacity made participants more involved in their studies and ignited their visionary engines. A partial support for this finding can be found in Yaghoubinejad, Zarrinabadi, and Ketabi's (2016) and Csizér and Kormos's (2008) study in which ideal L2 self and English learning attitudes were reported as learners' main motivational elements.

By the end of semester, continuous increase in participant's L2 learning experience and ideal L2 self-scores (25.91 and 20.34 mean scores, respectively) and decrease in their ought-to L2 self-scores (16.62 mean score) was revealed. Equal increase in scores related to the first two factors was a piece of evidence for the fact that the motivational potential of the tasks practiced meantime in the semester extended beyond these tasks and kept students motivated till the end of the course. Defining an attractor state role for ideal L2 self was not just limited to the present study. Stability in motivational intensity of L2 future image was also observed by Hiver (2015) and Yaghoubinejad et al. (2016). With regard to L2 learning experience, Lamb (2012) similarly found its strong predictive power in participants' both motivated learning behavior and L2 proficiency. When these two factors are jointly taken into consideration, previous research put credence on their mutual influential impact. In line with the findings of the present study in this regard, Islam et al. (2013) reported L2 learning experience and ideal L2 self as the strongest predictors of participants' learning effort.

Table 2. *Descriptive Statistics of L2MSS Components over Three Timescales*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
TotalTideal	35	8.00	24.00	15.57	4.13	.529	.398	-.342	.778
TotalTought	35	12.00	34.00	24.42	4.38	-.262	.398	1.41	.778
TotalTlearning	35	9.00	33.00	16.40	6.19	.936	.398	.309	.778
TotalTTideal	35	10.00	24.00	17.54	3.33	-.184	.398	-.079	.778
TotalTTought	35	10.00	26.00	18.94	3.38	-.227	.398	.573	.778
TotalTTlearning	35	15.00	31.00	22.57	4.06	.474	.398	-.263	.778
TotalTTTideal	35	10.00	29.00	20.34	4.29	-.293	.398	.206	.778
TotalTTTought	35	9.00	26.00	16.62	3.71	.597	.398	.825	.778
TotalTTTlearning	35	17.00	33.00	25.91	3.39	-.282	.398	.039	.778
Valid N (listwise)	35								

Results Concerning the Second RQ

In order to answer this RQ, Paired Sample T-test was employed. Results of this section are presented in the following tables.

Table 3. *Paired Samples Statistics of L2MSS Components over Tasks and Overall Semester*

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	TotalTTideal	17.54	35	3.33	.564
	TotalTTTideal	20.34	35	4.29	.725
Pair 2	TotalTTought	18.94	35	3.38	.572
	TotalTTTought	16.62	35	3.71	.627
Pair 3	TotalTTlearning	22.57	35	4.06	.687
	TotalTTTlearning	25.91	35	3.39	.573

Table 4. *Paired Samples Test of L2MSS Components over Tasks and Overall Semester*

		Paired Differences					T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	TotalTTideal – TotalTTTideal	-2.80	5.41	.915	-4.66	-.939	-3.05	34	.004
Pair 2	TotalTTought – TotalTTTought	2.31	5.33	.901	.481	4.14	2.56	34	.015
Pair 3	TotalTTlearning – TotalTTTlearning	-3.34	5.74	.971	-5.31	-1.36	-3.44	34	.002

In order to investigate the first hypothesis of the study predicting no effect of task level motivation on semester level motivation a paired sample t-test was carried out on participants' scores in L2MSS components. As Table 3 and 4 illustrate, there was a statistically significant increase in participants' ideal L2 self from task performance ($M = 17.54$, $SD = 3.33$) to end of semester ($M = 20.34$, $SD = 4.29$), $t(34) = 3.05$, $p<.005$ (two-tailed). The mean increase in ideal L2 self-scores was 2.8 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 4.66 to .93. Moreover, there was a statistically significant decrease in participants' ought-to L2 self from task performance ($M = 18.94$, $SD = 3.38$) to end of semester ($M = 16.62$, $SD = 3.71$), $t(34) = 2.56$, $p<.005$ (two-tailed). The mean decrease in ought-to L2 self-scores was 2.31 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from .48 to 4.14. Finally, there was a statistically significant increase in participants' L2 learning experience from task performance ($M = 22.57$, $SD = 4.06$) to end of semester ($M = 25.91$, $SD = 3.39$), $t(34) = 3.44$, $p<.005$ (two-tailed). The mean increase in L2 learning experience scores was 3.34 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 5.31 to 1.36. Therefore, regarding this variable the first hypothesis of the study was rejected. Past research on this issue reported an influential role for imagining successful future on immediate task performance (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Moreover, Dörnyei (2009) suggested that tasks are useful tools for differentiating among students' different self-perceptions. These general beliefs were supported by the present findings. Quite in line with these findings, Kormos and Dörnyei (2004) found that active engagement in the task performance is the result of participants' raised motivation.

Results Concerning the Third RQ

According to the indices in Table 5, there was a significant effect of timescale on participants' ideal L2 self-scores, Wilk's Lambada = .64, F (2, 33) = 9.29, $p < .001$, multivariate partial eta squared = .36. As Table 6 depicts, there was a significant difference in these scores between first and third (mean = 4.77 and sig.= .000) and second and third (mean= 2.80 and sig.= .013) timescales. However, no such difference was found in participants' ideal L2 self between first and second timescales.

Table 5. *Multivariate Tests of Ideal L2 Self over Three Timescales*

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
	Pillai's Trace	.36	9.29	2.00	33.00	.001	.360
	Wilks' Lambda	.64	9.29	2.00	33.00	.001	.360
Ideal	Hotelling's Trace	.56	9.29	2.00	33.00	.001	.360
	Roy's Largest Root	.56	9.29	2.00	33.00	.001	.360

Table 6. *Pairwise Comparisons among Scores on Ideal L2 Self over Three Timescales*

(I) Ideal	(J) Ideal	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-1.97	.903	.108	-4.24	.303
	3	-4.77*	1.09	.000	-7.53	-2.00
2	1	1.97	.903	.108	-.303	4.24
	3	-2.80*	.916	.013	-5.10	-.494
3	1	4.77*	1.09	.000	2.00	7.53
	2	2.80*	.916	.013	.494	5.10

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Moreover, there was a significant effect of timescale on participants' ought-to L2 self-scores, Wilk's Lambada = .32, F (2, 33) = 33.64, $p < .001$, multivariate partial eta squared = .67. As is depicted in Table 8, there was a significant difference in these scores between first and second (mean= 5.48 and sig.= .000), first and third (mean= 7.80 and sig.= .000), and second and third (mean= 2.31 and sig.= .045) timescales.

Table 7. *Multivariate Tests of Ought-to L2 Self over Three Timescales*

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Ought	Pillai's Trace	.67	33.64	2.00	33.00	.000	.671
	Wilks' Lambda	.32	33.64	2.00	33.00	.000	.671
	Hotelling's Trace	2.03	33.64	2.00	33.00	.000	.671
	Roy's Largest Root	2.03	33.64	2.00	33.00	.000	.671

Table 8. *Pairwise Comparisons among Scores on Ought-to L2 Self over Three Timescales*

(I) Ought	(J) Ought	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	5.48*	.932	.000	3.14	7.83
	3	7.80*	.958	.000	5.38	10.2
2	1	-5.48*	.932	.000	-7.83	-3.14
	3	2.31*	.902	.045	.044	4.58
3	1	-7.80*	.958	.000	-10.2	-5.38
	2	-2.31*	.902	.045	-4.58	-.044

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Finally, there was a significant effect of timescale on participants' L2 learning experience scores, Wilk's Lambada = .32, $F(2, 33) = 33.60$, $p < .001$, multivariate partial eta squared = .67. As Table 10 shows, there was a significant difference in these scores between first and second (mean= 6.17 and sig.= .000), first and third (mean= 9.51 and sig.= .000), and second and third (mean= 3.34 and sig.= .005) timescales.

Table 9. *Multivariate Tests of L2 Learning Experience Self over Three Timescales*

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Learning	Pillai's Trace	.67	33.60[b]	2.00	33.00	.000	.671
	Wilks' Lambda	.32	33.60[b]	2.00	33.00	.000	.671
	Hotelling's Trace	2.03	33.60[b]	2.00	33.00	.000	.671
	Roy's Largest Root	2.03	33.60[b]	2.00	33.00	.000	.671

Table 10. *Pairwise Comparisons among Scores on L2 Learning Experience Self over Three Timescales*

(I) Learning	(J) Learning	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-6.17*	.901	.000	-8.44	-3.90
	3	-9.51*	1.20	.000	-12.5	-6.48
2	1	6.17*	.901	.000	3.90	8.44
	3	-3.34*	.972	.005	-5.79	-.896
3	1	9.51*	1.20	.000	6.48	12.5
	2	3.34*	.972	.005	.896	5.79

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

All in all, the results driven from all these ANNOVA analyses rejected the second hypothesis which predicted no significant difference between learners' ideal, ought-to, and L2 learning experience selves on task performance and overall educational semester. This kind of fluctuation in and interaction among different components of L2MSS was also reported by similar studies (e.g. Piniel & Csizér, 2015). Apart from the differences among these components, past research has highly credited the effect of time in promoting participants' motivation on these components (Khany and Amiri, 2016; Rajab, Far, & Etemadzadeh, 2012).

Conclusion

Results of the present study revealed different manifestations of L2MSS components over three timescales of the study. Initially, ought-to L2 self, L2 learning experience, and ideal L2 self were the dominant motivational inclinations of the participants. However, the more they proceeded through the course and got immersed in motivational tasks the more changes these components experienced. Midpoint in the semester, a noticeable decrease in ought-to L2 self-scores and increase in L2 learning experience scores was found. Ideal L2 self-scores increased as well, though not that much considerable. Finally participant's ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience scores increasingly ameliorated, whereas their ought-to L2 self-scores deteriorated by the end of semester. This significant increase in participants' ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience scores and

decrease in their ought-to L2 scores laid credence to the influential effect of task level motivation on semester level motivation. Moreover, ANNOVA results revealed significant difference in participants' ideal L2 self between first and third timescales and second and third timescales. By contrast, these scores did not differ significantly between first and second timescales. On the other hand, significant differences were found in participants' both ought-to L2 self and L2 learning experience among all three pairs of timescales.

Following implications for L2 motivation research can be inferred from the present study. Timescales and their interaction are of primary concern to the SLD. In this study it was revealed that the motivational factors exerting impact in task motivation continued to have a role throughout the semester. Therefore, teachers have to recognize these factors and invest on them in their teaching activities. Moreover, L2 tasks are increasingly gaining importance as playing a very facilitative role in foreign language learning. As it was revealed, motivational trace of these tasks could be found in each stage of the study. As a result, teachers should be both competent in and motivated to involve their students in these educational tasks the most. Regarding L2MSS, those particular tasks are the most useful which can incite students' future self-images.

Related to issues investigated in the present study several directions for further research can be envisaged. This study was limited to the context of the study (university) and the characteristics (e.g., their travelling to or living in an English speaking country) of the sample tested. Other studies can be either done in other educational contexts, such as different levels of the state schools, or can compare the participants of the public and private institutions. In terms of sample's characteristics, future studies can specifically deal with more homogenous population on the demographic variables. In this study, participants voluntarily selected the course. Since ought-to L2 self was one of the main measured variables, it might have been directly influenced by this voluntary nature of the course. Further studies are required to see whether the same results are obtained in compulsory contexts as well. In so doing, the role of possible future selves can be paralleled on optional and obligatory settings.

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