

## Motivation and Multiglossia: Exploring the Diversity of Interests, Attitudes, and Engagement of Arabic Learners

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**Abstract :** Demand for Arabic language is growing worldwide, driven by increased interest in the multifarious purposes the language serves, both for the population of heritage learners and those studying Arabic as a foreign language. The diglossic, or indeed multiglossic nature of the language as used in Arabic speaking communities however, is seldom represented in the content of classroom courses. This disjoint between the nature of provision and students' expectations can severely impact their engagement with course material, and their motivation to either commence or continue learning the language. The nature of motivation and its relationship to multiglossia is sparsely explored in current literature on Arabic. The theoretical framework here proposed aims to address this gap by presenting a model and instruments for the measurement of Arabic learners' motivation in relation to the multiple strands of the language. It adopts and develops the Second Language Motivation Self-System model (L2MSS), originally proposed by Zoltan Dörnyei, which measures motivation as the desire to reduce the discrepancy between learners' current and future self-concepts in terms of the second language (L2). The tripartite structure incorporates measures of the Current L2 Self, Future L2 Self (consisting of an Ideal L2 Self, and an Ought-To Self), and the L2 Learning Experience. The strength of the self-concepts is measured across three different domains of Arabic: Classical, Modern Standard and Colloquial. The focus on learners' self-concepts allows for an exploration of the effect of multiple factors on motivation towards Arabic, including religion. The relationship between Islam and Arabic is often given as a prominent reason behind some students' desire to learn the language. Exactly how and why this factor features in learners' L2 self-concepts has not yet been explored. Specifically designed surveys and interview protocols are proposed to facilitate the exploration of these constructs. The L2 Learning Experience component of the model is operationalized as learners' task-based engagement. Engagement is conceptualised as multi-dimensional and malleable. In this model, situation-specific measures of cognitive, behavioural, and affective components of engagement are collected via specially designed repeated post-task self-report surveys on Personal Digital Assistant over multiple Arabic lessons. Tasks are categorised according to language learning skill. Given the domain-specific uses of the different varieties of Arabic, the relationship between learners' engagement with different types of tasks and their overall motivational profiles will be examined to determine the extent of the interaction between the two constructs. A framework for this data analysis is proposed and hypotheses discussed. The unique combination of situation-specific measures of engagement and a person-oriented approach to measuring motivation allows for a macro- and micro-analysis of the interaction between learners and the Arabic learning process. By combining cross-sectional and longitudinal elements with a mixed-methods design, the model proposed offers the potential for capturing a comprehensive and detailed picture of the motivation and engagement of Arabic learners. The application of this framework offers a number of numerous potential pedagogical and research implications which will also be discussed.

**Keywords :** Arabic, diglossia, engagement, motivation, multiglossia, sociolinguistics

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