

***Motivation among Learners of English in  
the Secondary Schools in the Eastern  
Coast of the UAE***

***By***

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## **Abstract**

*Everybody needs to have motivation and a reason for action. Second and foreign language learners should be offered the opportunity to be motivated and fulfill their learning orientations. The purpose of this study is to examine the students' integrative and instrumental motivation for learning English in the UAE state secondary schools. Additionally, the study aims to recognize the factors affecting the students' motivation. One hundred students participated in completing a questionnaire reflecting their orientations for learning English and what affects negatively their English learning motivation. Follow up interviews with 20 students, 10 Arab English teachers as well as 3 supervisors were conducted to deepen understanding and interpretation of the results. As expected, the data revealed that the UAE students have a higher degree of instrumentality than integrativeness. Contrary to the findings of other related studies, difficulties with the subject (English) aspects such as vocabulary, structures and spelling were found to be in the first place in terms of demotivating factors. Based on the findings, recommendations and some implications which are of significance to educators and policymakers as well as to researchers are provided. At last, it is hoped that the results of this study could be of much benefit for developing teaching and learning English in the UAE schools.*

## ***Dedication***

*This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, my wife, my brothers, my daughters and my sons. I appreciate their everlasting love, patience, encouragement and support.*

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## Chapter One: Introduction

The word "motivation" appears to be simple and easy but it's so difficult to define. It seems to have been impossible for theorists to reach consensus on a single definition. Martin Covington (1998:1) states that "motivation, like the concept of gravity, is easier to describe - in terms of its outward, observable effects- than it is to define. Of course, this has not stopped people from trying it." A few definitions were found during the research process: -

- According to the Macmillan's dictionary (1979), to motivate means to provide with a motive; move to effort or action.
- Gardner (1985) states that motivation involves four aspects: a- a goal b- an effort c- a desire to attain the goal. d - a favorable attitude toward the activity.
- Motivation is defined as the impetus to create and sustain intentions and goal seeking acts (Ames& Ames, 1989).
- Oxford and Shearin (1994) defined motivation as a desire to achieve a goal combined with the energy to work toward that goal.
- Keller (1983) states that motivation is the degree of the choices people make and the degree of effort they will exert.

Furthermore, when we read or hear the word "motivation", many words and expressions are triggered in our minds:

Goal - desire - will - effort - ambition - energy - persistence -achieve- inspire - reward. Indeed, motivational issues take up large part of our daily life. When we talk about likes and dislikes, interests, or wishes we are in fact concerning ourselves with main motivational determinants of human being. When we complain about long working hours, poor salaries, tough colleagues, or alternatively when we are pleased by the recognition of our achievements, promotions and generous incentives, we are addressing issues at the heart of the motivational psychology. Yet, Kanfer (1998:12) states that motivation is "psychological mechanisms governing the direction, intensity, and persistence of actions not due solely to individual differences in ability or to overwhelming environmental demands that coerce or force action". In short, "the concept of motivation is very much part of our everyday personal and professional life and few would ignore its importance in human affairs in general." Dornyei (2001:1).

In fact learning and teaching English as a second/ foreign language is no exception in this respect. When we think of how to encourage slow learners to work harder, how to create an attractive learning atmosphere or how to reward the hard-working students we indeed deal with motivation.

Because motivation is one of the most significant factors in language learning, it is difficult for the low motivated students to learn English as a foreign language. Dornyei (1994) unequivocally states that motivation is one of the main determinants of second/ foreign language learning. Interestingly, motivation is perceived by Dornyei (2001) as cyclic, going up and down, affecting language achievement and being affected by it. He also claimed that a demotivated person is someone who initially has had motivation to fulfill a goal or to engage in an activity and has lost the motivation to do so because of negative external factors which related to the environment in which learning takes place such as the classroom and school. Nikolov (1999, in Dornyei, 2001) found that the most important demotivating factors for all the age groups were related to the learning situations such as materials, the teacher or teaching methods and he added that these factors had great effect on language acquisition and achievement.

Thus, understanding the students' goals and motivation for learning English in addition to the demotivating factors help the teachers, educational policy makers and curriculum planners to improve the students' proficiency.

Many studies (Krusdenier, 1985, Dornyei, 1994) have demonstrated that measures of proficiency in the second/foreign language are related to motivational characteristics of students. In this respect, Corria (1999) claims that a full understanding of students' motivation is necessary to maximize the English language results and positive outcomes. To emphasize the importance of identifying the students' needs and orientations, he cites an example of students at the school of nursing in Holguin who rejected learning English because they did not find any relation between English and their own career and learning some irrelevant and unpleasant material wouldn't satisfy their needs.

Realizing the vital role of motivation in learning English, in addition to the desire of school administrations and teachers to know what affects the students' motivation towards learning English and the shortage of studies about motivation in the UAE state secondary schools urged me to conduct this study. Therefore, the main aim of this study is to recognize the factors affecting the UAE students' motivation toward learning English as a foreign language. It also aims at exploring the students' integrative and instrumental motivation for learning English.

The study will first provide information on motivation toward learning L2 through literature review in two relevant areas: integrative ( positive attitudes toward the target language group and a willingness to integrate into the target language community) and instrumental ( practical reasons for learning a language, such as to gain social recognition or to get a better job) motivation and the demotivating factors influencing the motivation of L2 learners; second, describe the methodology used in collecting the data; third, display the results; fourth, discuss and interpret the results.

## **1.1. Sources of Motivation**

"Without knowing where the roots of motivation lie, how can teachers water those roots?" Oxford & Shearin (1994: 15). Fisher, (1990) points to three major sources of motivation in learning:

- The learner's natural interest (intrinsic satisfaction)
- The teacher / employment....etc (extrinsic reward)
- Success in the task (combining satisfaction and reward).

Intrinsic motivation deals with acts or behavior performed to experience pleasure or satisfying one's curiosity, whereas, extrinsic motivation involves a behavior to receive some extrinsic reward (e.g. – good grades, employment) or to avoid punishment and it can serve as an interim source of motivation for a demotivated learner . Ryan & Deci (2000) point out that intrinsic motivation is the most important kind and it is defined as the desire to engage in an activity for its inherent satisfaction rather than for some separable consequences. To

promote intrinsic motivation, many characteristics as challenge, control, curiosity and fantasy should be available to reflect the learners' willingness to learn (Lepper & Hodell, 1989). It is also stated by Small (1997) that intrinsically motivated learners usually display intellectual curiosity, find learning fun and continue seeking knowledge even after the formal instruction (classes) and this is the major goal of education. The lack of intrinsic motivation among the learners not only frustrates them, but it also frustrates the teachers who are the cornerstone of the educational process. Luce (2002:1) reported :*" over the years I have watched them(teachers) collapse, falling hard into vinyl seats of the faculty lounge, heard them grunt the 'oh, hell' and 'damn' that come from the experience of working with students who wouldn't learn. I have listened to the long sighs of frustration and then the discussion of the fact that students are largely unmotivated, unwilling slugs taking up my time and best performances."*

Littlejohn (2001) believes that a small number of students have a sense of intrinsic satisfaction. Some teachers try to affect positively the pupils' sense of intrinsic satisfaction by using games or puzzles. This thing has temporary impact. So, natural interest of the learners is unreliable to generate sustained motivation in language learning. Vroom (1995) originated the Expectancy theory in which motivation is most likely to occur when learning has value to the learner (valence), the effort to learn will be useful to the learner (instrumentality) and the learner's effort will be rewarded by the learner's expected outcome (expectancy).

Aware of these facts, many teachers resort to the extrinsic reward and the extrinsic punishment. In the classrooms, teachers may reward good students with good marks or praising words or punish other students with low marks. Therefore, the reward system itself can be frustrating and demotivating for the weaker students.

I think that the third source of motivation is the most important and crucial one. For the weak and failing students" we, as teachers have to develop their sense

of success and a feeling that they "can" do something, rather than a feeling that they "can't". (Littljohn, 2001:4)

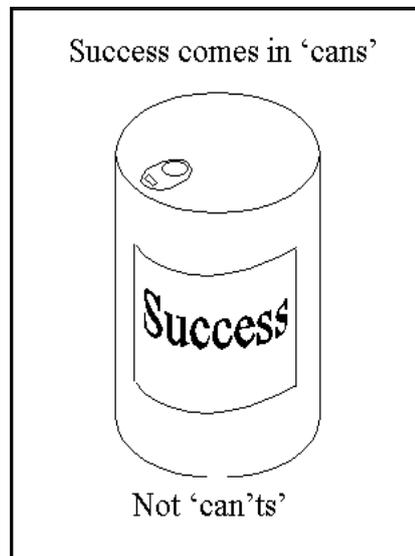


Figure 1: from "Motivation- Where Does It Come From?" (Littlejohn, 2001)

## 1.2. Motivation and Attitudes in L2 learning

Many theorists and researchers have found that it is important to look at the construct of motivation not as a single entity but as a multi-factorial one. Oxford and Shearin (1994) analyzed a total of 12 motivational theories or models, including those from socio-psychology, cognitive development, and socio-cultural psychology, and identified six factors that impact motivation in language learning:

- Attitudes (i.e., sentiments toward the learning community and the target language)
- Beliefs about self (i.e., expectancies about one's attitudes to succeed, self-efficacy, and anxiety)
- Goals (perceived clarity and relevance of learning goals as reasons for learning)
- Involvement (i.e., extent to which the learner actively and consciously participates in the language learning process)
- Environmental support (i.e., extent of teacher and peer support, and the integration of cultural and outside-of-class support into learning experience)

-Personal attributes (i.e., aptitude, age, sex, and previous language learning experience)

Concerning the learner attitudes toward the target language, it was indicated by Gardner's results (1959, 1983, 1985) that L2 learners with positive attitudes towards the speakers and culture of L2 were more successful in learning the language than those who had negative attitudes. Gardner (1983) argued that, because language is an integral part of culture, the learning of a second language is dependent upon the learner's willingness to identify with the culture of the target language and to incorporate aspects of the target-language culture, including linguistic repertoire, into his or her own behavior. Moreover, Fasold (1984) stressed the role of learners' attitudes in language growth or decay and he stated that the concept of language attitudes not only includes attitudes towards speakers of a particular language, but it also includes all kinds of behavior concerning language to be treated (e.g. attitudes toward language maintenance and planning efforts).

Interestingly, success in learning L2 largely depends on the social relation among the L1 and L2 communities. Wong-Fillmore (1991) suggested that success in learning a second language is contingent on the existence of the following conditions: (a) motivated students who realize they need to learn the target language, (b) target-language speakers who support the second-language learners, and (c) frequent social contact between target-language speakers and learners.

Concerning the effect of learning a foreign language on one's own culture, Kramsch (1995) writes about how language plays an important role not only in the construction of culture but also in the emergence of cultural change. In this regard, Kramsch (1995: 85) claimed that "social change occurs slowly, but inevitably at the edges of dominant cultures. This is true also of the change that we might want to bring about by teaching people how to use somebody else's linguistic code in somebody else's cultural context." Teaching members of one community how to talk and how to behave in the context of another

discourse community potentially changes the social and cultural equation of both communities, by subtly diversifying mainstream cultures.

The level of the relationship between students' own cultural background and the background projected by the target community culture usually affects their attitudes and motivation toward learning L2. Lambert (1990) differentiated between two types of bilingualism: "additive" and "subtractive". In additive bilingualism, the L2 learners feel that by learning a new language, something new to their knowledge and experience is added without taking anything away from what they already know. But, in subtractive case, the learners feel that learning L2 threatens what they already gain for themselves. So, it can be said that additive situations lead to successful L2 learning and integrativeness. In this respect, Obeidat (2005) conducted a study to investigate Malaysian students' attitudes -who were studying in Jordan Universities- toward learning Arabic as a foreign language. He concluded that the students were integratively motivated and their integrative orientations could be attributed to the shared belief in Islam which made them inclined to broaden their horizon and build up their personality through learning Arabic.

Furthermore, attitudes of the foreign language learners may be affected by the fear that involvement with the target language group may result in alienation from one's own group. For instance, perceptions that English is being pitted against Arabic, or in competition with Arabic, may have a negative affect on acquisition of English in the Arab World. Pennycook (1994:204-10) has remarked..." that whether or not tension exists between Western and Islamic knowledge , there is a strong feeling that English is linked to forms of culture that threaten an Islamic way of life." Thus, an investigation into learner's attitudes is a means by which language teachers, education planners, syllabus designers and researchers can gain greater insight into the language learning /teaching process.

### **1.3. Teaching English at the UAE Secondary Schools**

English language is a compulsory school subject in the UAE schools. Students experience 12 years of schooling before entering the higher educational institutions. Students at preparatory and secondary stages spend six 45 minutes English periods per week. Despite the shift from the traditional teaching methods to communicative language teaching, most English language classrooms continue to be places to memorize textbooks rather than practice communication and English is still to be treated as a school subject that needs to be mastered and tested rather than a tool for communication. Nevertheless, English language has recently become a heated topic in the UAE due to two things. First, the school graduates can not join the institutions of higher education without passing the Common English Proficiency Assessment (CEPA). Second, the Ministry of Education has obliged the school administrations to learn English and pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). So, success in learning English might determine one's up-word mobility and future.

It is worth mentioning that in spite of the great efforts exerted in the UAE secondary schools to teach English, one can hardly come across fluent school graduates. Weakness in listening and speaking skills are clearly noticed because teachers are "forced" to educate students in a manner which is directed to meet the requirements of the exams (extensive vocabulary and grammatical rules). Because the General Secondary Exam is not directed toward the speaking and listening skills of students, the teachers of English find themselves uninterested in preparing students for something which will not be examined. Unfortunately, many students in the UAE secondary schools dislike learning English and consequently they attend the English lessons to pass the compulsory exams. As a result of my long experience in the teaching field, I found out that most students have passive attitudes toward learning English due to the previous experiences that English is hard to learn and it is observed that students in the current school systems are feeling hopeless and helpless because they lack the skills needed to help them develop motivation.

## **1.4. Research Questions**

The aims of this study which are mentioned in the introduction will be investigated through the following research questions:

- What are the secondary students' goals for learning English?
- Are the students motivated integratively or instrumentally?
- What causes students' demotivation for learning English?
- Do the students consider the teacher the most demotivating factor?

In the chapter that follows, the major findings relating to integrative and instrumental motivation in addition to the demotivating factors affecting learning English as a foreign language will be reviewed.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

To better understand the students' motivation for learning English as a foreign language; it is helpful to examine the literature in two relevant areas: integrative / instrumental motivation and the factors affecting the students' motivation as they are major determinants for language acquisition and achievement.

### **2.1 Integrative and Instrumental Motivation**

Motivation and needs are closely related. On the one hand, motivation is seen as the fulfillment of needs, and on the other, human needs serve as drives or incentives which move one to a particular action. The best known theory of human needs is Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of need. Maslow formulates a five-fold hierarchy of human needs which begins with biological needs and progresses upward to psychological ones: physiological needs, including the need for food and water; the need for safety; social needs, including belongingness and love; esteem needs, e.g. the feelings of self-respect and positive recognition from others; and · self-actualization, which means the need for a sense of self-fulfillment.

In terms of the foreign or second language learning, the need for safety indicates that the L2 learner needs to be secure that learning the target

language and culture doesn't affect negatively his/her own culture or language. Additionally, learning in general and learning languages in particular needs a safe and an unstressful atmosphere to facilitate language acquisition. Esteem and social needs also indicate that the learner needs to be a knowledgeable person who is able to communicate and integrate with others by learning their language. Failure to satisfy students' needs is likely to hinder their risk-taking and motivation. Psychologically insecure L2 learners can be very anxious (Macintyre & Gardner, 1991) and if this happens, L2 learners regress in their needs, motivation, and performance in the classroom.

Motivation for learning a second/foreign language is defined as the learner's orientation with regard to the goal of learning a second language. (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991). To investigate and realize the effect of motivation on second language acquisition, the two basic types of motivation (integrative and instrumental) should be identified. Integrative motivation is characterized by the learners' positive attitudes towards the target language group and the desire to integrate into the target language community. Instrumental motivation underlies the goal to gain some social or economic reward through L2 achievement, thus, referring to a more functional reason for language learning (Gardner & Lambert, 1972).

Gardner (1985) established a model of motivation in second language learning called the socio- educational model. As a result of long studies and research, he concluded that the learner's attitude toward the target language and the culture of the target – language speaking community has great impact on language learning motivation. The model is concerned with the role of various Individual differences in the learning of an L2. In the model, two classes of variables, integrativeness and attitudes toward the learning situation are said to contribute to the learner's level of motivation.

Gardner states that learning a foreign language is unlike any other subject taught in a classroom because it involves the acquisition of skills and behavior patterns which are characteristics of another community. He also claimed that

motivation is a dynamic process where many other variables play a part, and that this model can accommodate broader views. To assess various individual differences variables based on socio-educational model, Gardner developed the Attitude/ Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) which consists of these five categories: integrativeness, instrumental motivation, motivation, anxiety and attitudes toward learning situations. Gardner's model has been used in many motivational studies (e.g. Tremblay & Gardner, 1995, Masgoret, 2001).

It can be said that Gardner's model put too much emphasis on the integrativeness and the role of learners' attitudes towards L2 group in learning the second language. Despite the fact that both kinds of motivation are essential elements of success in learning the second/foreign language, much debate and controversy among researchers and educators have been taking place about which kind of motivation is more important for the second language learners. Lambert (1974) viewed integrative motivation as being of more importance in formal learning environment than the instrumental one and it was a more powerful predictor of linguistic achievement. Falk (1978) agreed with Lambert's claim by pointing out that students who are most successful when learning a target language are those who like the people that speak the language, admire their culture and have a desire to become familiar with the society in which the language is used. On the other hand, Lukmani (1972) found that an instrumental motivation was more important than an integrative one among the non- Westernized female learners of L2 (English) in Bombay. Dornyei (1990) opposed Gardner by claiming that instrumental motivation and the learner's need for achievement are more important than the integrative motivation. Brown (2000) stated that second language learners rarely select one form of motivation when learning a second language, but rather a combination of them and he cites the example of the international students residing in the United States. However, in response to calls for the adoption of a wider vision of motivation, Tremblay & Gardner (1995) incorporated other motivational variables into the socio- educational model and they acknowledged that other factors as instrumental orientation, attitudes toward the teacher and the course, learning strategies and self confidence might contribute to motivation. I think that socially grounded attitudes may provide

important support or lack of support for motivation because language learning takes place within a social context. In other words, success in second language learning is not only correlated with integrative and instrumental orientations but it is also affected by social factors because motivation -which is a complex construct- interacts with social or political variables. Many studies have found negative correlations between attitudes and language proficiency (Chihara, 1978, Oller, 1977). Oller attributed the anti-integrative motivation of the Mexican Americans in Southeast to the situation in which colonizes minority of Mexican Americans have been oppressed by a powerful political system.

In respect of the Arab context, second language learners might preserve their identity by unconsciously selecting to be motivated instrumentally. Aspiration related to integrative motivation might affect their Arab identity and the fear of identifying with English (Western) culture and values may be related to the colony or to the latest American campaign against some countries in the area.

Upon review of the literature available in the area of students' motivation for learning foreign languages, many studies attempted to explore the learners' integrative and instrumental motivation. Oller et al (1997) studied educated Chinese speaking ESL students and he found that those who considered Americans as helpful, sincere and friendly did better in a cloze test of English as a second language. Man-Fat (2004) agrees with Oller when he explored the motivation of English language learners in Hong Kong (grade10) and his study reported the significant correlation between integrative motivation and language proficiency.

On the other hand, instrumental motivation was found more prominent in some situations particularly where there appears to be little desire to integrate. Fu& Lee (1980) found out that Chinese students in Hong Kong were instrumentally motivated and L2 linguistic achievements correlated more with instrumental motivation. Dornyei's study (1996) of Hungarian secondary school learners of English revealed that instrumental motivation is a central component of

motivation where relatively utilitarian benefits are actually available for the learners. He also claimed that foreign language learning in a classroom doesn't involve attitudes towards the L2 community because learners have little or no contact with members of L2 group.

Concerning the Arab learners, Al-Shalabi (1982) investigated Kuwaiti university students' motivation for studying EFL. It was found out that the majority of the students reported themselves as having instrumental motivation for language learning (to be "educated person, to get a higher degree" ...). Moreover, AlMutawa (1994) distributed a questionnaire among 1030 Kuwaiti secondary students and he found out that more than three quarters of the subjects disagreed with considering learning English as a means to know and learn the foreign culture. A Saudi study by Alam (1988) investigated the purpose of learning English in Saudi Arabian public schools and revealed that the majority of participants were instrumentally motivated and considered English as the language of business and higher education. Musa (1985) has given a questionnaire to 357 secondary school students in the UAE to investigate the students' attitudes towards studying English. Seventy-five per cent of the students stated that they liked studying English because of its importance as an international means of communication and because it would enable them to pursue their postgraduate studies and to keep them in contact with a high-status foreign culture.

In a study about motivation for learning English among first year female university students in Zayed University in the UAE (Zayed University, 1999), it was found out that the key motivating factor for the learners was instrumental. Although the attitudes to the target community were generally positive, there appears to be no desire to assimilate or become friends with speakers of the English. Attitudinal studies conducted on Arab students (Zughoul & Taminian, 1984, Harrison et al, 1975) have shown that Arab students are instrumentally motivated to learn English and it is true that some learners are integratively motivated but they are in a minority. Dhaif Allah( 2005) explored the Saudi students' integrative and instrumental motivation for learning English as a foreign language and he found out that middle school students were oriented

towards integrative and instrumental goals and that none of the two kinds was seen to be more important than the other. It is noticed that the Saudi study agrees with Brown (2000) who claimed that learners rarely select one form of motivation when learning a second language, but rather a combination of them. However, there is no clear-cut separation between these orientations. For example, Dornyei (1990) defines the desire to integrate into a new community (the assimilative orientation) as an orientation lying between integrative orientations and instrumental orientations and new items were added to the instrumental/integrative orientations, e.g. desire to broaden one's view and avoid provincialism, and desire for new stimuli and challenges to the integrative orientations (Dornyei, 1994a).

To sum up, as it is understood from the above discussion, the researchers and educators haven't agreed on what the most important kind of motivation a second/foreign language learner should have. The 1970s studies (Gardner, 1972, 1979, Lambert, 1974) have shown that integrative motivation is more important for successful L2 acquisition and instrumental motivation did not seem to relate to successful language learning. However, the following studies (Gardner & McIntyre, 1991, Dornyei, 1994, Oxford, 1994) found that integrative motivation may not be the strongest predictor for language learning and the issue of motivation may not be as simple as integrative-instrumental dichotomy. They suggested that other components such as desire for knowledge need for achievement, intellectual stimulation and personal challenge can also play important roles in second language learning.

## **2.2. Factors Demotivating Foreign Language Learning**

A feature shared in most foreign language classrooms where the language in question is a required school subject, is the problem of demotivation. The following behaviors described by Chambers (1993: 13) will be familiar to many foreign language teachers: "poor concentration; lack of belief in own capabilities; no effort made to learn; 'What's the use?' syndrome; negative or nil response to praise; lethargy; lack of cooperation; disruptive; distracted;

distracts other pupils; produces little or no homework; fails to bring materials to lessons; claims to have lost materials."

However, the weakness of English language learners in general has been attributed to various factors such as teaching methodology, lack of the target language environment and the learners' demotivation (Mukkatash, 1983, Zughoul, 1987). Therefore, it is important for the teachers at least to be aware of the possible factors that may be affecting their students' motivation. With those factors in mind, they may be able to develop strategies to help solve the problems that arise relating to students' motivation and desire to learn English as a foreign language.

Much research has been conducted on language learning motivation but less on the demotivating factors in learning the second language and a few studies have addressed them. Dornyei & Otto (1998) don't perceive motivation or demotivation as a static phenomenon. On the contrary, they are considered as dynamic, increasing and declining, affecting language achievement and being affected by the surrounding learning context. The demotivated learner is defined by Dornyei as the one who is originally motivated and lost his/her motivation because of negative external factors. Some studies have shown relatedness between demotivation and the learning context such as classroom environment, teaching methods and curricula (Gardner, 1985, Skehan, 1991, Sivan, 1986).

Gorham & Christophel (1992) investigated the factors that students perceive as motivators/demotivators in college classes in West Virginia University. The study compared students' perception of the demotivating and motivating factors. As to demotivating factors, the factors related to teacher's behavior were the most frequent, 43%, those under partial control of the teacher were second in frequency (e.g. assessment and choice of text books), 36%, and only 21% related to contextual factors over which the teacher has little control. In terms of the data as a whole, the teacher behavior contributed equally to both motivation and demotivation. However, the researchers concluded that motivation is perceived as a student-owned state, while lack of motivation is perceived as a teacher-owned problem.

Chambers (1993) (in Dornyei, 2001) investigated demotivation in language learning in four schools in the UK. The study was conducted on the school students and their teachers. Students placed most blame on teachers and learning materials. While the teachers claimed that the students' motivation caused by psychological, social and attitudinal reasons.

Keblawi (2005) conducted a study to explore the factors affecting negatively learning English in Palestine high schools. The data revealed that English teachers were referred to directly or indirectly-as demotivators- by almost half of the respondents. Interestingly, the study revealed that about half of the respondents referred to aspects of English (grammar, vocabulary) as main demotivators. Furthermore, depending on the results of a study conducted on secondary students in Budapest who were identified as demotivated, Dornyei (2001) categorized nine demotivating factors in order of most common to least:

- The teacher—personality, commitment, competence, teaching method;
- Inadequate school facilities—group is too big or not the right level; frequent change of teachers;
- reduced self-confidence—experience of failure or lack of success;
- Negative attitude towards the L2;
- Compulsory nature of L2 study;
- Interference of another foreign language being studied;
- Negative attitude towards L2 community;
- Attitude of group members;
- Coursebook.

Generally, most studies conducted in the field of motivation and demotivation as its flip side found out that the personality of the teacher, teaching methods, learning context in addition to the learner's attitude toward L2 could play a vital role in the students' motivation or demotivation toward learning languages.

### **2.3. Study Hypotheses**

Based on the findings of the few studies on language learning motivation reported above, it can be hypothesized that:

- The UAE secondary schools students like to learn English for utilitarian (instrumental) orientations;
- The majority of the factors affecting the students' motivation toward learning English are related to the immediate learning context
- The demotivating factors related to the teacher are the most dominant.

## **Chapter Three: Methodology**

### **3.1. Participants**

The participants were 100 national students from four state secondary schools in the Eastern Coast of the UAE. Moreover, 10 teachers and 3 supervisors of English from Sharjah Educational Bureau were interviewed to give more insight to the investigated phenomenon. All of the students were males and they range in age from 16-18 years. All the participants (students) have been studying English as a school subject for more than 8 years. As a measure to language self efficacy or students' perception of themselves as learners, the students were asked to rate themselves on a scale from 1 – 5 to indicate how proficient they are at English. (1= very poor, 2= poor, 3= average, 4= good and 5= very good). As a result (3) students perceived their English proficiency as very poor, (13) as poor, (42) as average, (30) as good and (12) as very good.

### **3.2. Instruments**

The current study employs a mixed method design which includes both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Such a method integrates both approaches to provide a much more detailed and comprehensive picture of that which is being investigated. In this study the qualitative data (interviews) was conducted after the quantitative data collection to deepen understanding and interpretation of the results. For the purpose of obtaining data that will explore why the UAE secondary school students learn English and what affects negatively their English learning motivation, I conducted this study by using the following tools for data collection:

- A questionnaire consisted of two parts (see appendix1). The first part was adapted from Gardner's (1985) AMTB to measure the students' integrative/instrumental motivation in learning English. This part of the questionnaire

contains 8 items reflecting the integrative/ instrumental motivation and a five-point Likert Scale ranged from "strongly disagree to" strongly agrees ".was used. The integrative motivation scale includes four items to find out how much the learners learn English with a genuine interest to assimilate with the target language, culture, community, their way of life and literature ; this would show their Integrativeness toward the target language. But, the instrumental motivation scale includes four items aiming at measuring the respondents' utilitarian reasons for studying English .The second part was tailored by the researcher to explore the demotivating factors facing the English language learners. The researcher generated 15 possible demotivating factors depending on the results of relevant studies and on his experience as an English language teacher which enabled him to identify some demotivating factors which might affect learning English and fit the UAE learning context. The items of the questionnaire were translated into Arabic by the researcher to prevent any interference due to misunderstandings in L2 and checked by two Arabic teachers and a translation instructor taking into consideration that the items retained their essential meaning and that the translation was easily understood.

-Semi structured interviews with 20 students from those who had participated in taking the questionnaire, 10 teachers and 3 supervisors of English to obtain qualitative data.

### **3.3. Procedures**

At the very beginning of the study, permission was gained from the principals of the targeted schools who showed a willingness to collaborate in this study. To guarantee a positive participation, the subjects were informed that their answers would be confidential and they were not required to write or give their names at any stage of the study. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher and 100 students participated in completing the questionnaire during the English classes. The respondents were chosen equally from literary and science sections. The students were assured that the main objective of the researcher was to find out why they like to study English and what makes them

sometimes dislike the English classes. Moreover, the students were told that their answers and opinions would not affect their grades or their teachers' impression and their participation in the survey would help teachers to understand their desires and problems. Students were encouraged to ask questions at any time during the process.

Concerning the interviews, they were conducted to gain a more in depth understanding of the factors affecting the learners' motivation in addition to their integrative and instrumental orientations. The 20 interviewed students were chosen according to their rate in English (10 from those who rated themselves good in English and 10 from those who were rated weak learners). After identifying the students opinions and attitudes, the teachers and supervisors of English who were selected according to their long experience were interviewed to elicit their opinions about the demotivating factors affecting the English learning.

The results of both processes provided a rich body of data on which to base conclusions about the learners' motivation. The survey results were tabulated and the interviews transcriptions were analyzed.

## **Chapter Four: Results**

The purpose of the study was to explore the UAE secondary school students' motivation for studying English in addition to the demotivating factors they face when learning English. To identify the high and low scoring items in the questionnaire, frequency, mean and standard deviation were calculated and worked out for each item in the first part of the questionnaire but the percentages and frequencies of the demotivating factors in the second part of the questionnaire were worked out.

### **4.1. Integrativeness & Instrumentality**

The students' responses toward the eight items measuring integrative and instrumental motivation are shown in table 1 below and in appendix 3.

**Table1: The frequency distribution, mean scores and standard deviation of the 8 items on integrative and instrumental motivation. (n=100)**

<i>Item</i>	<i>S.D</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>S.A</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>S.D</i>
<b>Integrative Motivation</b>							
1-I study English to be more at ease with English speakers	1	11	9	45	34	4	0.97
2- I study English to meet and converse with varied people	9	8	10	33	40	3.87	1.27
3-I study English to understand British & American arts and literature	6	18	33	25	18	3.31	1.13
4- I study English to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups	2	8	20	37	33	3.91	1.01
<b>Overall mean score</b>						<b>3.77</b>	
<b>Instrumental Motivation</b>							
5- I study English as I need it for my future career	0	0	7	34	59	4.52	0.62
6- I study English to become more knowledgeable	2	3	12	43	40	4.16	0.89
7- I study English as it helps me get a good job	0	2	7	40	51	4.40	0.70
8- I study English as the others respect me more	7	10	26	37	20	3.53	1.12
<b>Overall mean score</b>						<b>4.15</b>	

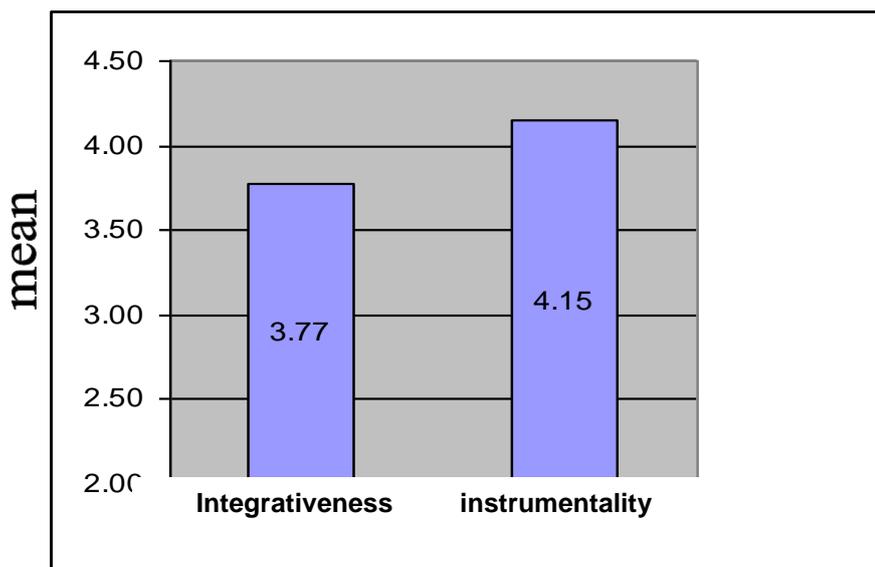
A close examination of the frequency distribution and mean scores of responses to the four items comprising the integrative orientations indicates that the students have positive and high degree of integrative motivation. The mean scores of the items are approximately 4 except item 3 (*studying English can be important for me because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate British and American art and literature*). With an overall mean score of 3.77, the students show a positive attitude toward the L2 community and an agreement that studying English can allow them to interact with other English speakers, to meet more variety of English speaking people and participate more freely in activities of other cultural groups. However, more than half of the respondents expressed their disagreement and uncertainty in viewing learning of English as a means to appreciate British/American arts and literature. Therefore, the paired samples T- test was conducted to find out the

statistical differences between the scores of the third integrative item and the other items in the same scale (see appendix 4). When comparing between the scores of the integrative items 1 and 3 (studying English can be important to me as it will allow me to be more at ease with other people who speak English versus item 3), it was found that there is a significant difference between the means of these two items ( $M_1 = 4$ ,  $M_3 = 3.31$ ), ( $t = 4.71$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ); the comparison between items 2 and 3 (studying English can be important for me because it will allow me to meet and converse with more and varied people versus item 3), revealed a significant difference between the means of these two items ( $M_2 = 3.87$ ,  $M_3 = 3.31$ ), ( $t = 3.44$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ); also there was a significant difference between the means of items 4 and 3 (studying English can be important for me because I will be able to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups versus item 3), ( $M_4 = 3.91$ ,  $M_3 = 3.31$ ) ( $t = -4.78$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ).

A new variable was created by calculating the total mean of the items 1, 2 & 4 in the integrative motivation scale; this variable had a mean of 3.93 and a standard deviation of 0.62; when item 3 in the integrative motivation scale was compared to this new variable using the paired samples T-test, it was found that the scores of these two variables differed significantly with ( $t = -5.36$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ).

Looking at the frequency distribution and mean scores of the 4 items making up the instrumental orientation shows that the students highly accepted items 5,6 and 7 ( getting a good job, improving future career and being a knowledgeable person) as being fundamental reasons to their desire to learn English.

Comparing the overall mean score (3.77) of the four integrative items to (4.15) of the instrumental items as shown in *figure 2*, it can be concluded that the respondents are to a certain extent integratively motivated but they still have a higher degree of instrumental motivation.



**Figure 2: The overall means of students' integrativeness and instrumentality**

Additionally, paired samples T- test was conducted to indicate whether there is a statistical significant difference between the total scores of the integrative motivation items (M=3.77, SD=0.60) and the instrumental motivation items (M=4.15, SD=0.51) or not (see appendix 5). By applying the T-test, it was found that there is a significant difference between the two scores ( $t = -5.68$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ).

In regard to the interview results concerning the students' instrumental and integrative orientations, all of the interviewees (students) mentioned that they like studying English for various practical reasons such as getting a good job, improving future career, continuing higher education.

*"I learn English because it is the key for getting a profitable noble job." (S3).*

*"I dream of being a doctor. How will I cope up with new medical innovations and developments without learning English?" (S5).*

*"Whatever the job you apply for it in the UAE, the ability to speak English is a basic condition. So learning English is a 'guarantee' for future jobs". (S4).*

*"My father wants me to run his business and be his company's manager. I think that to be a successful manager, one should understand and speak English well."*(S20).

Learning English for the sake of joining the institutions of higher education is also indicated in the following quotations:

*"Pursuing higher education in the UAE University or in the higher colleges becomes impossible for the students failing an English proficiency test".* (S5).

*"I'd like to join the faculty of medicine or engineering in a university. So, if I can't speak and write English well, it will be impossible for me to fulfill my ambitions".* (S2).

13 respondents mentioned the importance of studying English as it is the most dominant international language and it enables them to use the computer programmes more effectively.

*"Computer is a basic thing in our modern life. Working on the computer or internet without good knowledge of English is difficult."*(S.9)

*"I feel proud of my self when I am able to help my brothers and friends browse some English websites."* (S16).

*"I learn English because it is the language of business, computer, science and medicine".* (S8).

On the other hand, 12 students mentioned that they study English because they had a desire to integrate with the English speaking people to give them an idea about Islam and Arabic culture.

*"Our religion urges us to learn the others' languages; therefore, I like to learn English to talk to the non Arabic speakers about the kindness of Islam and the true peaceful nature of Arabs."* (S 4).

*"I learn English to communicate with the English speaking people working in the UAE to make friendly relationships and recognize their culture and habits."(S19).*

*"Learning English enables me to express my opinion and participate in the debate and chat rooms with multi cultural people via internet". (S9).*

*"By speaking English fluently, I can convey a bright picture about our traditions and culture to thousands of tourists coming to our country every year."(S6).*

*"Most of the English people don't understand Arabic, so it is our duty to learn English to call them for Islam."(S11).*

*"We should learn English to send a message to the world about the true principles of our religion." (S3).*

*"I learn English to understand the foreigners' views about the Arab culture and Islam."(S15).*

Surprisingly, none of the 20 interviewees mentioned that he studies English to recognize the American or British art and literature.

## **4.2. The Demotivating Factors**

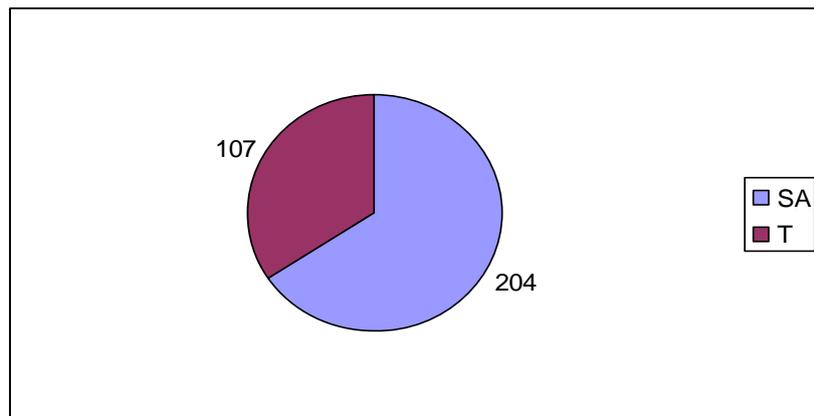
The second part of the questionnaire was designed to investigate the factors demotivating the students when learning English. The question asked to recognize the demotivating factors was "which one of the following factors demotivated you when studying English?"(see appendix 1). The respondents had an opportunity to choose more than one factor. Then, the factors were ranked according to their frequency; from the most frequent to the least. (see table 2)

**Table 2: The frequency distribution and percentages of the demotivating factors facing students when studying English. (n=100).**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Item no.</b>	<b>Demotivating factor</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>percentage</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Vocabulary load</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Difficulty of structures</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Listening skill difficulties</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Spelling errors</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Textbooks</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Rare use of technology</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Teacher's personality</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Friends' discouragement</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Social &amp;religious reasons</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Rare use of Arabic</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Teachers' rapid speech</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Evaluation system</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Effect of English on Arabic</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Parents' discouragement</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3%</b>

As can be seen in table 2, the most demotivating factors mentioned by the students referred to the difficulty of English as a school subject. The first places in terms of demotivating factors were occupied by some subject aspects; "vocabulary load" which was considered the first demotivating factor by 58% of the respondents, "difficulty in understanding structures", 54%, "listening difficulties", 51% and the "spelling errors ", 41%. Moreover, some aspects of the teacher's personality and style are still considered demotivating by considerable percentage of respondents (teacher's nervousness, 30%, rare use of technology, 35%, little use of Arabic, 22% and teacher's rapid speech, 20%). Demotivating factors related to the textbooks was mentioned by 39% of the respondents whereas 24% feel demotivated because of some social and religious reasons.

Comparing the total frequencies of the subject demotivating factors (204) to the teacher demotivating factors (107) as seen in *figure 3* indicates that the students' demotivation toward learning English is affected largely by the subject-related aspects. Additionally, the results shown in *figure 3* don't lend support to the third hypothesis of this study by showing that the teacher of English in the UAE secondary schools is not the most dominant demotivating factor for learning English.



**Figure 3: Total frequencies of subject aspects and teacher as demotivators.**

SA= subject aspects, T= teacher

On the other hand, the participants' responses to the open ended question number 15 in the second part of the questionnaire (see appendix1) in addition to the interviews clarified some points and added others to the results. Most of the interviewees complained of the subject demotivating factors such as the big amount of vocabulary to be memorized with their meanings and the complexity of some structural rules like different types of reported speech and the use of phrasal verbs.

*"I dislike learning English because I don't know how one can memorize the English meanings of hundreds of vocabulary items". (S3).*

*"Long lists of new lexical items which I should memorize to pass the English test makes me feel frustrated and stressed."(S7).*

*"My favorite subject is English. I always get high marks in English tests, but the structural mistakes in the use of 'reported speech, passive or prepositions make me feel demotivated."(S4).*

*"The difficulty and arbitrariness of English structures makes me and most of my classmates dislike the English classes."(A written statement from the questionnaire).*

Other students said that they usually feel demotivated and embarrassed when they can not understand or participate in the listening activities.

*"I dislike the English lesson when I find myself unable to speak out some sentences or express myself correctly in front of my colleagues and my face will be lost if I am asked to answer any question concerning the listening texts." (S 5).*

*"I feel embarrassed and demotivated when I usually find myself unable to follow or understand the recorded dialogues and texts."(S13).*

Other students pointed to the problems they encounter in writing paragraphs and compositions:

*"I like English and I am good at it. I wish to be an English teacher but I think my countless spelling mistakes will prevent me from fulfilling my ambition. I wonder how some colleagues can write a free spelling mistake composition."(Interview S 7).*

*"Writing letters and paragraphs is not difficult but the numerous spelling mistakes I commit make me frustrated"(S11).*

Teachers of English were considered as demotivators by some interviewees. The nervousness of the teachers and the use of offensive words as a result of the students' weakness or misbehaviors contribute to students' demotivation.

*"My teacher usually become angry and stressed when I forget my notebook or fail to answer his questions."(A written statement).*

Furthermore, some students claimed that the teachers' style and teaching methods made them hate learning English.

*"My teacher begins every English lesson by saying ...open your books page.....and read the lesson silently so, my friends dislike this routine. Also the teacher refuses to use Arabic in the English lesson."(S 1).*

*"Our teacher of English is dedicated and competent but most of the lessons are presented in the classroom without the use of any technological device". (S12).*

A few students mentioned that the English textbooks are not motivating because they don't contain stories or songs and they don't meet the students' needs in the real life situations outside the classroom.

*"Most of the topics in our English textbook are long, boring and invaluable in our real life."(A written statement)*

Three respondents mentioned that they dislike learning English because of some political motives or social concepts:

*"We hate learning the language of those who are killing our brothers in Iraq and other places." (A written statement).*

*"The big concentration on learning English and its wide spread in the UAE will spoil our culture and language". (A written statement).*

To conclude, the students' responses on the questionnaire as well as the interviews with them are able to answer the research questions and lend much support to the first and second hypotheses (The *UAE secondary schools students like to learn English for utilitarian (instrumental) orientations and the majority of the factors affecting the students' motivation toward learning English are related to the immediate learning context.*) Contrary to the third hypothesis (*the demotivating factors related to the teacher are the most dominant*), the results show that the most dominant demotivating factor for learning English is the "vocabulary load" not the "teacher".

In the next chapter the mentioned results will be analyzed and discussed in detail.

## **Chapter Five: Discussion**

As mentioned before, the aim of this study is to explore the UAE secondary school students' motivation for learning English. The original hypothesis of this study was that the UAE students are instrumentally motivated. It was also hypothesized that the learning context particularly the teacher could be the main demotivating factor affecting the students' learning of English.

The results of this study have shown that the UAE students have a higher degree of instrumental orientations and motivation than the integrative ones. It can be noticed that this finding is in line with the results of many related studies conducted in the Arab World (Al Mutawa, 1994, Alam, 1988, Zughoul & Taminian, 1984) with slight difference concerning the rate of integrative motivation. Those studies showed low rates of integrativeness among the Arab students, but this study proved that the UAE students have a high level of integrative motivation toward learning English (mean=3.77). This result is not surprising because the UAE is a cosmopolitan country and the peaceful and friendly nature of the UAE citizens help them to integrate with the other communities and nationalities.

In respect of the demotivating factors affecting learning English in the UAE secondary schools, the findings of this study didn't lend much support to the related hypothesis (*the demotivating factors related to the teacher are the most dominant*). It was revealed that the teacher wasn't the dominant demotivating factor for learning English. On the contrary, the subject aspects (vocabulary, structures, spelling) were found to be in the first place in terms of demotivating factors. Moreover, the study revealed the effect of textbooks, friends' discouragement and some social and religious beliefs on the students' motivation.

The results of this study are different from Keblawi's (2005). Keblawi found that the learning context particularly the teacher was the most and first

demotivating factor for learning English in Palestine schools and the subject demotivating factors appeared to be in the second place whereas this study showed that the teacher was not the most demotivating factors for the UAE English learners. One possible explanation of this finding could be referred to the highly qualified and trained teachers working in the UAE schools. It is worth mentioning that the teachers of English in the UAE secondary schools have to pass some English proficiency tests and meet the strict conditions of the Ministry of Education before being appointed in the state schools. Furthermore, in Palestine the newly graduated teachers can be appointed in the state schools without experience but in the UAE it is impossible for the English teachers coming from the Arab countries to be appointed in the state schools without at least 3 years of experience. (Ministry of Education).

A thematic discussion of the major findings will be presented below in detail.

### **5.1. The UAE Students' Instrumental & Integrative Orientations**

There is one main reason for identifying the students' needs in the foreign or second language classroom. Identifying their needs and goals to learn a foreign language is the first step which the educational policy makers and syllabus designers should consider if they want to instill or enhance motivation for learning L2. Additionally, identifying L2 learners' goals and needs enables the teacher to adopt teaching methodologies and strategies meeting and satisfying the students' needs. This perceived relevance between personal needs and learning activities is, as mentioned above, a prerequisite for sustained motivation to learn.

Dornyei (1994a) and Oxford & Shearin, (1994) have recently conducted investigations to identify needs for learning a foreign language especially in the context where the language is learned as a school subject among teenagers. From a scrutiny of these investigations, a mixture of orientations and motives (integrative, instrumental, personal) could be detected in the following list:

- getting a better job, getting access to target-language media, or conducting business with the target-language country (the instrumental orientation);

- traveling to other countries (the instrumental motivational subsystem);
- friendship, or, in Dornyei's term, xenophilia (the integrative motivational subsystem);
- broadening one's view and avoiding provincialism (the knowledge orientation);
- interests in foreign language culture, and people, or satisfying curiosity about cultural 'secrets' (the socio-cultural orientation);
- seeking new intellectual stimulation and personal challenge;
- enjoying the elitism of taking a difficult language (e.g., American high school students learning Japanese);
- showing off to friends, parents and society.

Of course these needs are by no means universally applicable or exhaustive. It should be realized that not all language learners have the same motives and needs due to the different learning contexts. Nevertheless, the above list may serve as general information which language teachers can take as a starting point to lead to more specific needs in the individual context.

The UAE context is not an exception because the findings of the survey and interviews in this study showed the students' instrumentality and integrativeness. In respect of the instrumental motivation, the results as shown in the previous section indicated that improving future career, getting a good job, becoming a knowledgeable person as well as continuing a higher education inside the country and abroad are some of the most common instrumental orientations for learning English in the secondary schools. As shown in the results section (table 1), more than 90% of the respondents like to study English for getting a good job because the labor market offers more high-paying jobs for those who know English and it is noticed that knowledge of English is a prerequisite for getting good jobs particularly in the private sector. Besides, one can hardly find job advertisements without conditions

related to English proficiency. As a result, more and more young people are becoming involved in English learning programmes hoping that some day they may obtain a satisfying profitable job.

Learning English to pursue higher education at the higher colleges and universities in the UAE has recently become a basic goal for the students. To advance from the school to university, students have to get good grades and pass some English placement tests as the CEPA. A low grade in English may lead to crucial troubles in one's higher education, so being good at English is very sensitive for those who dream of continuing their education. Zughoul (2002) claimed that the spread of English in the Arab Countries is very clear in the field of higher education and he added that the public universities in the UAE, Oman and Qatar are moving fast into a completely English medium instruction. Additionally, the UAE students seeking higher education abroad particularly in Britain, America and other English speaking countries are in need of learning English.

However, instrumental motivation is strongly goal oriented and “doesn't seem to involve any identification or feeling of closeness with the other language group” Gardner (2002:10). L2 learners might apply instrumental motivation, which operates as a meta-cognitive strategy whereby they persuade themselves to engage in L2 learning even though they have no liking for the language and the culture (Zimmerman, 1989). As mentioned in chapter two, instrumental motivation will be more prominent in situations where there are utilitarian benefits.

Although the results of the study indicated that the UAE students are instrumentally motivated toward learning English, the respondents in this study showed a considerable amount of integrativeness (mean=3.77). As mentioned before, having integrative motivation means being ready to integrate into the target language community and culture. It is also theorized that integrative motivation typically underlies successful acquisition of a wide range of registers and a native like pronunciation. (Finegan, 1999).

However, being integrative in the UAE context might be something relatively different. Students expressed their desire to interact with other speakers of English (79%), whereas (70%) like to learn English to participate in the activities of other cultural groups to learn about their lifestyles and to exchange with them some cultural and religious issues.

*"Learning English enables me to convey a message about the teachings of Islam and recognize the others' cultures."(S19)*

In regard to the UAE context, the students' considerable inclination to integrativeness could be a result of the noticeable existence of the English speaking people in the UAE. The unique situation of the UAE enables the students to contact and make good relations with the English speakers in many places such as universities, private schools, companies and with the tourists in every place in the country.

*"Without speaking and understanding English one will lose his face in the shopping centers, banks, airports companies...etc. Moreover, by learning English one can integrate and communicate with most of the expatriates because English is an international language."(S14)*

It is worth mentioning that the lowest scoring item in the integrative motivation scale was the third one which is "Studying English can be important for me because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate British and American art and literature." I think that the students' incompetence and weakness in English might make them unable to understand and appreciate English literature. In addition, the English textbooks in the state schools concentrate on the linguistic features of the language rather than literary forms. In this respect it should be realized that literary stream students are not exposed to much English literature because there is no difference between literary and science streams in term of English textbooks or number of classes. Moreover, some interviewed students mentioned that they didn't like to watch English films and plays because most of them include items contradicting with their values and beliefs.

*"my culture and values don't allow me to watch films or plays containing 'Haram'(illegal) scenes such as gambling, drinking.....(S7)*

However, the UAE students' integrative orientations could create a sense of optimism towards the future of learning English in the UAE because instrumental motivation can be very unstable as it is influenced by external variables such as the economic and political changes. Those who learn English for getting a good job or because English is the dominant language of technology and economy should realize that the supremacy of English is not going to last forever and the rise of a competing super power might change the situation. Let's look at the declined global position of Russian and French languages because of the Soviet Union collapse and the regression of France as a super colonial power. Crystal (1997) claims that the superiority of English and its dominance on global economy is a result of the emergence of the US as a strong economic and military power. In other words, much emphasis on instrumental motivation for learning English at the expense of integrativeness might jeopardize the student's general motivation for learning L2. For example, most of the respondents in this study like studying English to join universities or for the purpose of test taking, this means that after passing the tests or entering the university, instrumental motivation has run its course for most of the UAE EFL learners. So, the strength of integrative motivation lies in the stability of its goals. Both the character and the culture of a nation prove to be more stable as goals than instrumental language goals related to career or passing university entrance exams.

At last, a deep look at the integrative motivation scale and the related interviews results points out that the UAE students' integrativeness is divergent from the classical definition of integrative motivation mentioned earlier and agrees in general with additive bilingualism which leads to successful L2 learning(see 1.2 in chapter 1). The learners like to integrate with the L2 community without being like them and without losing their culture and identity.

## **5.2. Demotivating Factors**

In this section, the focus will be on the external demotivating factors affecting the UAE students' motivation for learning English. Dornyei (2001:143) first broadly states that demotivation "concerns various negative influences that cancel out existing motivation," but excludes affect as a stimulus by narrowing his definition to "specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioral intention or an ongoing action".

However, results of the survey and interviews showed that demotivators related to learning context were not the only type of demotivation which the UAE students referred to. Another type of demotivation related to some subject aspects (vocabulary load, spelling & structural difficulties) was also referred to by a higher percentage of students (table 2). Additionally, it can be noticed clearly through the results of this study that most of the demotivating factors in the UAE context are in line with the demotivating factors which are categorized by (Oxford,1994)(see 1.2) and (Dornyei,2001) (see 2.2) particularly, teacher's personality and teaching methods ,the negative attitudes toward L2 community, coursebook and reduced self confidence. The discussion will be first about the subject demotivating factors since they were the most frequent and on social/religious factors in addition to the teachers as demotivators as they affect largely the language learning and acquisition

### **5.2.1. Subject Demotivating Factors**

Demotivation resulted from the perceived difficulties of some subject related aspects gives consideration to intrinsic motivation and its role in the learning process. It is clear in the literature review that intrinsically motivated learners usually find learning fun and display their curiosity and challenge to reflect willingness to learn (see 1.1). Furthermore, the subject demotivating factors which will be discussed below could expand Dornyei's definition of demotivation (chapter2) by adding the difficulty of some subject aspects to the external demotivating factors and learning context.

It should be realized that goals to be effective in motivating learners should be difficult to a certain level and perceived important and attainable (Locke, 1996). Ames (1992) in his goal theories stressed that learning new things should be challenging and not perceived unattainable. However, the qualitative results in chapter 4 indicated that most students perceive mastering English structures and other difficult aspects unattainable.

### **5.2.1-1 Vocabulary**

The survey and the interviews indicate that most students feel demotivated in learning English due to the large number of new lexical items which should be memorized to enable them to write and speak fluently and consequently to pass English tests (table 2). There is no doubt that vocabulary plays an important role in learning a foreign language and it is one element that links the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing all together. In order to communicate well in English, students should acquire an adequate number of words and should know how to use them accurately. Although the UAE students realize the importance of vocabulary when learning English, most of them learn vocabulary passively due to several factors. First, the testing system of English language as a school subject requires students to memorize long lists of vocabulary by heart (rote memorization). For instance, in grade 10 and 12 students have to memorize hundreds of new words to pass the vocabulary test. Second, the UAE students are still using the traditional ways in learning and memorizing vocabulary. Most of them have nothing to do in vocabulary learning section but to listen to the teacher and ask him to explain the meanings and usages. As in the UAE context, memorizing long lists of new words with meanings in the native language without any real context practice shoulders heavy burden on the learners and affects their motivation for learning the language. Nation (2000:6) states that words should not be learnt separately or by memorization without understanding. Moreover, "learning new words is a cumulative process, with words enriched and established as they are met again." Therefore, the "look and remember" way of vocabulary learning seems to be not very effective for learners of the English language.

I think that the learning context in the UAE secondary schools (evaluation system, teaching methods, and learning strategies) can be partly blamed for the sense of demotivation among the students toward learning vocabulary. The interviews with students revealed that there are some mistaken beliefs in terms of vocabulary learning.

*"I am not a dictionary. I must memorize thousands of words to understand the recorded lessons and the reading comprehension passages." (S17).*

Furthermore, one of the interviewed teachers complained that most students prefer to ask the teacher about the meanings of the new words because they don't have the strategies for increasing their vocabulary such as derivations or word collocations. Another teacher claimed that *"the UAE students resort to memorizing the new English words as a single way to grow their vocabulary since the incidental growth of vocabulary needs extensive amount of oral and written input and fortunately most of the UAE student's exposure to English is limited to the classroom."*

Thus, it is unsurprising to find that most students dislike learning English because of the vocabulary "myth".

### **5.2.1-2. Structure Difficulties**

It is undeniable that an understanding of a language grammar is essential and as it is said vocabulary is the flesh of the language and grammar is the skeleton. However, most Arab learners of English as a foreign language view the study of grammar as tedious and there are frequent outcries about the difficulty of structures among the students. For instance, in the Sudan, Kambal (1980) analyzed errors in three types of free composition written by first year Sudanese university students, the study gave an account of the major syntactic errors in the verb phrase and the noun phrase made by those students. He also reported on three main types of errors in the verb phrase: verb formation, tense, and subject- verb agreement. In addition, errors in tense sequence, tense marker and confusion of perfect tenses were identified. Similarly, Jordanian and Egyptian learners of English face difficulties in

learning structures. (Abdul Haq, 1982, Wahba, 1998). English grammatical rules are intricate and the UAE secondary school students are weary of taking grammar classes with rote memorization and drills which they find both boring and difficult to understand or appreciate. One of the misconceptions among the UAE students is the belief that without mastering most English grammatical rules they will not be able to communicate in English. I think that these misconceptions stem from the extra concentration on structural rules particularly in the tests at the expense of other major skills as listening and speaking.

Being an EFL instructor and in light of the interview results, I think that the difficulty of English structures facing the UAE students in particular and Arab learners in general stems from the difference in the grammatical and syntactical structures between Arabic and English.

One of the most difficult structural elements for EFL learners is the English article system (definite & indefinite). Surprisingly, the English articles *a* (*n*), *zero*, and *the* are quite difficult to acquire not only for ESL/EFL learners but also for children learning English as a first language. Articles are believed to be a source of difficulty for learners (and teachers) of English as a second/foreign language, especially for those whose native languages do not have articles or do have articles or article-like morphemes which are used in ways that differ from English articles (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999). The following quote gives much insight into how the incorrect use of English articles can demotivate the learners:

*I usually write correct paragraphs in the English exams without committing any spelling mistake ,but when the teacher marks them I become frustrated because of the incorrect use of "the" and" a". (S9).*

Furthermore, in a study done on 80 students at a Jordanian University with an average of 11 years' instruction behind them, Mukkatesh (1986) identified a number of persistent errors such as deletion of the verb to be, use of past simple instead of present simple, etc. He found that neither error correction nor explicit grammatical explanation had any effect on these errors, so, it can be

said that they reached a state of fossilization. Moreover, the 14 tenses in English are considered one of the most difficult structural points facing the Arab students learning English. Khuwaileh and Al Shoumali (2000) conducted a study to investigate the Jordanian students' writing errors and they found that tense errors are the most frequent ones committed by Arab learners. This thing might be happened because Arabic has three tenses only. Furthermore, some students referred to English structures in general as the main cause for the low marks they score in the English tests.

*"I dislike learning English because of its difficult grammar. If I pass the grammar tests, English classes will be enjoyable and motivating."(S8).*

I think that reaching a state of fossilization in understanding and mastering some grammatical points as mentioned in the above investigations would demotivate the English learners and reduce their desire to learn English.

### **5.2.1-3. Spelling Errors**

Due to the importance of spelling in writing, English learners are required to be good spellers. Correct spelling gives the "writer" more self confidence and from this grows a willingness to experiment more with language. Additionally, if students hear a new lexical item and can make a realistic guess about its spelling, they can check its meaning in a dictionary. Also writing it may help them to 'fix' it in their minds.

It is usually noticed that some UAE secondary students dislike writing paragraphs and compositions since they fear committing a lot of spelling mistakes. Experience has shown that English spelling is perceived difficult by many Arab EFL learners for many reasons. First, students perceive English as not representing the pronunciation of words; there are silent letters and many ways to spell one sound. It should be realized that English has 26 letters for about 44 sounds. Second, some learners are not able to identify pronunciation distinctly enough to spell words. Some sounds such as /v/, /p/ in addition to the vowel sounds have no equivalent in Arabic. It is worth noting that some consonants which have phonic alternations as "c" in *pencil* and *perfect* or "g" in

*get* and *gem* cause a challenge for the learners in terms of spelling. Swan & Smith (1987) claimed that the short English vowels cause spelling problems for Arab learners because meaning in Arabic is carried by consonants and long vowels only, so they usually confuse or gloss over short vowel sounds. Third, spelling difficulty facing the UAE learners might result from the spelling learning strategies which depend on memorizing the written forms of words rather than using the spelling rules.

Regardless of the reasons causing difficulties in mastering English spelling, the constant fear of committing spelling mistakes which affects negatively the writing skill and makes students learn in an insecure learning atmosphere will inevitably reduce the students' motivation for learning English.

#### **5.2.1-4. Listening**

The survey results indicate that 51% of the respondents feel demotivated when they face difficulty in understanding the recorded material (listening texts) in English classes. I think that this result reflects the students' complaints which usually detected during the listening exercises. A survey conducted at Zayed University by Osman (2003) about the difficulties facing the UAE students in learning English showed that more than 40% of the respondents considered "listening" the main difficulty.

Realizing the importance of listening as a basic language skill, many researchers and linguists point to the effects of listening on the other language skills and on the learners' schemata. Rost (1990) says that listening is the most widely used language skill and it is considered a primary vehicle for language learning because it is a medium through which people gain a large portion of their information and understanding of the world. Moreover, listening as a receptive skill gives way to the productive skills and communicative competence. Therefore, increasing the student's motivation toward listening texts and exercises and investigating the demotivating factors in this respect will reduce the anxiety about the difficulty of recorded lessons.

In the UAE secondary schools, many factors might result in the students' passive perception of listening. First, most students may find it hard to understand the native speakers' accent on the tape in listening exercises because they are used to listening to their teachers who are non native speakers of English. Second, another possible consideration is the learning situation inside the classroom; asking the students to listen for specific information or for details before listening for gist and activating their schematic knowledge will make comprehension difficult if not impossible. In our normal experience the mother tongue language grows in context, whereas in a foreign language ,context must be created because the more we know about the situation, the more readily we understand the language used in it . Third, there is a wide spread belief that listening is not important because it is not tested particularly in the final exams, as a result it is simply not well taught. In this respect, Anderson & Lynch (1988:6) postulated that in most EFL classes listening is considered a passive skill and has been "left to take care of it and develop naturally". Yagang (1993) concludes that teachers think that listening is the easiest skill to teach, but most students consider it the most difficult to improve. I think that the UAE context reflects Yagang's claim.

It is worth noting that some English textbooks in the UAE secondary schools e.g. " *English for the UAE 10* " comprise un motivating listening texts because they don't represent the real life situations and don't present learners with challenging listening tasks.

*Most of the reading and listening texts in our English textbook are irrelevant to our interests and don't help us make real communication. (A written statement).*

Seliger (1995) argued that there has been for many years in English teaching a loss of respect for the natural patterns of the language; teachers have got in the way of accepting all sorts of artificial or adapted texts. Therefore, I think that it is authentic listening material which provides a true representation of real speech which makes listeners more motivated to cope with real life situations.

### 5.2.2. Social and Religious Factors

Second-language learning is a social phenomenon which is normally affected by the social context where it takes place. In the case of learning English in the Arab World in general, political, religious and socio-cultural factors have been crucial in influencing and shaping the Arab students' motivation for learning English. 24% of the respondents feel demotivated for learning English due to socio-cultural and religious considerations. Historically, the Western colonization and missionaries helped to foster the feelings of Arab nationalism and rejection of western cultures and languages among certain groups in the Arab World. Recently, the American occupation in Iraq and in other places in the area might create a sense of hatred and fear of learning the "conquest's" culture and language. Additionally, Yazigy (1994) claims that the perception of Arabic as a sacred God given language and its religious value might influence some Arab students' motivation for learning foreign languages. The following excerpt reflects the effect of the latest events and wars in the area on some students' motivation toward learning English and supports what has been claimed by Fillmore 1991 in chapter 1 about the effect of relations and social contact between L1 & L2 communities on motivation toward learning the target language.

*"I hate learning English and western culture when I see what is happened to the Muslims in Iraq. Iraq was occupied by the Americans to wipe out our culture and identity, so we should interest more in our mother tongue which is a part of our religion instead of the excessive interest in the others' languages."(S 12).*

Needless to say that English language holds great power in the UAE context in which anyone hoping to advance academically or professionally must attain a certain level of proficiency in English. Nevertheless, some students believe that the excessive interest in learning foreign languages/cultures and the drastic spread of English in all the affairs of life might set them a part from Arabic and its culture and heritage. The following quotation reflects how the wide spread

of English in most aspects of daily life in the UAE is perceived as a threat to the cultural identity:

*"Arabic is neither spoken nor written in most of huge shopping centers and hypers. In most institutions particularly the private ones such as banks, travel agencies and companies, one can perform his works without a need of uttering a single word of Arabic." (S17)*

Therefore, the "identity crises" seems to be fundamental in learning foreign languages. For instance, Syria which is in favor of Arabization of education made Arabic the official and the only medium of university instruction.

Clement (1980) states that the fear of assimilation refers to the fear of becoming completely like the other culture and losing one's native language and culture. So, the fear of losing heritage and native language may weaken L2 learning motivation. However, the anxiety about identity and culture in the UAE context might not be justifiable because the students who are integratively motivated like to integrate and communicate with the English speakers but not be like them culturally or socially at the expense of their culture and heritage.

Du Bois (1956) postulates that students whose experience are unpleasant with English or its speakers tends to have unfavorable attitudes toward the English speaking countries and their languages. For example, a study conducted in morocco by Elbiad 1985 to investigate the attitude of high school students toward English showed that when the respondents are given a choice between English and French, they tend to choose English on the basis that French is considered as a colonial language. The negative attitudes of the participants toward French were acquired from their parents who perceived the French as colonizers.

Generally, it can be concluded that social, religious and political affiliation work together to shape or at least affect the L2 learners' motivation.

### **5.2.3. Teachers as Demotivators**

Although the results of this study indicate that the teacher is not the most demotivating factor for learning English in the UAE secondary schools, both qualitative and quantitative results show that considerable number of students still view teacher as a demotivator. The demotivating factors that students referred to and that were related to teachers could be classified into two main groups: teachers' style, i.e. the way they taught and presented the material to students (rare use of technology and Arabic), and personality traits, i.e. the way they behaved with students. Generally, both variables (teacher's personality and style) can play a negative role if perceived negatively by students.

In classes where students referred to their teachers as demotivators, they often agreed on the same aspects of their teachers' personality or style that they perceived negatively. For example, most interviewed students referred to teacher-related demotivating factors and complained, particularly, about their teacher's nervousness, loss of control of class and about the use of some scolding words. It is worth mentioning that the demotivating elements which students attributed to teachers refer to the current and previous teachers.

#### **5.2.3-1. Teacher's Personality and Style**

As the teacher is the key of the teaching and learning process, his/her personality has great impact on the learners' like or dislike for learning the related subject. Krashen (1987:32) states that "the effective language teacher is some one who can provide input and help make it comprehensible in a low anxiety situation."

In this study, 30% of the respondents referred to teacher's personality as a demotivator and a similar picture was revealed in the interview with students. The following quote gives much insight into how the teachers' perceived negative behavior and personality can demotivate learners:

*"I realize that English is very important for my professional life but I dislike the English class because of the teacher. He usually becomes nervous and angry when one talks to his colleague during the lesson. Improper and scolding words are used by the teacher when one fails to answer some questions or forget doing homework..."(S16).*

In most secondary schools in the UAE, English classes tend to be teacher-centered. Sanders & Quirke (2002) show that the UAE secondary schooling system remains very traditional with teacher-led classes where memorization is emphasized. The teacher-centered atmosphere makes the students who can't keep up with classes behave poorly, pay less attention and talk to each others and so on. In such atmosphere the teacher considers the side talks among the students during the lesson a challenge or indifference.

As indicated in the interview the weak learners feel demotivated and embarrassed when the teacher asks them to speak well in front of their classmates or correct their mistakes directly.

*"My teacher embarrasses me when he asks me to read aloud or role play because I am weak at English and I don't like to be criticized for committing mistakes in front of my colleagues."(S 6).*

Instead of demotivating the weak learners by asking them to carry out some activities individually, the teacher can involve the students in group works and activities. Scarcella & Oxford (1992) suggest using pair work, group work or cooperative learning activities (student- centered learning) to help in not putting too much pressure on individual students in front of the whole class. I think these activities are necessary because the English classes in the UAE schools still tend to be teacher centered and as a result most students are passive. On the other hand, some students particularly the competent ones suffer from the teacher's daily routine and the traditional presentations of the topics and reading/listening activities.

Concerning correcting the students' mistakes, teachers need to have students understand that they can learn through mistakes. Harmer (1999:100) claimed

that "when second language learners make errors, they are demonstrating part of the natural process of language learning." Additionally, Doyon (2000) shows that explicit error correction tends to make students feel they are criticized, and instead teachers should correct errors in indirect ways. For instance, if a student says, "I watch TV yesterday ", instead of pointing out the mistake, a teacher can say a correct sentence, ' you watched TV yesterday', in a non threatening way. It should be realized that in a motivating and supportive classroom students feel comfortable taking risks and participating positively in the class activities because they know that they will not be criticized or embarrassed if they make mistakes.

Another crucial demotivating element for the learners is announcing the results of the tests publicly in class.

*"Our teacher embarrasses and insults us because he usually announces the results of the exams in front of the whole class; consequently, the high scoring students laugh at those who fail the exam or get low marks." (A written statement).*

The students with lowest scores usually become demotivated and stigmatized if their classmates know their grades. Dornyei (2001:92) asserts: "... few things are more detrimental to one's self esteem than the constant threat of social comparison hanging over one's head like a sword of Damocles . This involves an excessive emphasis on comparing successful and unsuccessful learners." As indicated above teachers need to be careful about public announcement of the test scores to build self confidence and enhance motivation and it should not be forgotten that one of the teacher's role is to reduce the students' anxiety in the classroom because too much anxiety blocks language learning.

### **5.2.3-2. Rare use of Technology**

As we live in the age of science and technology, it is unsurprising to find out that students like some technological devices (TV, video, computer and so on) to be utilized in their learning. This study revealed that 35% of the respondents

feel demotivated toward learning English because their teachers rarely use technology in presenting the English lessons. Many different types of technology can be used to support and enhance learning. Everything from video content, laptop and projectors to language labs have been used in classrooms. Marshall (2002) found strong evidence that educational technology complements what a great teacher does naturally, extends his reach and broadens students' experience beyond the classroom. With ever-expanding content and technology choices, from video to multimedia to the Internet, Marshall suggests that there's an unprecedented need to understand the recipe for success, which involves the learner, the teacher, the content, and the environment in which technology is used.

The English teachers in the UAE secondary schools have to realize the basic role which technology can play in motivating the learners and enriching the teaching and learning process. The use of technology in classes will cause positive change in the educational process. For example, teachers' perceptions of their students' capabilities can shift dramatically when technology is integrated into the classroom. Also, teachers frequently find themselves acting more as coaches and less as lecturers. Another example is that use of technology tends to foster collaboration among students, which in turn may have a positive effect on student achievement (Tinzmann, 1998).

Likewise, in teaching language learners, using technology has distinct advantages that relate not only to language education but preparing students for today's information society. Computer technologies and the Internet are powerful tools for assisting language teaching because Web technology is a part of today's social fabric. Besides, language learners can now learn thorough writing e-mail and conducting online research (Wang, 2005). I think that the UAE secondary schools students are in need of learning how to utilize some technological devices in their learning because they realize that they would benefit from technology in their university studies and it is indispensable in their future practical life. Therefore, it can be said that the use of technology in classes correlates with students' needs and goals; consequently the rare use of it make the learners feel demotivated.

It is worth noting that utilizing technology in schools is correlated with other variables such as teachers' training, school buildings, curriculum, cost effectiveness and teacher-students ratio. For example, students cannot be expected to benefit from technology if their teachers are neither familiar nor comfortable with it. Teachers need to be supported in their efforts to use technology. The primary reason teachers do not use technology in their classrooms is a lack of experience with the technology. Wenglinsky (1998) found that teachers who had received professional development with computers during the last five years were more likely to use computers in effective ways than those who had not participated in such training. On going professional development is necessary to help teachers learn not only how to use new technology but also how to provide meaningful instruction and activities using technology in the classroom.

Realizing the vital role that technology plays in motivating the learners and facilitating the learning process, the UAE Ministry of Education has recently facilitated the access to the internet in most secondary schools and urged if not obliged the schools' administrations and teachers to get the International Computer Driving License (ICDL).

### **5.2.3-3. Rare Use of Arabic in English Classes**

The use of L1 in L2 classes is a controversial issue and much debate has been taking place among educators and linguists about the impact of such issue on second language acquisition. To communicate in the target language, students need to have maximum meaningful input of the target language. Both maximum "input" (Krashen, 1982) and "output" (Swain1985) are believed to be very essential for any language acquisition. However, some studies proved the importance of some use of the students' native language in the foreign language classrooms (Atkinson, 1987, Guthrie, 1984).

In this study as mentioned in the previous chapter, 22% of the respondents in addition to some interviewed students feel demotivated because their English teachers rarely use Arabic in English classes.

*Last year I passed the English tests because my teacher was presenting new vocabulary and some grammatical rules in Arabic , but this year I feel I don't understand any grammatical rule because my current English teacher refuses to use Arabic in class.(S18).*

I think that it is difficult for students particularly the underachieving ones to understand what teachers say in English in class because of the accumulated weakness and limited competence in English. Schmidt (1995:26) points out that "lower level students can easily be left behind. If only the L2 is allowed, they may frequently miss out an explanation and instructions and can become discouraged."

Interestingly, some interviewed students claimed that they sometimes dislike the English classes because their teachers overuse Arabic in class.

*"I think I am good at English and my score is 90%. I also understand all the lessons in my English textbook. But I face difficulty in understanding the listening texts and I usually lose my face when I express my self in English because our English teachers speak Arabic more than English in the English period."(S11).*

Chambers (1993) claimed that there are various demotivating elements that can work differently with different students under different circumstances. Similar experiences that different students undergo can have different effects on them. This claim could be observed clearly in the above quotations where the teacher's rare use of Arabic in English classes is viewed as motivating and demotivating at the same time in the eyes of different students. Those who referred to the rare use of Arabic as a demotivating factor might aim to achieve short term goals(passing the tests) whereas other students, in the same classes, referred to it as a demotivating factor since they wanted to communicate fluently and achieve real language acquisition.

As noted above , the teachers are placed in a dilemma because they are required to maximize the use of English as well as they need to ensure that their weak students understand what they say and cooperate in the learning

tasks. I think it is improper to prescribe any rules of language choice for the teachers without taking into consideration the realistic classroom situations. However, instead of providing the teachers how much Arabic should be used in the English classes, they should be encouraged to examine their own attitudes, values and practice and develop their own system of interaction with their students which they consider to be appropriate and motivating.

### **5.3. Teachers' and Supervisors' Perspective**

In order to get a clearer picture about what demotivates UAE students when learning English, recognizing perspectives of teachers and supervisors of English is necessary and beneficial. The 10 interviewed teachers recognized the positive effects teachers can exert on their students' motivation if they are perceived positively by them and vice versa.

*"In my opinion, the teacher can play a big role in enhancing students' motivation for learning English. As most learners perceive English as a difficult school subject, our duty as teachers is to change this negative belief by giving more attention to the students' needs and attitudes towards learning English. I am sure that the teacher's personality and style have a big impact on students' like or dislike to learn English."(Teacher 3)*

Some interviewed teachers clarified that students' demotivation because of the teacher is not always justifiable. For instance, the weak students usually ask their teachers to provide them with ready made composition to be memorized, additionally, many of them don't like to be asked in English or involved in the class activities. Another interviewed teacher explains:

*"I feel that many of my students feel demotivated and dislike the English class because I don't respond to their illogical desires which usually reflect some fossilized misconceptions. For example, I usually refuse to parrot them the new lexical items and the grammatical rules or allow the overuse of Arabic in the English class."*

The above quotation reflects what usually happens in some English classes. Due to the superficial students' understanding of what learning English means and the ineffective learning strategies which view the teacher as the only source of knowledge, the students' demotivation because of the teacher in some cases might be artificial and illogical. For example, when the teacher presents the new lexical items in context without literal translation or explains a grammatical point communicatively without much use of Arabic, he might be considered demotivator because he didn't respond to the students' needs which are against the real language learning and acquisition.

Furthermore, the teachers complain that they are torn between the needs of the weak students and the justifiable expectations of good students. An interviewed teacher reflects on this by saying:

*"I think it is impossible for the teachers of English to be viewed as motivators by all the learners in heterogeneous classes. If they respond to the good students' needs they will lose the weak ones and vice versa."*(teacher18)

So, heterogeneous classes make the teachers encounter serious motivational dilemmas.

Additionally, some of the interviewed teachers tried to "defend" themselves by blaming the unmotivated students for distractive behavior, indifference and general weakness in all subjects such as Science, Math and Arabic language itself.

*"The students who feel demotivated in the English classes usually feel the same in Math....., and Arabic classes because they might not have motivation or desire to learn anything."*(teacher 8).

In regard to the rare use of technology in the English classes, some teachers mentioned two reasons. First, most secondary schools lack English labs, enough computer sets and overhead projectors. Second, the insufficient experience and training courses in manipulating technology in teaching.

Interestingly, the teachers' attempts to show that not all the students' accusations for their teachers as demotivators are justifiable and the students' constant blame for teachers brings to mind the notion that students tend to attribute success to themselves and failure to external factors (Gorham, 1992).

Concerning the supervisors' opinion, the 3 interviewed supervisors expressed different degrees of dissatisfaction with the textbooks which are poorly organized and with the unsuitable attitudes of some school administrations who are after the tests results rather than the real language learning and acquisition. One supervisor reflects on the problem he faced with a school administration:

*"Once I was called on by a school principal to discuss the issue of a teacher who was considered as a demotivator by many students. When I paid a visit to the class and investigated the matter, I found out that the students' complaint resulted from the teacher's concentration on teaching the language itself and not teaching for testing which the students are after."*

Based on the above claim and as a result of experience, it can be detected that in the UAE context where instruction and official interest are mostly directed to the exams results, tests and evaluation system become sources of anxiety and demotivation. In terms of English tests, 50% of questions in the final English exams in the UAE context tests grammar and vocabulary without any consideration to the listening and speaking skills. Besides, the exam results particularly in grade 12 determine the students' acceptance in the universities and higher colleges. Therefore, it is unsurprising to find contradiction between the teachers' ambitions in achieving real language learning and the students' needs for scoring high marks without paying much interest to the real language learning.

## **Chapter Six: Recommendations and Conclusion**

### **6.1. Implications & Recommendations**

The findings in this study have suggested some implications which are of significance to educators and policymakers as well as to researchers. For the convenience of discussion, these implications will be presented in two main aspects: the implications which arise directly from this study for educational practice relating to the teaching, learning and examination of EFL in the UAE, and recommendations for future research in aspects of UAE EFL teaching and learning which this study has not covered

As indicated by the findings of the present study, the UAE secondary school students are instrumentally motivated in learning English. The students' instrumentality poses a necessity for change in the field of EFL. Teachers, educators and syllabus designers should be sensitive to learners' motives by recognizing their instrumentality. Enhancing learners' instrumentality can be easily achieved by focusing more on practical skills such as how to communicate with others fluently and express oneself correctly. As most students learn English to get a good job, it is necessary to train them for example on how to do well at the interviews, to write formal letters and e-mails. Moreover, English textbooks and examination system should be also modified to meet the learners' instrumental motives.

On the other hand, raising students' integrativeness is also necessary because both integrative and instrumental orientations are required for real language acquisition and learning. Students' integrativeness can be raised by enhancing their positive attitudes and correcting their negative stereotypes toward English speaking communities. Additionally, interests toward the English culture and literature can be raised by exposing learners to more literary forms which suit the UAE context and by providing opportunities for communication with the native speakers (Rossier, 1975). For example, exposing the students to English poems, stories or short plays which reflect some good manners and traditions might increase the students' motivation toward the English literature. To fulfill the integrative desire to learn the L2 to integrate with the people of the

target language, there must be some form of communicative contact. But often in foreign language contexts, contact with native speakers has not been possible for many learners, so the lack of contact with L2 community affect developing positive attitudes towards that community (Dornyei, 1990). Therefore, major strategies for stimulating integrative motivation should be followed by teachers. For instance, teachers can set up activities which place the students into contact with L2 speakers such as inviting native speaker guests and promoting students' contact with native speakers through exchange programmes like pen pals.

Concerning the demotivating factors affecting students' motivation, the study shows that subject-related difficulties such as vocabulary load, spelling, listening and structure difficulties are the most demotivating factors. Thus, the educational policy makers should make some changes by reducing the load of vocabulary which should be memorized for the sake of tests and providing more attractive and motivating listening texts. I think that students' negative beliefs about aspects of the language might be changed by improving the traditional teaching methods and the content of the textbooks. Experience tells us that some English textbooks fail to capture the students' interest due to the heavy emphasis on vocabulary and grammar. Instead, the topics should create great deal of class interaction and help to motivate students to develop their language skills.

One of the most important pedagogical implications derived from the findings is the teacher's role (personality & methods) in shaping the learner's motivation and attitudes toward learning L2. When the learner comes to the classroom with low intrinsic motivation, he could be motivated extrinsically by the motivational teacher's choice of approaches and personal styles. Finocchiaro (1981) states that..." Motivation is the feeling nurtured primarily by the classroom teacher in the learning situation. The moment of truth - the enhancement of motivation - occurs when the teacher closes the classroom door, greets his students with a warm welcoming smile and proceeds to interact with various individuals by making comments or asking questions which indicate personal concerns."

Depending directly on the findings of this study and realizing the crucial role of teachers in reducing the learners' anxiety and demotivation, the researcher likes to present some recommendations which might be beneficial to those who are responsible for the educational process in the UAE:

- Teachers should create some school activities which meet the students' needs and learning goals instead of concentrating solely on memorizing vocabulary and grammatical rules at the expense of the language skills and actual language acquisition. Concerning the vocabulary load, I think if the students are trained and accustomed to guess the meaning from the context instead of memorizing all the new lexical items, learning vocabulary will be easier and more motivating because the "look and remember" way of vocabulary learning seems to be not very effective for learners of the English language
- It should be borne in mind that students have to be taught in a meaningful way to master the language skills, be able to communicate fluently and use English in real world situations. Knowles (1998) believes that adults are motivated by acquiring knowledge that solves real world problems in their lives or gives them internal satisfaction.
- Teachers should explain their language teaching approach to their students. For instance, students should realize that student- centred activities such as pair work or group activities designed to create an interactive learning environment. In other words, motivation levels drop when students are unsure about why they should perform certain language skills.
- It is recommended that the foreign language teacher should adopt the role of a facilitator rather than an authority figure in the classroom to increase students' motivation (Oxford& Shearin, 1994). At the same time, teachers have to bear in their minds that the maximum use of a target language facilitates its acquisition and balancing the use of L1 and L2 according to the students' levels and abilities will motivate students to learn English.
- It should be realized that integration of culture and language could function as a positive attitude and further motivation to study a foreign language (Gardner, 1985). This can be done easily by utilizing authentic material and

arranging some students' visits to English speaking countries. At the same time, teachers should develop students' cross cultural awareness systematically rather than simply adopting the socio-cultural components to satisfy students' integrative orientations (Dornyei, 1994).

- The Ministry of Education should give more freedom to the teachers in selecting approaches and strategies which suit their learners' levels and abilities particularly in the heterogeneous classes.

- To respond to the students' needs about tests , the teachers can reduce the students' demotivation by allocating few periods before the final exams to review and train students on test taking strategies.

- In order to utilize technology effectively in teaching English , schools should be equipped with adequate numbers of technological devices (language labs, computer sets...etc.) . Additionally, teachers should be trained intensively on utilizing technology in teaching English. It should be noted that teachers cannot be expected to learn how to use educational technology in their teaching after a one-time workshop. Teachers need in-depth, sustained assistance not only in the use of the technology but in their efforts to integrate technology into the curriculum (Kanaya & Light, 2005). The time spent ensuring that teachers are using technology to enrich their students' learning experiences is an important piece in determining the value of technology to their students.

In regard to the future research, many methodological and pedagogical questions with regard to different issues in foreign language education in the UAE emerged while investigating the research questions addressed in this study. However, this study might serve as a basis for further research in many ways. First, this study utilized qualitative and quantitative instruments to investigate the students' motivation toward learning English. It is recommended that such an approach can be used to study the context in which English instruction takes place including teachers, schools, and syllabus or socio- cultural barriers. Second, it is recommended to conduct a study about teachers' demotivation to find out its effect on learners' motivation. Finally, this

study could be replicated with a larger number of participants (males & females) in the seven emirates of the UAE to give a clearer and a more generalizable picture about the investigated phenomenon.

## **6.2. Conclusion**

This study aimed at examining the students' motivation towards learning English in the state schools in the Eastern Coast of the UAE. The results showed that the English learners are instrumentally motivated and their integrativeness is fairly high. Furthermore, the study revealed that the students feel demotivated because of some subject-related aspects such as vocabulary load and difficulties they encounter in understanding listening texts and mastering English structures and spelling. Contrary to other studies in the field of L2 learners' motivation (Gorham, 1992, Keblawi, 2005), the teacher of English is not perceived as the main demotivator for the UAE English learners.

The study has been conducted in a fashion where both quantitative and qualitative instruments were used. Crookes & Schmidt (1991) stated that the discussion of motivational and attitudinal factors in second language learning requires a variety of methodology that do not rely on quantitative data but also incorporate qualitative data as well. The interviews with students and teachers in this study were conducted to enable the researcher to recognize the perceptions of the two 'teams' in terms of the factors affecting students' motivation toward learning English.

It is worth mentioning that in light of this study results, Dornyei's definition of demotivation as "external demotivating elements" (2001:143) could be expanded to include aspects of the language which perceived difficult to be mastered by the learners in addition to the external factors.

On the other hand, it should be acknowledged that there are some limitations to this study. First, the limited number of the participants might not enhance the generalizability of the findings. Also, since this study was conducted on secondary students in the UAE state schools whose motivational needs might

be different from those in private schools, it should be noticed that the findings might not be applicable in private school context.

To conclude, no matter what the underlying motivation to study a second language, what cannot be disputed is the fact that motivation is an important variable when examining successful second language acquisition. It should be realized that making learners recognize a real need to accomplish learning goals and providing them with the motivation to learn is one of the best steps we can take to facilitate learning success. This is best conveyed by Bruner (1960:31): "*The best way to create interest in a subject is to render it worth knowing, which means to make the knowledge gained usable in one's thinking beyond the situation in which learning has occurred.*" Thus, future researches are needed to shed more light on the investigated phenomenon from different perspectives and angles as only the tip of the iceberg has been discovered.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire

A- Below are statements with which some people agree and others disagree. There is no right or wrong answers since many people have different opinions. We would like you to indicate your opinion about each statement by ticking the boxes below which best indicates the extent to which you disagree or agree with that statement.

	Statements	S.disagree	disagree	uncertain	agree	S.agree
1-	Studying English can be important to me as it will allow me to be more at ease with other people who speak English.					
2-	Studying English can be important for me because it will allow me to meet and converse with more and varied people					
3-	Studying English can be important for me because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate British and American art and literature.					
4-	Studying English can be important for me because I will be able to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups					
5-	Studying English can be important for me because I'll need it for my future career.					
6-	Studying English can be important for me because it will make me a more knowledgeable person.					
7-	Studying English can be important for me because I think it will someday be useful in getting a good job.					
8-	Studying English can be important for me because other people will respect me more if I have knowledge of L2.					
9-	How do you rate your English proficiency?	very poor	poor	average	good	very good

**B-Which one of the following factors demotivated you when studying English?**

- 1- The teacher of English speaks rapidly during the lesson.
- 2- The teacher doesn't use much Arabic in the English lesson.
- 3- The teacher becomes very angry and nervous when I answer wrong.
- 4- The teacher doesn't usually use the modern technological aids.
- 5- There is a big difference between what he teaches and what he examines.
- 6- The English textbook is difficult and boring.
- 7- The number of lexical items which we should memorize is very large.
- 8- English structures (grammatical rules) are complicated.
- 9- The difficulties in understanding what I listen in English.
- 10 - My numerous spelling errors.
- 11- Learning English affects negatively my mother tongue.
- 12- My parents don't encourage me to learn English.
- 13- My friends don't encourage me to speak English.
- 14- Social and religious reasons make me hate learning English .15- Are there any factors you like to add them?

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**Appendix 2: The translated copy of the questionnaire.**

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

يرجى التعبير عن رأيك في العبارات الواردة في هذه لاستبانته والتي تتعلق بموضوع الدافعية نحو تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية وذلك بوضع إشارة ( √ ) في المربع الذي يناسبك.

اسم المدرسة:-----  
الفرع:-----  
الصف:-----

**أ- الأسباب التي تدفعني وتشجعني على تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية**

	لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	محايد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	العبارات
1						أتعلم اللغة الانجليزية لأنها تمكيني من التعرف على الشعوب الناطقه بنا
2						أتعلم اللغة الانجليزية لأنها تمكيني من مقابلة ومحادثه شعوب متنوعه
3						أتعلم اللغة الانجليزية لأنها تساعدني على فهم وتذوق الفن والأدب البريطاني والأمريكي
4						أتعلم اللغة الانجليزية لأنها تمكيني من فهم الثقافات الأجنبية والمشاركة فيها
5						أتعلم اللغة الانجليزية لأنها تساعدني في اختيار وظيفة المستقبل
6						أتعلم اللغة الانجليزية لأنها تجعلني شخص مطلع ومثقف
7						أتعلم اللغة الانجليزية لأنها تسهل علي إيجاد وظيفة جيدة
8						أتعلم اللغة الانجليزية لأنها تجعل الآخرين ينظروا لي باحترام أكثر
9	ضعيف جدا	ضعيف	متوسط	جيد	جيد جدا	كيف ترى مستواك في اللغة الانجليزية

ب- أي من العوامل التالية تجعلك لا تحب تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟

- 1- مدرس اللغة الإنجليزية يتكلم بسرعة خلال الشرح
- 2- مدرس اللغة الانجليزية لا يستعمل اللغة العربية لتوضيح بعض الدروس الصعبة
- 3- المدرس يغضب جدا عندما لا اتمكن من الإجابة الصحيحة
- 4- المدرس لا يستعمل وسائل الشرح الحديثة
- 5- تعليمات المدرس في الحصة غير واضحة
- 6- كتاب اللغة الانجليزية ممل وصعب
- 7- المفردات المطلوبة للحفظ كثيرات وصعبة
- 8- قواعد اللغة الانجليزية معقدة
- 9- الصعوبات في فهم ما اسمع باللغة الانجليزية
- 10- كثرة أخطائي في الإملاء
- 11- تعلمي للانجليزية يؤثر سلبا على لغتي العربية
- 12- الوالدين لا يشجعونني على تعلم وتحدث الانجليزية
- 13- الأصدقاء لا يشجعونني على تعلم الانجليزية
- 14- هناك أسباب اجتماعية ودينية لا تشجعني على حب الانجليزية
- 15- هل توجد أية أسباب أخرى تقلل من دافعتيك لتعلم اللغة الانجليزية

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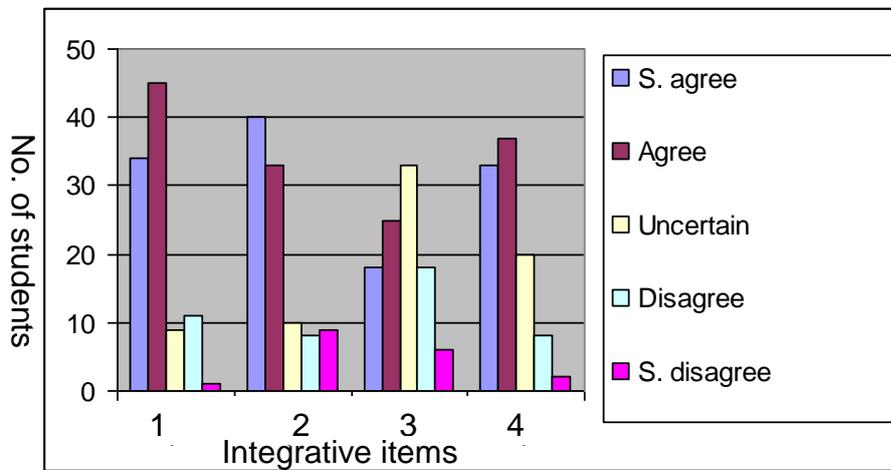
.....

\*مع كل الشكر والتقدير على مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة العلمية\*

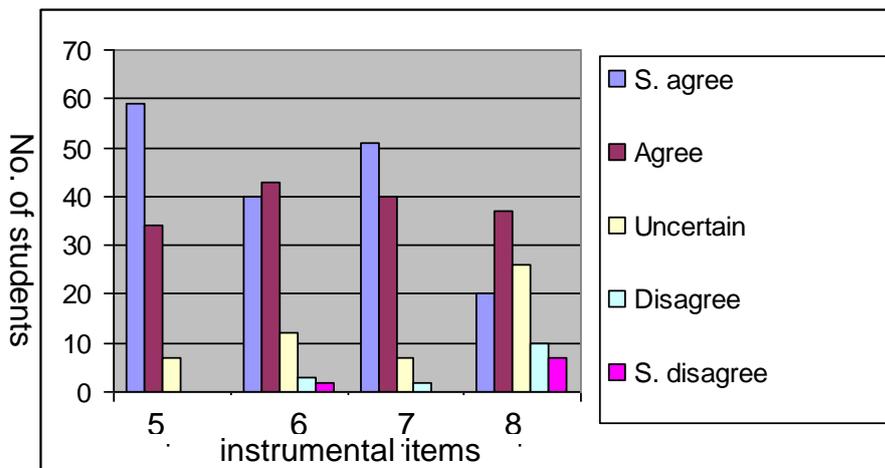
الأستاذ:

سليمان حسن

**Appendix3:**



**Figure 4: A comparison between the results of the four integrative items**



**Figure 5: A comparison between the results of the four instrumental items**

**Appendix 4: Paired samples T-test for the third integrative item (studying English to appreciate English literature) and the other items in the integrative scale.**

Sig.(2 tailed	df	t	Paired Differences					
			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		Std .Error Mean	SD	Mean	
			Upper	Lower				
.000	99	4.714	1.0089	.4111	.1506	1.5062	.7100	Studying English can be important to me as it will allow me to be more at ease with other people who speak English. & Studying English can be important for me because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate British and American art and literature. Pair 1 1&3
.001	99	3.438	.8832	.2368	.1629	1.6288	.5600	Studying English can be important for me because it will allow me to meet and converse with more and varied people & Studying English can be important for me because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate British and American art and literature. Pair 2 2&3
.000	99	-4.780	-.3509	-.8491	.1255	1.2553	-.6000	Studying English can be important for me because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate British and American art and literature. & Studying English can be important for me because I will be able to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups Pair3 4&3
.000	99	-5.355	-.39236	-.85431	.11640	1.16405	-.62333	Item3 & Integrative Scale without Item 3 Pair4 New &3

**Appendix 5: The mean, standard deviation and the t-value with 2-tailed test of students' integrativeness and instrumentality**

**Paired Samples Statistics**

Std. Error Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	
.06019	.60186	100	3.7735	Integrative Motivation
.05136	.51357	100	4.1525	Instrumental Motivation

**Paired Samples Test**

Sig. (2-tailed)	df	t	Paired Differences					Pair 1
			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		Std. Error Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	
			Upper	Lower				
.000	99	-5.678	-.24395	-.50605	.06605	.66048	-.37500	Integrative Motivation - Instrumental Motivation