

**Relationships between Intercultural Contact and L2 Motivation for a  
Group of Undergraduate Saudi Students during their First Year in the  
UK**

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## Abstract

Using the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei (2005), this mixed methods approach study aimed to investigate two key issues. First, to investigate the possible relationships between prior levels of ICC and self-reported motivation to learn English among newly arrived (during their first month of arrival) undergraduate (pre-foundation) Saudi students in the United Kingdom. Second, to explore whether the reported motivational profiles (high Ideal L2 Self and strong Ought to L2 Self) on arrival help to explain the behaviour of a sample of new arrivals (4 participants) during their first year of study in terms of recognising and responding to ICC opportunities and L2 learning.

The study began with a quantitative phase, using an online survey distributed to 257 new Saudi pre-foundation students across the UK in October 2012 to investigate their prior ICC and reported motivation to learn English (n = 257: 36 females and 221 males). Correlation analysis of the data revealed a relationship between the new Saudi arrivals' ICC and aspects of their L2 motivation. Regression analysis revealed that one construct of the L2MSS in particular (the Ideal L2 Self) had the strongest association with ICC, which suggested that prior ICC might have promoted the participants' Ideal L2 Self. Furthermore, regression analysis revealed that Language Learning Attitudes were better predictor of the reported L2 learning effort than Ideal L2 Self and Ought to L2 Self, which may have indicated that the positive attitudes of the participants towards the L2 learning environment was based on their realisation of the importance attached to English for their future. Finally, Ought to L2 Self was a stronger predictor of the reported L2 learning effort than Ideal L2 Self, which may have underscored the importance of the collective nature of Saudi society where family expectations serve as a powerful source of motivation.

A qualitative phase followed the quantitative phase when four study participants (males) were selected based on their representation of distinct motivational profiles: strong Ideal L2 Self and strong Ought to L2 Self (two participants for each). These were to be interviewed three times (November 2012, February 2013, and May 2013). Their distinct motivational profiles did not help to explain the behaviour of the participants as they all showed similar ICC behaviour and similar L2 learning behaviour. Instead, the analysis of the qualitative data suggested that a number of social, cultural, and personal issues may have had a stronger impact on the behaviour of the new Saudi sojourners than their Ideal L2 Self or Ought to L2 Self.

In conclusion, the study strongly suggests the significance of being involved in ICC (direct or indirect) to give Saudi L2 learners reasons to study English and create a vision of themselves as future L2 users, which is likely to help them to establish and maintain their L2 motivation. Given the collective nature of Saudi society, English teachers and parents play a crucial role in encouraging and supporting L2 learners in such a process. Finally, the study suggested a number of cultural, social and personal issues that stakeholders and policymakers in study abroad programmes and in international universities need to pay close attention to in order to understand and help visiting students to make the most of their stay abroad.

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## Abbreviations

ALM	Audio-Lingual Method
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EAP	Teaching English for Academic Purposes
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EIL	English as an International Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
GTM	Grammar Translation Method
ICC	Intercultural Contact
IELTS	The International English Language Testing System
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
MISPI	Michigan International Student Problem Inventory
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
QUAL	Qualitative
QUAN	Quantitative
RQ	Research Question
SA	Study Abroad
SAMIRAD	The Saudi Arabian Market Information Resource
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TOEFL	Test Of English as a Foreign Language
TV	Television
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

## **1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

In 2005, as part of Saudi Arabia's plans for national development, a large number of Saudi organisations, both governmental and non-governmental initiated programmes which involved sponsoring Saudi students to study abroad. These organisations included the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), Sabic, Aramco, and the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation. The aim of these programmes was to sponsor highly qualified Saudi students to continue their studies in 22 countries around the world; some were English-speaking countries, some were not (Ministry of Higher Education 2011). Every year these organisations send thousands of young Saudis to study outside Saudi Arabia in countries including the USA, Canada, Japan, Germany and the UK (Ministry of Higher Education 2011). The Deputyship for Planning and Information (2010) reported that according to their figures, the number of Saudi students studying abroad is currently 80,929, with approximately half of these being undergraduates. In the UK the undergraduate Saudi students make up a significant proportion of the total of young Saudis studying abroad, with some 14,901 studying there in 2010 (i.e. 23.5% of all the Saudi students in the 22 countries).

In a vast country like Saudi Arabia not all citizens have the same opportunities to meet people from other cultures who do not speak their mother tongue. These opportunities may be readily available to those working in specific sectors (e.g., the oil industry, health sector, and hotels) as well as those who live in specific places which attract people from other cultures for particular purposes, such as pilgrimage (e.g., the Holy Cities of Makkah and Medina), or business (e.g., the oil fields). Communicating with people from other cultures using English (direct Intercultural Contact) and/or

encountering English cultural artefacts (indirect Intercultural Contact) including English language TV programmes, web pages, newspapers or magazines, gives English learners a purpose and a motive to study the language. As not all Saudi students have the same opportunities to experience direct or indirect Intercultural Contact, these varying degrees of Intercultural Contact (hereafter ICC) can be said to create two broad types of Saudi scholarship students (forming a continuum not a dichotomy). The first type have frequent opportunities for high levels of ICC and consequently are more likely to see English as a language that can be used for multiple purposes like their own first language (hereafter L1), while the second type have had little or no ICC and tend to view English as merely a school subject rather than a living language.

Those students who have had numerous ICC opportunities and experiences have had the chance to experience authentic communication in English, either directly or indirectly, which gives them a sense of themselves as being an actual English user in the future. This in turn might boost their motivation for learning English as they begin to see themselves in terms of an 'Ideal L2 Self' Dörnyei (2005), in which they are English users (see Chapter Three). On the other hand, students who have had few ICC experiences are likely to have studied English as a school subject and to have worked hard at it because they were encouraged to do so by some significant authority, for example, their friends, or family members. This second type of Saudi students possibly lack the experience of being English users, and their motivation for learning English is high because they felt that they 'ought to' (Dörnyei 2005) (see chapter Three).

Consequently, when they arrive in the UK, the former group might arrive with more experience of ICC, which may in turn mean that they are more inclined to have more ICC in the UK and meet more people from other cultures. Students in the second group arriving with less experience of ICC may also be less inclined to have more ICC in the

UK. However, both types of students are put on the same track, which the Saudi Study Abroad Programmes call ‘the language phase’, and they have to study English for a year and reach the expected IELTS (International English Language Testing System) level in order to be admitted to their university foundation course the following year.

This study aims to investigate whether prior experience of ICC, either direct or indirect, has an impact on the progress of the L2 motivational behaviour of young Saudi students during their first year in UK universities when they arrive on pre-foundation courses. The study will draw on the L2 Motivational Self System that has been demonstrated to have significant validity in various educational cultural contexts, including the Asian contexts of Japan (Ryan 2009b, Yashima 2009), China and Iran (Taguchi *et al.* 2009), Indonesia (Lamb 2012), and Pakistan (Islam *et al.* 2013), which are thought to be comparable to the Saudi context in terms of being collectivist societies where English is taught as a foreign language. Therefore, the study will contribute to L2 motivation and ICC research by applying concepts from previous work by researchers like Csizér and Kormos (2008a), Dörnyei *et al.* (2006), and Clément *et al.* (1994) to a different population. The aim of the study is reflected in the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between prior levels of ICC and reported motivation to learn English among pre-foundation Saudi sojourners newly arrived in the UK?
  - a) What is their prior level of ICC?
  - b) How is ICC related to the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System?
  - c) What is the relationship between the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System and reported learning effort?



2. How do participants with distinct motivational profiles on arrival (as measured by the questionnaire) recognise and respond to opportunities for ICC and for L2 learning over the course of their first year of study in the UK?

I believe that ICC is important in successful language learning especially in the context of Saudi students who study abroad (here in the UK). Therefore, I hypothesise that pre-foundation Saudi students who arrive with higher levels of ICC are likely to experience higher levels of language learning motivation (L2 motivation) than those with lower levels of ICC. However, I also hypothesise that this relationship is not a direct one, i.e., someone with a higher level of ICC will not necessarily be more motivated to learn the language than someone with lower levels of ICC. Thus, for example, there are students from regions of Saudi Arabia where the inhabitants have direct or indirect ICC with vast numbers of people from other cultures, and sometimes on a daily basis (e.g. Makkah and Medina). However, not all those students are motivated to learn English. This relationship might be mediated by the 'Ideal L2 Self' because students with higher levels of ICC may have experienced the language beyond studying textbooks, seeing themselves as real users of the L2, in ways that students with lower levels of ICC may not. Therefore, there may be a relationship between ICC and motivated behaviour via the 'Ideal L2 Self'.

For these Saudi teenagers, who have been given the opportunity to be independent from the control of their significant others (parents) and to travel to a foreign country learning a foreign language (English) in an attempt to pursue their future dreams, the transition experience that they will go through during their first year is worthwhile. They need to be highly motivated to take such a crucial step into the uncertain future and sacrifice their secure and familiar Saudi environment for the sake of achieving their aspirations. In the host environment, those Saudi students will be surrounded by plenty of

opportunities for interacting with other international students. As a Saudi sojourner myself, I went through an experience of this kind, albeit at a later age, and I found it fascinating.

English plays a major role as a means of contact between the newly arrived Saudi students and the people surrounding them as soon as they leave Saudi Arabia. As a teacher of English, I hoped that this study would provide me with insights into Saudi student perspectives on English teaching in general and also suggest ways in which this might be improved to meet their needs

Finally, as an academic researcher, my ambition was to find a way of describing and analysing the nature of these students' motivation. I knew that my own motives for study abroad, and my motivation during the sojourn period, were complex and multidimensional. Therefore, I needed to find a theory that would enable me to obtain a deeper understanding of such complex and multidimensional phenomenon, which the L2 Motivational Self System might offer.

This thesis is structured into eight chapters. Chapter One presented an introduction to the study explained the aim of the study and outlined how I became interested in the topic of the study. In addition, the theoretical contribution of the study was also briefly pointed out. The introductory chapter also included the research questions to be addressed in this study. In chapter Two, I will shed light on the context of the study, Saudi Arabia, examining issues including Saudi Arabian culture, teaching English in Saudi Arabia, and Saudi study abroad programmes. Chapter Three will present the theoretical background to L2 motivation and ICC research as well as reviewing research that has been done on study abroad programmes. Then Chapter Four will focus on the methodological considerations that have informed this study and will explain a number of relevant issues including the study design, the choice of sample, the process of data

collection and analysis (both quantitative and qualitative), procedures followed to enhance the quality of data, and ethical consideration. Chapter Five will present the quantitative findings that have been generated from descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, and regression analysis. Chapter Six will introduce the qualitative findings which have been generated from thematic analysis of the accounts of four male participants. In chapter Seven, the main findings will be discussed with findings from relevant literature. Chapter Eight will be the conclusion chapter that will outline limitations, contributions, and recommendations of the study.

## **2 CHAPTER TWO: BACKGROUND TO THIS STUDY**

Having introduced the main ideas relevant to this thesis, this chapter provides contextual information relating to Saudi Arabia, its educational system and the Saudi scholarship scheme, on which this study focuses.

### **2.1 The Saudi Arabian context**

#### **2.1.1 An overview of Saudi Arabia**

Saudi Arabia is an Islamic, Arabic-speaking country, located in the South Western corner of Asia. Modern Saudi Arabia was unified by King Abdulaziz Al Saud in 1932 under the name of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (SAMIRAD 2011). With a size similar to Western Europe, Saudi Arabia comprises four-fifths of the Arabian Peninsula, its land mass covering some 2,250,000 square kilometres. It has a population of 26,417,600 inhabitants (World Atlas 2011).

Saudi Arabia is a conservative Muslim country that hosts the two holiest cities in Islam; the Holy Cities of Makkah and Medina. Approximately three million Muslims from every part of the world head to Saudi Arabia each year to perform the *Hajj* (pilgrimage). Oil was discovered in Saudi Arabia in 1937 (World Atlas 2011), and since then it has become the largest producer and exporter of oil on the planet. Nowadays, the Saudi government possesses approximately 20 per cent of the world's total proven reserves of this natural resource (Central Intelligence Agency 2011). The government of Saudi Arabia exploits its oil revenues to build the infrastructure of the country, to improve the lives of its citizens, as well as to diversify the economy to reduce dependence on oil alone. One of the underlying purposes of the building of the country's infrastructure has

been to encourage social development in its widest sense, e.g. education, health and social services (SAMIRAD 2011).

### **2.1.2 Saudi Arabian Culture**

The discovery of oil was a landmark that led to rapid changes in Saudi Arabia; however, the country remains conservative and many cultural practices can be attributed to “two inter-related main factors: the influence of religion, and the influence of tribal and family traditions” (Mellahi and Wood 2001, P. 143). Moreover, “most tribal and family values in Saudi Arabia are a product of Islamic teachings” (ibid.) and Islam is the major force “in determining the social norms, patterns, traditions, obligations, privileges and practices of society” there (Al-Saggaf 2004, P. 1). Therefore, any acceptable action/practice should follow Islamic principles first, then societal conventions. Saudi culture is ‘collectivist’ as it “encourages strong links among members of a social group, who subordinate personal needs for the good of the group, or choose goals which do not threaten group harmony” (Caldwell-Harris and Ayçiçeği 2006, P. 332). The collective nature of ‘interpersonal relationships’ in Saudi society gives “minimal opportunities for Self-recognition” Papi (2010) as the younger generation do not have much room to express their own views especially those that challenge the views of the older generation which is regarded as being more experienced and possessing wisdom that the youth lack. This gives significant others (e.g. parents and senior family members) a huge influence on the personal decisions and choices that their offspring make.

One of the main characteristics that shapes Saudi society is the issue of gender segregation which exerts itself in almost every private and public institution. Gender mixing is prohibited in the education sector (schools and universities), restaurants, parks, and even homes as Saudi houses are divided into two sections: one for males and

one for females; (Mayer 2000, AlMunajjed 1997). This practice of segregation practice is based on the traditional historical view in Saudi society regarding the role of each gender, which has nothing to do with ‘Islamic principles’ (Abu-Ali and Reisen 1999, AlMunajjed 1997, Fanjar 1987). The dominant belief in Saudi society is that:

A man is responsible for work outside of the home and for providing a secure and safe life for his wife and other family members, while a woman takes responsibility for inside the home, looking after her husband and children, and providing love and warm-heartedness for the family (AlHazmi 2010, p. 2).

Therefore, the social life of a Saudi individual has ‘two separate worlds: the private and the public. The public world is ‘the man’s domain’, which is the area of business, religious, and political activity” (AlMunajjed 1997). Females belong to the private world, which is associated with “the home, kinsmen or family members, family life, and intimate relationships” (AlHazmi 2010, p. 2). The private world is “usually considered as a retreat, and sanctuary that man should keep safe and secure” (Deaver 1980, p. 32). Women have an inferior and subordinate status to men and the female is regarded as a component of the male’s dignity i.e. inappropriate female behaviour shames the responsible man. Therefore, the responsible man (father, husband, or brother) must take care of his female(s) who must respect and obey him (AlHazmi 2010, AlMunajjed 1997, Deaver 1980).

The Saudi government support and adopt ‘the conservative Islamic movement’, one of the main means of implanting the ‘pious conservative Muslim life’ being the Saudi educational system (Shaw 2009, Molavi 2006, Berkey 2004, Al-Banyan 1980). This emphasis on religious education is reflected in the national curriculum requirements:

ELEMENTARY LEVEL:	Nine classes of religious studies per week (Total = 30 classes)
INTERMEDIATE LEVEL:	Eight classes of religious studies per week (Total = 33 classes)
SECONDARY LEVEL:	First two years: four classes of religious studies per week (total = 24 classes) Senior year: three classes of religious studies per week (Total = 33 classes)

Each class usually lasts for 45 minutes Shaw (2009) and religious studies as a subject places emphasis on aspects such as:

- Strengthening faith in God and Islam, and in Mohammed as God's prophet and messenger.
- Recognising that life on earth is a stage of work and production during which a Muslim invests his or her abilities with full faith in eternal life in the next world, in the belief that today is work without judgment; tomorrow is judgment without work.
- Encouraging social solidarity among members of the Muslim community through cooperation, love, fraternity and placing the public good over private interests.
- Encouraging strength in its most sublime forms—strength of faith, character and body—because a strong Muslim is closer to God's heart. (Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission in the United States 1991).

Therefore, it is not surprising to find that Saudi sojourners have strong religious convictions that they will not easily compromise, as other studies of Saudi sojourners in various parts of the world have found; for example in Australia (AlHazmi 2010, Midgley 2009), and in the USA ; (Shaw 2009, Al-Banyan 1980).

### **2.1.3 Education in Saudi Arabia**

The Directorate of Education was established in 1924 to form the nucleus for the first modern educational system in Saudi Arabia (Al-Sadan 2000). In 1953 this official body was replaced by the Ministry of Education. The new Ministry had a specific task of “expanding the national school system, to give it a modern basis comparable with that of Western states” (Al-Sadan 2000, p. 145). This means that the Saudi educational system is highly centralised, therefore, and all educational policies follow a ‘top down’ sequence. Education in Saudi Arabia is segregated by sex; however, “both sexes follow the same curriculum and take the same annual examinations” (Sedgwick 2001, p. 1). The general education system of Saudi Arabia is organized into three main levels - preschool, compulsory schooling (primary/intermediate/secondary), and higher education (Ministry of Higher Education 2011).

Compulsory schooling is made up of three stages: primary, intermediate and secondary, and is provided free of charge. During these three stages common syllabi, curricula and textbooks are used throughout the country (Al Shumaimeri 2003). Students must successfully complete each stage and obtain a certificate before beginning the next. They start elementary education at the age of six and this stage lasts for six years. The next stage, intermediate, lasts for three years, followed by another three-year period of secondary education. At this stage students can attend either high schools or vocational schools, the former offering programmes in both the Arts and Sciences. The academic year is divided into two semesters each of which lasts for approximately twenty weeks, including “a two-week examination period” (Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission 2006 ). In addition, the students need to take two tests: ‘General Aptitude Test’ (GAT) and ‘Standard Achievement Admission Test’ (SAAT) in order to pursue their higher education (National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment 2009).



The accumulative percentage of the secondary school certificate, GAT, and SAAT, determines the students' admission to the university. Students are allowed to study either in Saudi Arabia or abroad. In addition to higher education, male high school graduates are also eligible to attend one of the military academies.

#### **2.1.4 The role of English in Saudi Arabia**

In 1927, a few years after the establishment of the Directorate of Education, basic English was introduced into the Saudi educational system. However, actual significant higher level English programmes were only introduced after the great expansion of the oil industry in the 1960s. The government exploited the huge oil revenues this generated to create the infrastructure necessary, including transport systems, utilities, telecommunications, and health services. Manpower, whose language was commonly English, was imported to do such work and only then did the Saudi government realise that its citizens needed training to enable them to communicate with the outside world. In addition, millions of non-Arabic speaking Muslim pilgrims visit Makkah for Hajj each year, most of them speaking English either as a first or as a second language. English is also required in both the private and the public sector, particularly in jobs related to industry, health sector and hotels.

English also plays a role in the Saudi mass media. One of the national Saudi TV stations, Channel 2, broadcasts 24 hours a day as do European language radio stations. Furthermore, there are three English daily newspapers, *The Arab News*, *The Saudi Gazette*, and *The Daily Riyadh* (Al-Seghayer 2005).

#### **2.1.5 Teaching English in Saudi Arabia**

English is the only compulsory foreign language taught in Saudi Arabia. Just like other subjects of the Saudi curricula, the main reason for studying English is simply to pass

the relevant exams and progress on to the next stage. Since 2004, students have started learning English twice a week as a compulsory subject in the sixth year of elementary school, at approximately 12 years old. At this stage, learners are taught the basics of English, e.g., the alphabet, numbers, some simple vocabulary and written sentences. During the intermediate and secondary stage, students study English for four sessions a week, covering listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, vocabulary acquisition and grammar (Al-Mohanna 2010, Rugh 2002). Students start composition writing (starting with one paragraph only) during the third year of the intermediate stage and continue throughout the whole secondary stage. At tertiary level, English is also a compulsory subject in all degree programmes, with students having to study several English modules. English is also the medium of instruction in some degree programmes such as science, engineering, computing and medicine.

#### **2.1.6 Teachers of English and classroom practice**

Individuals employed as English teachers by the Saudi Ministry of Education need to have at least a Bachelor's degree in English, but do not need to have followed any pre-service training courses. All English teachers therefore have a degree in one of the following programmes: Teaching English as a Foreign Language, English language and translation, or English literature. Al-Mohanna (2010) reveals that even the English language teaching programmes offered by teacher training colleges do not offer adequate preparation, with teaching methodology modules representing approximately 9 per cent of the total programme, while the rest of the content "ranges from courses that teach the English language to totally irrelevant courses" (Al-Mohanna 2010, p. 75).

The Directorate of Curriculum at the Ministry of Education (2000) issued a document asserting that "English education should foster students' abilities to comprehend and

express Basic English, as well as foster interest in foreign languages and cultures” (cited in Al-Mohanna 2010, p. 69). It is clear, then, that the primary goal of such a curriculum is fostering communication skills. Although it is claimed officially that teaching English in Saudi Arabia follows a Communicative Language Teaching approach, the teaching practices which are followed suggest otherwise.

Al-Seghayer (2005, p. 129) noted that “the methods used in teaching English in Saudi Arabia are the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) and to some extent, the Grammar Translation Method (GTM)”. This means that English teaching in Saudi schools follows an extremely teacher-centred system, in which teachers play the dominant role, as the only source of knowledge (AlAhmadi 2007). Students are given limited opportunities for practicing the language or none at all. English teaching practice usually relies heavily on repetition of words and phrases, memorization, and monotonous grammatical rule drills. In addition, teachers mostly use Arabic (the mother tongue of students and teachers) as the language of instruction.

The number of students in each class is between 30 and 50. In comparison to the number of students, classrooms tend to be very small and overcrowded. The prevalent view among inspectors, head teachers, teachers, students and parents is that good teachers control their class very strictly. Therefore, if the class seems noisy and chaotic, that is likely to indicate that the teacher has a weak personality. Even students “find it difficult to accept a teacher who does not play a dominant leading role” (AlAhmadi 2007, p. 4). Teachers suffer from having to teach a high volume of sessions, with most taking 24 sessions a week and sometimes teaching in more than one school. Besides that, they must cover the contents of the whole textbook, regardless of whether their students master the material included in the textbook or not (Al-Mohanna 2010).

### **2.1.7 The examination system for English in Saudi schools**

Since the student success or failure rate affects a teacher's annual evaluation report, written by his/her educational inspector, both teachers and students are exam-oriented. Teachers have to follow "the instructions and students evaluation scheme described by the General Directorate of Education in designing EFL exams for their students" (Al-Mohanna 2010, p. 81). Although the mark allocated to the oral test is 5 out of a total of 50 marks, this oral component is not included in the final English examination which consists of a written composition, reading comprehension, a Cloze test dialogue, grammar test, information questions (i.e. a section in which questions regarding general information mentioned in the textbook are asked) and vocabulary exercises.

In the composition, students are asked to write a paragraph about a topic that they have previously come across in the textbook with a number of key words being provided to refresh the students' memory. Students are supposed to memorize the whole paragraph before the exam and simply write this out onto the answer sheet. The reading comprehension consists of a passage which may have been extracted from the textbook or, if this is not the case, will consist of linguistic items already encountered in the textbook. The Cloze test dialogue is selected from the textbook, and the student is expected to fill in the missing elements. In the grammar test, information questions, and vocabulary exercises, students are presented with a variety of questions including multiple choice, gap-filling and word-matching. Similar texts and exercises are mostly practised in class beforehand. Al-Mohanna (2010, p. 82) concluded that "English language examinations were not stimulating" as "they did not aim to measure genuine communicative use of the language" which the national curriculum claims to teach. He also added that the English language examinations in Saudi schools "were still restricted to two skills: reading and writing. Even test items on reading and writing did not assess

the ability of the students to read or write. They merely assessed their ability to memorize” (ibid.).

As a result, it is not surprising that this type of English Language Teaching (ELT) is likely to cause many Saudi students to experience massive failure in international English language tests (e.g. IELTS, TOEFL) or in job-related tests as well as suffering from poor linguistic proficiency and lacking essential communication skills (Al-Seghayer 2005).

### **2.1.8 Saudi study abroad programmes**

There are numerous Saudi study abroad programmes that offer scholarships for Saudi students, administered by, for example, the Ministry of Higher Education (hereafter MoHE), Sabic, Aramco, and the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation. According to the MoHE (2011) website, the purpose of these study abroad programmes is: “to sponsor highly qualified Saudi students to continue their studies in different universities around the world”.

The excellent reputation of British universities makes the UK one of the most attractive destination countries for Saudi students.

#### **2.1.8.1 Conditions for acceptance onto the undergraduate scholarship programme**

This section presents the conditions relating to undergraduate study since pre-foundation Saudi students form the focus for this study. Saudi study abroad programmes at undergraduate level have similar conditions; therefore, I will present King Abdullah’s Scholarship Programme as an example. According to the MoHE website, the conditions for acceptance in King Abdullah’s Scholarship Programme “are subject to periodic review during each stage in accordance with changing circumstances and directives”.

The conditions of acceptance below represent the current version (The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Scholarship Programme Study Abroad Department 2010):

- The applicant must be a Saudi citizen
- The applicant must not be a government employee
- The applicant must study full-time and reside in the country designated
- The applicants' secondary school grade must not be less than 90% in the Physical Sciences division or its equivalent [this subject area is emphasised because students are allowed to apply to study specific disciplines, see below]
- The applicant must pass the General Aptitude Test (Scholastic Aptitude) with a score of not less than 80%
- No more than three years must have passed since the applicant graduated from secondary school
- If the applicant was awarded a qualification outside the Kingdom, it must be validated by the relevant agency prior to application to the programme
- The applicant must not be more than 22 years old (MoHE, 2011).

#### **2.1.8.2 Academic disciplines**

King Abdullah's Scholarship Programme allows students to follow one of the following disciplines:

- Medicine, dentistry, and the medical fellowship
- Pharmacy
- Nursing

- Medical Sciences: radiology, medical laboratories, medical technology, and physical therapy
- Engineering: civil, architectural, electric, mechanical, industrial, chemical, environmental and communications engineering, as well as heavy equipment and machinery
- Computer: computer engineering, computer science, networks, etc.
- Pure sciences: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology
- Other disciplines: law, accounting, e-commerce, finance, insurance and marketing (MoHE, 2011).

### **2.1.8.3 Stages of the process from application to departure**

According to the MoHE (2011) website there are five stages to this process. The first stage is ‘application’, which occurs immediately after the end of the school year in Saudi Arabia, when “the Department for Scholarship Affairs” announces the beginning of registration for the programme, either in local newspapers or on the MoHE website. The second stage is ‘screening and interview’; during this stage the Administration of the Scholarship Programme screens the identification and academic documents for the applicants, each one being personally interviewed. The third stage is called ‘nomination’ when names of nominated applicants are announced in local newspapers or on the MoHE website. At the fourth stage, the MoHE organizes a forum that lasts for three days for scholarship students in three cities; Riyadh, Jeddah and Khobar. This event seeks “to provide nominees with the knowledge and skills they will need to face the problems of daily life in the countries in which they will pursue their education” (MoHE, 2011). In the forum the following topics are dealt with:

- Information regarding the scholarship system and the scholarship recipient's rights and obligations
- Information regarding the countries in which the scholarship awardees will study, including their legal systems, social customs, systems of study and academic affairs, medical systems, and housing
- A wealth of other information which serves to prepare the scholarship awardees psychologically and socially and enables them to improve themselves, alongside different lectures on topics of general awareness (MoHE, 2011).

At the final stage, the nominee presents required documentation (e.g. acceptance letter and visa) before departure to the host country.

#### **2.1.8.4 The period of the undergraduate scholarship programme**

The MoHE (2011) website asserts that the undergraduate scholarship ranges between four and five years (based on the discipline of study). This period is preceded by a year that is allocated for studying the language (i.e. English) during which the student should obtain the prerequisite language qualification (e.g. IELTS) in order to obtain the acceptance letter for the foundation level the following year. The participants of this study belong to the first year (i.e. language level). Technically they are regarded as pre-foundation students, while the Saudi study abroad programmes regard them as undergraduate students. Therefore, the terms undergraduate and pre-foundation students will be used interchangeably in reference to the participants of the study.

#### **2.1.9 Concluding comments**

It can be concluded that ICC is not among the priorities of the Saudi educational system. Therefore, students arriving with high ICC do so due to their personal



experience outside national classrooms and curricula. In addition, ICC is utterly neglected by the Saudi MoHE scholarship programme, which (according to previous studies, see chapter 3 below) has a significant role in learning another language, as well as motivation to learn another language.

## **2.2 Summary**

This chapter has presented the background to the Saudi Arabian context by shedding light on Saudi Arabia (as a country), the culture of Saudi Arabia, Education in Saudi Arabia, and the role of English in the Saudi Arabian context in general and in the educational system in particular. The chapter has concluded by providing a detailed example of Saudi study abroad programmes starting from conditions for acceptance on to the scholarship programme (Bachelor Degree) to issuance of the scholarship award.

### **3 CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW**

The theoretical background of this study relies heavily on two research traditions, the first being the social psychology of intercultural contact; and the second being L2 motivation research. However, before focusing more specifically on research regarding Saudi sojourners, the initial part of this chapter will consider research on study abroad programmes.

#### **3.1 Research on Study Abroad Programmes**

The assumed positive linguistic outcome of study abroad (SA) programmes led to an expansion in these programmes during the 1980s and attracted the attention of various researchers wishing to investigate language learning in this context. Freed (1995) assembled a collection of these studies in her book *Second Language Acquisition in a Study Abroad Context*. The studies investigated a number of areas in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) which included measuring and predicting language gains in SA settings (Brecht *et al.* 1995, Lapkin *et al.* 1995); examining the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence in a SA setting (Regan 1995, Siegal 1995); comparative analysis of language learning gains for students at different levels at home and abroad (Guntermann 1995, Huebner 1995); and exploring student perspectives on learning in SA programmes based on learner narratives and diaries Polanyi (1995). The studies in this volume ranged from large-scale quantitative analysis to smaller-scale qualitative studies but most dealt with differences in individual and group linguistic outcomes (e.g. the use of communication strategies, lexical and grammatical development, and fluency).

Most of the studies emphasised the notion that SA programmes helped students to become ‘fluent’ L2 speakers. Freed (1995, p. 26) asserts that when comparing L2 learners who remain at home with their counterparts who study abroad (i.e. sojourners):

Those who study abroad appear to speak with greater ease and confidence, realised by a greater abundance of speech, spoken at a faster rate, and characterised, correspondingly, by fewer dysfluent-sounding silent and/or filler pauses.

These findings lent support to earlier studies that found sojourners show “a wider range of communicative strategies than students who have not been abroad, demonstrating an ability to initiate, participate in and maintain an interaction” (Freed 1995, pp. 26-27).

However, SA research has tended to be dominated by statistical studies that rely heavily on test scores (e.g. pre- and post-residence period). In addition, these studies have mainly focused on linguistic outcomes, for instance, fluency and syntax, pronunciation, proficiency in reading, communicative strategies, oral fluency, and grammatical and lexical abilities (e.g. Freed 1998, Huebner 1998, Coleman 1997, and DeKeyser 1991). Scholars like Salvadori (1997) argued that such extensive quantitative research that reflects a linguistic and cognitive view of L2 learning tends to underestimate the social dimension of L2 learning, such as the L2 learner’s experience of SA programmes, their perspectives, and their personal growth. Freed (1995, p. 28) urged applied linguists to learn about “how students actually spend their time while abroad, which language they speak with friends and host families, the purposes for which they use language and the amount of time they actually spend using the target language”.

Therefore, after reviewing SA research, Coleman (1998, p. 197) concluded that:

Limiting research to linguistic outcomes distorts the experience as language skills are not merely mechanical: sociocultural and intercultural competence are essential

elements of the true linguistic proficiency which residence abroad is expected to enhance.

This view was later supported by Collentine and Freed (2004, p. 157) who warned that “focusing on traditional metrics of acquisition such as grammatical development might not capture important gains by learners whose learning is not limited to the formal classroom”.

Recently, qualitative approach research using case studies and ethnography, and drawing on introspective techniques such as interviews and diaries have begun to investigate the multiplicity of processes involved in language and cultural learning (e.g. Jackson 2008, Pellegrino 2005, and Murphy-Lejeune 2002). These qualitative studies enabled the researchers to dig deeper beneath the surface into the sojourner’s personal experience in order to get a more complete picture than the purely quantitative studies afford. Paying attention to the voices of individual sojourners can contribute to a better understanding of the impact that SA can have on both social behaviour and language use of L2 learners.

Murphy-Lejeune (2002) adopted a case study approach when she interviewed students from three types of European SA programmes (Erasmus, a French business school programme, and a bilateral language assistantship) in order to investigate the migration of students within Europe. Murphy-Lejeune maintained that the mobility experience could change sojourners’ concepts of ‘home’ and ‘space’ as they adapt to an ‘unfamiliar environment’ and participate in ‘new social scenes’. Murphy-Lejeune (2002, p. 27) also asserts that “the spatial, temporal, social and symbolic disorientation which strangers experience may provoke a personal crisis during which their identity appears somewhat fragmented or torn”.

In another qualitative study, Kinginger (2004) followed an American student called Alice who had ‘a disadvantaged social background’ due to difficulties she experienced during her adolescence. Using interviews and diaries for collecting the data, Kinginger followed Alice for four years from the US during her university studies to France during her study abroad programme and then back to the US. Alice became a French speaker through her experiences during the study abroad programme by “reidentifying herself to be a cultured person, someone she can admire” (Kinging 2004). She was able to gain memberships of different communities of practice in the host environment with ‘French peers’, which might have helped her to move away from “ethnocentrism and toward greater intercultural sensitivity”. Kinginger (2004) concluded that L2 learners are different in their ability to access ‘social networks’ in the host culture that may offer opportunities for L2 development. Therefore, “access to language is shaped not only by learners’ own intentions, but also by those of the others with whom they interact – people who may view learners as embodiments of identities shaped by gender, race, and social class” (Kinging 2004, p. 221).

Later Kinginger (2008) conducted another study that included a cohort of twenty four American students in France, from which the case histories of six participants were selected in order to understand the nature of their study abroad experiences by asking questions relating to ‘what language learning means to the participants’, ‘why they choose to study abroad’, and particularly ‘in France’, ‘what the students do’, ‘for how long’, and ‘in what language’. She found that language learning conditions were highly variable for different participants. However, what “seems to matter as much or more than the conditions that students describe” is the students’ disposition towards language learning (Kinging 2008, p. 107). For example, one of her participants ‘Bill’, a successful language learner who lived in a welcoming and supportive homestay,

“envisaged study abroad as a locus of growth through interpersonal relationships”; while another participant ‘Ailis’ was not as successful and fortunate. Kinginger (2008, p. 108) concluded that differences in individual language learning achievement abroad “are not necessarily attributable only to events or conditions characterising the experience itself. They may in fact be deeply rooted in life histories of the people involved and tightly connected to the aspirations that students have been enjoined to hold for themselves” i.e. whether they imagine themselves as L2 users, which resembles the notion of the Ideal L2 Self used in this study (for details see section 3.3.3.1).

Pellegrino (2005) followed 76 American adults during their sojourn in Russia, exploring those factors that could be said to complicate self-presentation of sojourners in their L2 (e.g. anxiety, age, gender, and self-esteem) and the strategies these sojourners employed to overcome such difficulties. Pellegrino (2005, p. 2) found that:

Learners often reject or reduce their interactions in the L2 in order to maintain and protect an ideal self-image. This avoidance of language use ultimately reduces their opportunities for learning and growth and can even inhibit the learner from continuing language study.

In an ethnographic case study Jackson (2008) followed four Hong Kong students during their five-week SA programme in England in order to interpret the relationship between identity, language, and culture from a sociocultural perspective. In her study, Jackson (2008) followed the participants from Hong Kong (their home environment) to England (the host environment) and back to Hong Kong (the home environment). She divided each participant’s journey into pre-sojourn, the sojourn, and post-sojourn to obtain a better understanding of the complex processes of language and cultural learning personal to each participant and to the construction of their identities over time. The study illustrates the degree of participation of the four students in social functions and

linguistic activities (i.e. their willingness and the effort they put into engagement in the host environment). Participants who viewed their hosts as receptive and supportive “developed a sense of belonging in a new community of practice” (Jackson 2008, p. 47 ). They perceived their sojourn as “fulfilling, and were therefore more open to personal and linguistic expansion and identity reconstruction” (Jackson 2008, p. 47 ). However, those who viewed their hosts as distant, unfriendly, or sometimes racist experienced “marginality or lack of mutuality in the host environment” (Jackson 2008, p. 47 ). They perceived a threat to their identities, and therefore their willingness to communicate in the host language reduced.

In another case study, Isabelli-García (2006) followed four American L2 learners in Argentina. She linked the low linguistic achievement of one of the female participants to a problematic relationship with native speakers (Argentines). The negative attitude of the participant towards the L2 culture combined with her low L2 motivation discouraged her from including many native speakers in her social network. Therefore, Isabelli-García’s study suggests that the L2 progress of the sojourner is likely to enhance their engagement in local social networks.

More recently, some studies have begun to employ a mixed methods approach; thus, Wright and Schartner (2013) investigated the social interaction and adaptation of twenty international postgraduate students on two programmes: TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and applied linguistics which extended for a whole academic year in a British university. They collected the data using ‘a self-reported diary’ (quantitative data) that participants filled in reporting their interaction over a week in different setting, together with semi-structured interviews (qualitative data) to illuminate the findings of the quantitative data. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently (in parallel) at two points: the first time was within the first

three months of the participants arrival in the UK, and the second time was at the end of their year (eight months later). The study found that the participants “remained frustrated by a perceived threshold barring successful interaction with English speakers”. The study also found that participants were “reluctant to take up available opportunities, independent of language proficiency and sociocultural adaptation” (Wright and Schartner 2013, p. 113 ).

A more recent mixed-method study, conducted by Kormos *et al.* (2014), investigated the change in a) ICC (direct and indirect), b) attitudes towards language learning (English), and c) the effort that international students put into L2 learning during a foundation programme in a British university, which lasted for nine months. The data was collected using a questionnaire that was distributed to 70 international students at three points during their academic year (quantitative data), and interviewing 10 students as well as two tutors at the end of the programme (qualitative data). The study found that the media contact and written contact of the participants increased, while their spoken contact declined towards the end of their academic year. The study also found that “contact experiences, socio-environmental factors, and learner internal variables” had an impact on each other, which in turn affected the language learning experiences of the participants (Kormos *et al.* 2014, p. 151 ).

It can be seen that the lion’s share of SA research takes the form of quantitative studies followed by qualitative studies, while mixed-method studies are scarce. Therefore, one of the possible contributions of this study is to add to the few mixed methods studies to date that have investigated sojourners’ SA experience at both the macro level (by looking at general trends) as well as at the micro (individual) level in order to probe the complex and multifarious nature of the SA experience.



### 3.1.1 Research on Saudi sojourners

Most of the studies that have involved Saudi sojourners have been conducted in the USA where the vast majority of Saudi sojourners have studied (Ministry Deputyship for Planning and Information 2012). According to Shaw (2009) the earliest studies that involved Saudi sojourners as participants are those by Jammaz (1972), who focused on Saudi student adjustment problems, and Rasheed (1972), who investigated the perceptions of a group of Saudi students regarding a set of goals and functions of their US universities. Later studies examined the Saudi sojourners' perception of various issues e.g. their level of satisfaction with the services provided by the Saudi Arabian Educational Mission (Al-Nassar 1982), their attitudes towards religion (Kershaw 1973), and the relationship between their US experiences and their changes in attitude towards Saudi cultural values (Al-Banyan 1980). Other studies have investigated the relationship between Saudi student attitudes towards fertility and family size, and their length of stay in the USA (Al-Said 1988), cross-cultural and intercultural communication difficulties (Basfar 1995), and a comparative study of moral judgements made by Saudi students and their American counterparts (Ismail 1977). In addition, a smaller number of studies have focused specifically on linguistic-related issues, for instance English pronunciation (Homiedan 1985), Arabic/English code switching (Al-Mansour 1998), and development of writing processes (Aljamhoor 1996).

Whilst the majority of this research dealt to some extent with adjustment issues, some studies have focused specifically on this topic. Mustafa (1985) surveyed 47 Saudi students, 22 faculty members, 24 administrators, and eight advisors from the Saudi Arabian Educational Mission in the USA in order to identify the academic problems encountered by Saudi students at Western Michigan University. The following year Al-Shedokhi (1986) surveyed 51 female Saudi students and 379 male Saudi students using

the Michigan International Student Problem Inventory (MISPI), again focusing on identifying problems faced by Saudi students in US higher education, but this time looking at both academic and non-academic issues. MISPI was also used by Al-Shehry (1989) to investigate the academic and financial problems of a sample of 354 Saudi graduates and by Shabeeb (1996) in a study involving 103 Saudi participants. In the latter study, Shabeeb explored the extent to which certain variables (e.g. gender, length of stay, and marital status) affected adjustment problems, concluding that the English language and studying caused most adjustment problems. At the turn of the century Al-Nusair (2000) conducted another quantitative study involving 171 Saudi students which examined their personal perceptions of the effort they had expended on their studies versus the gain in educational terms. Her findings showed that study participants felt less satisfied with their involvement in academic, conversational, and scholarly activities and believed they had made fewer educational gains in comparison to another national group (which is not defined).

Qualitative studies of Saudi sojourners in the USA are hard to find. Recently, however, Shaw (2009) conducted a study that consisted of interviews with 25 Saudi student sojourners in order to explore their attitudes towards the US learning environment, the differences between this and the Saudi learning environment, and the strategies they had developed to accomplish their academic goals. Shaw found that the Saudi participants were resilient enough to cope with the challenges that resulted from dissimilarities between the Saudi and the US educational environment. In addition, Saudi participants had succeeded in developing intercultural competence. Shaw (2009) concluded that resilience and intercultural competence helped the Saudi sojourners to bridge the gap between the US and Saudi environments and to develop strategies to accomplish their academic goals.

Studies involving Saudi sojourners outside the USA have appeared only recently. To date, three studies on Saudi sojourners in Australia have been published, all of them qualitative. Midgley (2009) looked at the adjustment experiences of two male Saudi students studying nursing at an Australian university. When asked to recount their experiences, he found that the two participants had different experiences based on their responses to the challenges of studying and living in Australia. For example, Latif (the first participant) had some contact with Australians while Rashad (the other participant) made no attempt to mix with the local people. In addition, Rashad struggled with opening hours of Australian shops as they close early in comparison to Saudi Arabia and the availability of Halal foods whereas Latif adapted to such differences. Later Midgley (2011) undertook another qualitative study that looked at the cross-cultural experiences of a male Saudi student regarding what he referred to as ‘the problem’ of his wife covering herself (i.e. wearing a veil (niqab)) in Australia. Using Bakhtin’s (1981) theoretical concept of ‘authoritative discourses’, Midgley (2011) argued that conflicting authoritative discourses in Saudi Arabia and Australia caused problems for the Saudi student and his wife. In Saudi Arabia the authoritative discourse regarding his wife’s form of dress was ‘don’t stare’, while in Australia it was the opposite. The third study was conducted by AlHazmi (2010) who interviewed two Saudi students, one male, one female, to discuss how the culture of gender segregation in Saudi Arabia had affected their engagement with Australian society. He found that the gender segregation culture had impacted on their involvement especially on their ability to relate to their peers in ‘a co-educational environment’.

Only two studies have featured UK Saudi sojourners as participants. Kubota *et al.* (2006) conducted a qualitative study that included five Saudi male studying TESOL in a British university in order to explore their experiences regarding the issues of

racialization and othering. They found that the Saudi sojourners experienced difficulties, particularly in terms of the cultural and academic practices of the new environment. A number of factors added to the complexity of their experiences including gender, culture, nationality, ethnicity, political events (e.g. 9/11), and Islamophobia. Another study that employed a mixed methods approach was conducted by Alqahtani and Archibald (2010) to explore the extent to which Saudi students at a British university were able to adapt to their programme of study as well as to certain cultural differences in their new environment. The students were from three different groups: (1) postgraduate students; (2) teachers of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), and (3) EAP students. The study concluded that all three groups experienced difficulties both with their programmes and with cultural differences e.g. teacher's classroom behaviour and unfamiliarity of Saudi students' with working independently

Overall, despite the fact that Saudi sojourners have featured in a number of studies for over four decades, there are no studies that focus on their L2 motivation. In addition, the majority of these studies have been conducted in the USA, which is not surprising as almost half of Saudi sojourners (49%) undertake their studies there (Ministry Deputyship for Planning and Information 2012). Therefore, one of the aims of this study is to make the voices of the Saudi sojourners in the UK heard, since to date they have been under-represented. Another issue which adds to the importance of this study is that it employs a mixed methods approach whereas the majority of the studies involving Saudi sojourners have used a quantitative methodology.

### **3.2 Intercultural Contact (ICC)**

Before exploring ICC, we will look firstly at the meanings of 'culture' which Ting-Toomey (1999, p.10) has defined as "a complex frame of reference that consists of

patterns of traditions, beliefs, values, norms, symbols, and meanings that are shared to varying degrees by interacting members of a community”. Culture therefore plays a crucial role in an individual’s development:

It provides individuals and groups of individuals with psychological structures that guide various aspects of their life. It steers them in their intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic development. It offers them a rationale for their behaviour, a prism through which to see it, and a measurement by which to evaluate it. It presents them with a basis for identity formation, thus helping them develop a sense of solidarity with other members of their community and the country. It shapes their aspirations and attitudes toward self and society. It equips them with a road map to explore the possibilities as well as the limits of their individual rights and responsibilities (Kumaravadivelu 2008, p. 10).

By means of human contact, culture is passed down, created and modified from generation to generation as well as across different societies (Ting-Toomey 1999). Turning to ICC, Csizér and Kormos (2008a, p. 166) define this concept as “contact between various ethnic and linguistic groups”, who are likely to differ in aspects of their culture. ICC has been investigated widely in various fields of applied linguistics, for example, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis and the social psychology of L2 acquisition (Csizér and Kormos 2008a). In addition, ICC was a component in a number of models in L2 motivation research. However, few studies have investigated the influence of ICC on intended learning effort and language learning attitudes (e.g. Csizér and Kormos 2008a, and Dörnyei and Csizér 2005).

ICC is a key issue in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) for a number of reasons. Firstly, one of the main goals of learning another language is to communicate with people from other cultures who cannot speak one’s own mother tongue (Szaszko 2007).

In addition, communicating with speakers of other languages may serve as an opportunity for enhancing L2 competence. Furthermore, L2 learner experiences of communicating with speakers of other languages “can influence both their disposition to the target language and their attitude to the process of the language learning itself” (Csizér and Kormos 2008a, p. 167). Finally, ICC is also assumed to promote L2 learners’ motivated behaviour, i.e., the energy and effort students put into L2 learning, making ICC “both a means and an end in L2 studies” (Dörnyei and Csizér 2005, p. 328).

Studying the influence of ICC on individual attitudes has a long history in social psychology research, one of the main outcomes of this research being the Contact Hypothesis (Allport 1954). This hypothesis states that contact changes the attitudes and behaviour of individuals and groups towards each other and may also influence any further contact. Allport asserted that mere contact does not guarantee positive changes as for that to take place four intergroup conditions should exist within the contact situation, these being: (1) equal status between groups; (2) common goals; (3) perception of common interests, and (4) institutional support for the contact. Allport’s work inspired numerous projects ranging from controlled laboratory studies to nationwide surveys (e.g. Hamberger and Hewstone 1997, Desforges *et al.* 1991, Cook 1978, and Amir 1969).

Pettigrew (1998) conducted a comprehensive review of the literature on Allport’s Contact Hypothesis and added a fifth condition to this author’s four conditions for optimal contact, namely ‘friendship potential’, or “opportunities for members of one group to share of themselves and empathise with others, thereby increasing the possibility for more intimate contact than is found in casual relationships” (Dörnyei *et al.* 2006, p. 18). Later, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006, p. 766) conducted a meta-analysis of

515 studies regarding intergroup contact and concluded that “Allport’s conditions are not essential for inter-group contact to achieve positive outcomes, rather they act as facilitating conditions that enhance the tendency for positive contact outcomes to emerge”.

The Contact Hypothesis research was originally conducted in the post-World War Two context when scholars were concerned about finding ways of ensuring that such a conflict between nations could never happen again. It can be argued that during that period it was much easier to consider nations as having easily identifiable and distinctive national cultures. Under the contemporary conditions of globalization, this is much more difficult, hence there is a need to reconceptualise ICC.

### **3.2.1 Problematizing ICC in the Globalisation Era**

According to Kumaravadivelu (2008, p. 32), a dominant driving force in the contemporary world “is shaping a new form of interconnections and flows among nations, economies and people”, and is also transforming the social, cultural, economic, and technological aspects of our everyday life. This dominant force is known as ‘globalisation’. Steger (2003, p. 13) defines globalisation as:

A multidimensional set of social processes that create, multiply, stretch, and intensify worldwide social interdependencies and exchanges while at the same time fostering in people a growing awareness of deepening connections between the local and the distant.

The United Nations report on Human Development (1999, p. 29) argues that globalisation is changing the international landscape in three main ways:

1. Space is shrinking: People’s lives –their jobs, incomes and health– are affected by events on the other side of the globe, often by events they do not know about.

2. Time is shrinking: Markets and technologies now change with unprecedented speed, with action at a distance in real time, impacting on the lives of people far away.
3. Borders are disappearing: National borders are breaking down, not only with regard to trade, capital and information but also for ideas, norms, cultures and values.

As a result “people’s lives around the globe are linked more deeply, more intensely, more immediately than ever before” (Human Development 1999, p. 30). Kumaravadivelu (2008, p.36) points to the fact that undoubtedly, “the most distinctive feature of the current phase of globalisation (i.e. the twenty-first century) is the global electronic communication force, the Internet”. This facilitates new types of contact at a distance “across traditional boundaries of cultures of place” Durant and Shepherd (2009, p. 160) by using email, blogs, and social media sites such as Facebook. Consequently, globalization appears to have created “new, hybrid forms of culture, language and political organisation: the results of global influences meeting local traditions, values and social contexts” (Graddol 1997, p. 33).

Views regarding globalisation are ambivalent as Ryan (2006, p.26) describes: On the one hand this phenomenon has been welcomed as “an opportunity to be embraced, allowing people to break free from the stifling restrictions of nationality and tradition”. On the other, it has been viewed as “a threat, removing the security of familiar local networks and imposing an unwanted external uniformity”.

In addition, the English language has been credited with playing a crucial role in globalisation and some scholars, such as Ryan (2006), and Pennycook (2003) believe that globalization would not have been possible without English. This integration of



English with the globalisation process makes learning English unlike learning other languages Phillipson (2001), for it is “turning into an increasingly international language, rapidly losing its national cultural base and becoming associated with a global culture” (Csizér and Dörnyei 2005, p. 30).

Taking the social aspect of language learning into account, the work of scholars such as Wenger *et al.* (2002), and Lave and Wenger (1991) highlights the value of communities of practice (hereafter CoP) to the process of language learning. In order to get a better understanding of the CoP from a sociocultural perspective, the following quotation has been used to provide a clear description of this notion:

A community of practice is an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in some common endeavour. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practices– emerge in the course of their joint activity around that endeavour. A community of practice is different as a social construct from the traditional notion of community, primarily because it is defined simultaneously by its membership and by the practice in which that membership engages. Indeed, it is the practices of the community and members’ differentiated participation in them that structures the community socially (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992, p. 464)

The CoP is valuable to the process of language learning because “learning is achieved through learners seeking access to and participating with others as members of communities” (Ryan 2006, p. 29). However, in most contexts where English is learned as a foreign language, direct access to the target community is out of reach (in its conventional sense). Therefore, L2 learners can view themselves as members of ‘imagined communities’, a concept defined by Kanno and Norton (2003, p. 1) as “groups of people not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect

through the power of the imagination”. Drawing on Wenger’s (1998, p. 176 ) definition of imagination as “a process of expanding oneself by transcending our time and space and creating new images of the world and ourselves”, it can be argued that by making use of their imagination language learners can become members of ‘an imagined language community’ in which they establish their own identity.

Since the Contact Hypothesis was originally proposed in the 1950s, the majority of ICC research has focused on face-to-face contact between members of opposing groups and on investigating the conditions under which intergroup hostility can be lessened and more positive intergroup attitude might be fostered. In other words, most of the data involved in such research concerned either contemporary presential contact or retrospective reports of past contact of this type (Turner *et al.* 2007). As a result of the electronic communication revolution, the internet has created a virtual world which allows people in most countries to contact each other easily. This virtual contact can be classed as a vivid example of ICC by means of an imagined language community.

Generally speaking, there is a consensus among scholars that there are two main types of contact: direct contact and indirect contact (see Kormos *et al.* 2014, Aubrey and Nowlan 2013, Csizér and Kormos 2008a, Turner *et al.* 2007, Dörnyei *et al.* 2006, and Clément *et al.* 1994). Csizér and Kormos (2008a, p. 167 ) explain that direct contact takes place “when students meet and talk with foreigners”, while indirect contact includes student consumption of “cultural products in the target language” including films, books, music, and inevitably the internet. In the indirect contact category these authors also include “when students hear about the target language speakers from significant others”.

This current study combines direct and indirect ICC into one construct on the grounds that in an EFL context like Saudi Arabia L2 speakers are out of reach, meaning that

direct contact is likely to be rare. Instead, indirect contact tends to dominate, with L2 learners obtaining “most of their foreign information from foreign media” (Aubrey and Nowlan 2013, p. 147 ).

### **3.3 Motivation**

Motivation theories aim to explain why individuals think and behave as they do (Guilloteaux and Dörnyei 2008). Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p. 4) added that researchers in this field would agree that motivation concerns “the direction and magnitude of human behaviour: the choice of a particular action, the persistence with it, and the effort expended on it”. Although at first sight this definition seems simple, it implies the complexity and difficulty of defining such concept due to the multidimensional nature of motivation and the infinite number of motives which can explain individual behaviour. As Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p.4) note “researchers are inevitably selective in their focus since it seems impossible to capture the whole picture”, and can be likened to the blind men in the Indian fable who encountered an elephant and each one was convinced that the part he touched (trunk, tusk, tail, etc.) was the whole elephant. This section begins by considering a number of contemporary definitions relating to the concept of motivation, before discussing this concept in relation to the chosen focus for this study.

Williams and Burden (1997, p. 120) define motivation as:

A state of cognitive and emotional arousal, which leads to a conscious decision to act, which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort in order to attain a previously set goal (or goals).

In this definition, the use of the concept ‘arousal’ indicates ‘an intellectual (cognitive) and affective (emotional) energy’ that will lead to conscious and deliberate actions by

the individual. In addition, the reference to ‘previously set goal(s)’ indicates that ‘motivation’ must relate to salient goal(s) that “may reside within the activity itself, or the activity may be undertaken because it is a means to other ends” (ibid.). In this case, for example, this may mean being involved in contact situations for the sake of practice of English and/or knowing about others’ cultures.

In addition, scholars like Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), and Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) view motivation as a process rather than a cause or an effect of learning. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p. 6) assert that the motivation to do something e.g. learning English “usually evolves gradually, through a complex mental process that involves initial planning and goal setting, intention formation, task generation, action implementation, action control and outcome evaluation”. This implies that the motivation process goes through different sub-phases, which are likely to be associated with different motives. Therefore, learning English as a foreign language can be considered as ‘sustained long-term’ activity that may last for years, with motivation going through infinite ‘ebbs and flows’ in response to ‘internal and external influences’ (ibid.).

Furthermore, social context has an impact on motivation. Since L2 learners can be considered to be ‘social beings’ their actions are embedded in multidimensional contexts which can be labelled ‘physical, cultural, and psychological’, all three of which are likely to have a considerable impact on their ‘cognition, behaviour, and achievement’ (Ushioda 2007). Thus, instead of viewing motivation as an entity that is located in the L2 learner mind, it should be understood as “dynamically constructed in discursive interaction between people situated in particular sociocultural contexts” (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011, p. 8). The influence of the social context will therefore help to explain how an L2 learner might come to have a specific type of motivation e.g. Ideal L2 Self or Ought to L2 Self.

To summarise, then, research suggests that three key aspects of motivation need to be considered:

1. It has cognitive (intellectual) and affective (emotional), dimensions.
2. It is both a process, and also something that has causes and effects (even if these are not easy to identify, and are often indirect); and
3. It is embedded in a social context rather than being isolated in the L2 learner's head.

It is essential to recognise these three key aspects of motivation when attempting to gain a clearer understanding of the behaviour of Saudi student sojourners, newly arrived in the UK to commence their first year of studies.

### **3.3.1 L2 motivation**

The relationship between motivation and L2 learning has been of concern to many researchers. Gardner and Lambert (1959) were the pioneers in investigating the relationship between L2 learning and motivation. In Canada, a bilingual society, which was characterised by “the often confrontational co-existence of the Anglophone and Francophone communities”, they integrated ‘individualistic’ and ‘social psychology’ in order to research the acquisition of English as a L2 (Dörnyei 2005, p. 67 ). They found that learner attitudes as well as their motivation were important in the acquisition process. Gardner and Lambert were convinced that learning a L2 is profoundly different from learning other school subjects, because a foreign language is not “a socioculturally neutral field but is affected by a range of sociocultural factors such as language attitudes, cultural stereotypes, and even geopolitical considerations” (ibid.).

Gardner and Lambert's social argument has been widely accepted by many researchers. For example, Williams (1994, p. 77 ) asserts:

The learning of a foreign language involves far more than simply learning skills, or a system of rules, or grammar; it involves an alteration in self-image, the adoption of new social and cultural behaviours and ways of being, and therefore has a significant impact on the social nature of the learner.

Gardner believes that L2 and learner attitude towards this language and its speakers (the L2 community) influence the learner's success in L2 acquisition. Gardner developed his socio-educational model in 1985, with integrative motivation as its main concept. The model suggests that integrative motivation, language aptitude and various other factors influence language achievement (Dörnyei 2005). Integrative motivation consists of three constituent elements: (1) integrativeness; (2) attitudes toward the learning situation, and (3) motivation. Gardner and Lambert (1972, p. 132 ) define integrativeness as “a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group” and this concept involves the notions of social identification and ethno-linguistic identity, as the L2 learner “must be willing to identify with members of another ethno-linguistic group and take on very subtle aspects of their behaviour” (Gardner and Lambert 1972, p. 135 ). However, scholars have begun to re-think the integrativeness concept given that in the contemporary globalizing world English as a lingua franca is widely accepted, and ownership of this language is no longer specific to certain target groups of speakers.

### **3.3.2 Dissatisfaction with the notion of ‘integrativeness’**

Dörnyei (1990) was sceptical about the application of the notion of integrativeness in EFL contexts where L2 learners rarely or never interact directly with L2 speakers. In addition, as English is increasingly used as a lingua franca, there is often no specific target community with which to integrate. Thus, after conducting a study in Japan, Yashima (2002) expanded the concept of integrativeness and coined a new term

‘international posture’. Yashima (2002)’s concept of international posture is based on the idea of an international and less geographically specific English-speaking community whose members are not just from English-speaking countries (such as the UK, USA, and Australia) but are found in all parts of the world where this language is spoken. Yashima (2009) argues that English language learners in today’s world wish to become a part of this ever-increasing and easily accessible international English-speaking community instead of integrating with the traditional English speaking community. She defines international posture as an “interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners and [...] openness or a non-ethnocentric attitude toward different cultures” (Yashima 2002, p. 57 ).

Other scholars, for example, Norton (2000) and Lamb (2004) have also re-thought the nature of integrativeness and L2 motivation. Both these authors focused on learner identity in a globalizing world, considering “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2009b, p. 4 ). Lamb (2004, p. 16 ), for example, suggests that the motivation to learn English experienced by a group of junior high school students in Indonesia is likely to be partly shaped by their pursuit of a ‘bicultural identity’ since such learners probably aim for “a vision of an English-speaking globally involved but nationally responsible future self”. Ryan (2009b) asserted that L2 learners may have a positive attitude towards the L2 community, but not the desire to identify with it or its culture. The findings of their longitudinal study conducted in Hungary between 1993-2004 e.g. Dörnyei *et al.* (2006), and Dörnyei and Csizér (2002), prompted Dörnyei and his colleagues to argue that “the process of identification theorised to underpin integrativeness might be better explained

as an internal process of identification within the person's self-concept, rather than identification with an external reference group" (Dörnyei and Csizér 2002, p. 453 ). This led Dörnyei (2005) to propose his L2 Motivational Self System.

### **3.3.3 L2 Motivational Self System**

Dörnyei's (2005) new approach for understanding L2 motivation integrated psychological theories of self with a number of influential theoretical L2 motivation constructs. Dörnyei (2005) based his framework on two key theories from mainstream psychology, namely, Possible Selves (Markus and Nurius 1986) and Self-Discrepancy (Higgins 1987). In reference to the first of these, Markus and Nurius (1986, p. 954 ) maintain that we each have three possible selves:

1. The ideal self that we would very much like to become.
2. The self that we could become.
3. The self that we are afraid of becoming.

The second of these theories, Self-Discrepancy Theory, asserts that individuals tend to try to reduce the discrepancy between:

1. Their 'actual selves' and their 'ideal selves', i.e. "hopes, wishes, or aspirations for the individual";
2. Their 'actual selves' and their 'ought selves', i.e. "the individual's duties, responsibilities, or obligations" (Higgins 1987, p. 319 ).

Csizér and Lukács (2010, p. 2 ) claim that "the conceptualisation of L2 motivation from a self-perspective does not contradict the traditional concept of L2 motivation but presents a broader frame of reference with increased capacity for explanatory power".

For instance, the traditional instrumentality notion, i.e. the pragmatic utility of learning



another language, for example, learning a L2 to get a better job or to increase one's salary was not neglected. On the contrary, Dörnyei (2005) operationalises this notion from a self-perspective following Higgins' (1987) promotion/prevention distinction. The promotion focus relates to "hopes, aspirations, advancements, growth and accomplishments (i.e. approaching a desired end-state)" while the prevention focus is about "regulating the absence or presence of negative outcomes, concerned with safety, responsibilities and obligations (i.e. avoidance of a feared end-state)" (Dörnyei 2009, p. 28 ).

Dörnyei's (2005) proposed L2 Motivational Self System consists of three dimensions:

1. **Ideal L2 Self:** Dörnyei (2005) declares that the Ideal L2 Self represents the image of the successful/competent L2 user that learners themselves want to be. Therefore, this works as a significant L2 motivator because learners desire to reduce the discrepancy between their actual and ideal selves. Later, Dörnyei (2009, p. 29 ) claims that "traditional integrative and internalised instrumental motives would typically belong to this component".
2. **Ought to L2 Self:** This relates to the attributes that the learner believes they must possess in order to avoid possible negative outcomes (e.g. not to fail an exam) as well as meet the expectations of significant others (e.g. parents). Therefore, Dörnyei (2005) views the Ought to L2 Self as representing more extrinsic (i.e. less internalised) types of instrumental motives. In terms of promotional/preventional instrumentality, Dörnyei (2009, p. 31 ) concludes that "figures prove that traditionally conceived 'instrumental motivation' can be divided into two distinct types, promotional and preventional, one relating to the Ideal L2 Self, the other to the Ought to L2 Self".

3. **L2 Learning Experience:** This is the final component of the L2 Motivational Self System and concerns “situation-specific motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience” (Dörnyei 2005, p. 106 ). Examples of the L2 learning experience include the impact of the L2 teacher, the curriculum, the experience of success and the peer group.

However, the L2 Motivational Self System is not without its critics. Ushioda (2009) criticised the tripartite construct of the self-system. She believes that such a construct “runs the risk of ending up with a rather static category system that does not take into account sufficiently the process-oriented nature of motivation or the dynamic interaction between motivation and the social environment” (Ushioda 2009, p. 354 ). Dörnyei (2009, p. 32 ) was sceptical concerning the role of Ought to L2 Self claiming that:

Because the source of the second component of the system, the Ought to L2 Self, is external to the learner (as it concerns the duties and obligations imposed by friends, parents and other authoritative figures), this future self-guide does not lend itself to obvious motivational practices.

Taylor (2010, p. 56 ) commented that Dörnyei’s claim contrasted with other literature that suggested that “socially-induced possible selves can enhance school persistence and academic achievement”.

On the other hand, the L2 Motivational Self System has been validated by research conducted in different educational cultural contexts e.g. Csizér and Kormos (2009) in Hungary; Ryan (2009b), and Yashima (2009) in Japan; Taguchi *et al.* (2009) in Japan, China and Iran; Lamb (2012) in Indonesia, and Islam *et al.* (2013) in Pakistan. These studies included thousands of participants from different sample types (e.g. secondary pupils, university students, and adult learners). Despite the fact that the Ought to L2 Self has not worked in a number of contexts e.g. Lamb (2012), and Csizér and Lukács

(2010), it can be claimed that these studies provided solid confirmation for the framework (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2009a). Macintyre *et al.* (2009a, p. 50 ) conclude that “the potential strength of the L2 self-formulation lies in its ability to map out new conceptual linkages by taking the self as the starting point”.

### **3.3.3.1 The Ideal L2 Self**

According to Dörnyei (2005) and Csizér and Lukács (2010), the Ideal L2 Self proved to be the most significant component for predicting the intended learning effort of L2 learners. Other studies reached the same conclusion, as they all found that the influence of the Ideal L2 Self on L2 learners’ intended learning effort was pivotal, whereas the role of Ought to Self was marginal. Thus, Csizér and Kormos (2009) investigated the role of the Ideal L2 Self, Ought to Self and L2 experiences, with three distinct groups of L2 learners (secondary school students, university students and adult L2 learners). Their study revealed the significant impact of the Ideal L2 Self and L2 learning experience on the students’ intended learning effort and the minimal role of the Ought to Self.

In addition, the Ideal L2 Self was found to be an important contributor in English learner motivation in a number of Asian contexts (including Japan, China, and Iran). This was also found to be closely related to other motivational variables. Yashima (2009) analysed questionnaire results from 191 high school students in Japan and consequently proposed a model in which the Ideal L2 Self is closely related to ‘International Posture’. In another Japan-based study, Ryan (2009b) surveyed 2,397 adult learners of English from nine educational institutions across Japan, using a 100 item six-point Likert scale questionnaire and concluded that ‘integrativeness’ is a part of the Ideal L2 Self. Finally, Taguchi *et al.* (2009) conducted a large-scale study in three Asian contexts that were culturally and educationally different, namely Japan, China

and Iran, surveying approximately 5,000 adult learners of English. Their findings demonstrated that the Ideal L2 Self is closely related to attitudes towards the L2 culture and community, as well as instrumentality-promotion.

In comparison to young learners, adult learners are likely to be more capable of creating a vision of their imagined Ideal L2 Self. Zentner and Renaud (2007) claim that stable Ideal Self representations do not emerge before adolescence. Consequently, the type of ‘Self’ that young learners have is likely to be the Ought to Self, which is projected by significant others. Based on these findings, Dörnyei (2009, p. 38 ) concluded that “the self-approach may not be appropriate for pre-secondary students”.

### **3.3.3.2 Ought to L2 Self**

The Ideal L2 Self has received most attention in previous studies as a strong motivator since this more intrinsic motivation comes from the learners’ desire to bridge the gap between their current self and desired self. However, studies like Kormos *et al.* (2011) and Taguchi *et al.* (2009) claim that the Ought to L2 Self is likely to play a more significant role in Asian contexts, where the family has a crucial impact on individuals. Similarly Dörnyei *et al.* (2006, p. 93 ) assert that “in Asian or Arab cultures, for example, where family expectations are powerful motives, we would expect this self-dimension (i.e., the Ought to L2 Self) to play a more central role”.

In addition, Dörnyei (2009) suggested that the Ideal L2 Self needs to be in harmony with the Ought to Self in order to achieve the maximum levels of motivation. Therefore, in a collectivist culture like that of Saudi Arabia, where fulfilling family expectations as well as conforming with social norms are among the top priorities of the L2 learner, the learner Ideal L2 Self should not clash with the learner Ought to L2 Self. Based on these

findings, it is thought that the Ought to L2 Self will also operate as a significant factor influencing the L2 motivation of the newly arrival Saudi students.

### 3.3.3.3 L2 Learning Experience

The third constituent of Dörnyei's model is the L2 Learning Experience, which has also been found to act as an important motivator, with some studies concluding that this component, just like the Ideal L2 Self, had a significant impact on learners' motivated behaviour (e.g. Islam *et al.* 2013, Lamb 2012, and Csizér and Kormos 2009). Dörnyei (2005) referred to this constituent as 'the causal dimension' of his proposed model, suggesting that the learning conditions experienced by the learner (including the L2 teacher, the peer group, the curriculum, and the experience of success) will influence their motivational orientation. Therefore, "potentially successful motivational routes for language learners, [can be] fuelled by the positive experiences of their learning reality" (Dörnyei 2005, p. 106). It is important to explain that the variable used in this study is 'Language Learning Attitudes', which belongs to the L2 Learning Experience.

### 3.3.4 Other motivational concepts relevant to this study

Based on previous studies e.g. Csizér and Kormos (2009), Ryan (2009b), Taguchi *et al.* (2009), Yashima (2009), Csizér and Kormos (2008a), Kormos and Csizér (2007), Szaszkó (2007), and Dörnyei *et al.* (2006) the questionnaire that will be used for surveying participants in this study will include two other variables considered relevant to participant motivation to learn English, namely, **milieu** and **intended learning effort**. A further motivational issue that may help to interpret data is **vision/visualisation**. These three concepts are explained below.

The term ‘milieu’ has been used in L2 motivation research to refer to the social impact of the immediate learning environment, the so-called ‘civil sphere’ (Dörnyei *et al.* 2006, p. 14 ). It is employed to refer to the perceived influence of significant others, e.g. parents, friends, and family. Dörnyei *et al.* (2006) also mentioned that although teachers may be thought of as significant others for L2 learners, they do not belong to this broader civil sphere as their role is education-specific. The impact of significant others on L2 learner motivation cannot be denied with previous studies referring to the views of significant others as “an important constituent of the motivational complex” (Dörnyei *et al.* 2006, p. 14 ). Studies on this topic include those by Gardner (1985), Deci and Ryan (1985), Noels *et al.* (2000), Dörnyei and Murphey (2003), and Macintyre *et al.* (2009b).

Intended learning effort has been included as a criterion measure in a number of L2 motivation studies (e.g. Csizér and Kormos 2009, Ryan 2009b, Taguchi *et al.* 2009, Yashima 2009, Csizér and Kormos 2008a, Kormos and Csizér 2007, Szaszko 2007, and Dörnyei *et al.* 2006). Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p. 200 ) highlighted the fact that in order to “draw more meaningful inferences about the impact of various motives it is more appropriate to use some sort of a behavioural measure as the criterion/dependent variable”. They added that “motivated learners will demonstrate more effort and persistence in their task behaviour” (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011, p. 201). Therefore, based on L2 motivation research literature, this study will use intended learning effort as the criterion measure.

L2 motivation researchers have only really begun to pay attention to the relationship between L2 motivation and visualisation since 2009, despite the fact that the motivational power of visualisation has been researched by sports psychologists for more than three decades (e.g. Gregg and Hall 2006, Hall *et al.* 1998, Gould *et al.* 1996,

and Paivio 1985). The first L2 motivation study which incorporated visualisation was conducted by Al-Shehri (2009) who was investigating the relationship between the L2 motivation of 200 Arab students and their ‘visual learning style preferences’ and ‘self-reported imaginative capacities’. The study found that the L2 learners’ visual learning style preference was positively correlated with imagination, Ideal L2 Self, and L2 motivated behaviour.

Further studies included more perceptual learning preferences including kinaesthetic and auditory learning styles. A study by Kim (2009) looked at a sample of 974 Korean primary school pupils, whilst Kim and Kim (2011) investigated 495 Korean secondary school students. Both studies confirmed Al-Shehri’s (2009) results and found a further positive association between auditory learning style and Ideal L2 Self, Imagination, and motivated behaviour. In a more recent study, which focused on 172 Hong Kong students aged 13-15 years old studying English and Mandarin, Dörnyei and Chan (2013) added Ought to L2 Self to this equation with the aim of comparing an ‘externally imposed vision’ (Ought to L2 Self) with ‘a self-generated vision’ (Ideal L2 Self) based on self-reported intended effort and course grades as criterion measures. In addition, they investigated the correlation between the two L2 future selves (Ideal L2 Self and Ought to L2 Self), visualisation and auditory style. They found that both L2 future selves were positively correlated with visual and auditory styles. They also found that Ideal L2 Self was associated with the two criterion measures while the Ought to L2 Self was only associated with intended effort. They concluded that whilst Ideal L2 Self and Ought to L2 Self involve vision (i.e. “the sensory experience of a future goal state”), the motivational capacity of Ought to L2 Self is limited (Dörnyei and Chan 2013, p. 454 ). To sum up, all the previously mentioned studies came to the conclusion that “if learners

have developed an image of themselves as an effective L2 user, this identity can become a powerful driving force in their L2 learning” (Chan 2013, p. 400 ).

### **3.4 ICC in L2 motivation studies**

Clément (1980) was the first researcher to explore contact as a constituent of motivation in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Clément and Kruidenier (1985), and Clément (1980) claimed that frequent (quantity) and pleasant (quality) contact experiences led to increased linguistic self-confidence in L2 learners, which, in turn, positively influenced their intended learning effort. Two decades later, Dörnyei and Csizér (2005) conducted a repeated (in 1993 and 1999) cross-sectional survey of 8,593 Hungarian school children (aged 13-14), in order to study the role played by ICC in shaping L2 learners’ attitudes and L2 motivation. They found that ICC influenced learner self-confidence in a positive way which in turn influenced their L2 motivation positively.

A number of researchers have investigated the influence of indirect ICC on L2 motivation (e.g. Csizér and Kormos 2008a, Dörnyei *et al.* 2006, and Clément *et al.* 1994). Dörnyei *et al.* (2006) conducted a longitudinal study (1993-2004) and developed a ‘L2 learning motivation model’ in which indirect ICC (what they referred to as Cultural Interest) features as one of the main variables predicting intended learning effort. Dörnyei *et al.* (2006, p. 34 ) defined cultural interest as “the appreciation of cultural products (films, TV programmes, magazines and pop music) associated with the L2”. Kormos and Csizér (2007) also investigated the influence of direct and indirect ICC on L2 learners’ attitudinal and motivational dispositions by conducting interviews with 40 Hungarian school children previously identified as motivated L2 learners. Their



study revealed that these students rarely had the opportunity to have direct ICC with L2 speakers so the majority of their ICC was indirect through L2 cultural artefacts. Nevertheless, this indirect form of ICC still helped to develop learners' L2 competence and contributed to an increase in their motivation and a decrease in their L2 use anxiety (Kormos and Csizér 2007). In the same domain, Csizér and Kormos (2008b) conducted a nationwide survey with 1,777 Hungarian L2 learners (English and German) aged 13-14-year-old in order to investigate differences in motivational and ICC measures, and determinants of the motivated behaviour between German learners and English learners. The study revealed that "students with high levels of motivational intensity engage in various types of ICC more frequently than students who invest less energy into language learning" (Csizér and Kormos 2008b, p. 43 ).

More recently, Aubrey and Nowlan (2013) conducted a mixed methods study to investigate the influence that direct contact between Japanese students and other international students had on the L2 motivation of the former group at two Japanese universities. The first was an international university, where almost half of the student population was made up of international students from 81 countries, and there was an international hall of residence where Japanese and international students lived together. The second university was non-international, with the vast majority of the student population being Japanese, with only 500 international students. Aubrey and Nowlan (2013) found that ICC had a significant impact on the Japanese student L2 motivation at the international university only, and suggested that engaging in ICC opportunities helped the Japanese participants to develop what Yashima (2002) calls 'international posture' i.e. an internationally oriented disposition (see section 3.3.2), which in turn may have helped them to put extra effort into their L2 learning. Aubrey and Nowlan

(2013, p. 147 ) concluded by asserting “the benefits of international universities for language learning and teaching in Japan”.

Research shows that the relationship between ICC and L2 motivation is not a simple one. Clément (1980) and Dörnyei and Csizér (2005) found that the impact of ICC is mediated by language learner self-confidence. In addition, the study by Kormos and Csizér (2007) revealed that ICC contributed to the increase in learner L2 motivation by improving L2 communicative competence. Furthermore, Csizér and Kormos (2008a) suggested that the influence of ICC was mediated by L2 learner language attitudes as well as their views about the perceived importance of ICC. Finally, Aubrey and Nowlan (2013) asserted that ICC had a significant impact on L2 learners’ motivation as a result of international posture.

From previous studies it can be concluded that ICC may play a role that influences learner motivation to learn a L2. While scholars look at this relationship from different perspectives, framing it in terms of self-confidence, L2 learner attitudes, and international posture, this present study draws on the Ideal L2 Self, which has been shown to be valid in various educational contexts (including Hungary, Japan, China, Iran, Indonesia, and Pakistan), and has helped to explain motivation and motivated behaviour better than previous models of L2 motivation (see section 3.3.3.1). The Ideal L2 Self is a constituent of the L2 Motivational Self System, which is now a well-established contemporary theory of L2 motivation originally proposed by (Dörnyei 2005) (see section 3.3.3).

### **3.5 Rationale for and significance of the study**

This study aims to investigate whether the experience of ICC, either direct or indirect, has an impact on how the L2 motivational behaviour of newly arrived undergraduate

Saudi students progresses during their first year of study in the UK. As the literature review has shown, in previous studies researchers have examined this relationship from various perspectives, for example, L2 learner attitudes, perceived importance of ICC, and L2 self-confidence. This study will draw on a contemporary model of L2 motivation, namely the L2 Motivational Self System, that has been demonstrated to have validity in various educational cultural contexts, including the Asian contexts of Japan, China, Iran, Indonesia, and Pakistan (Ryan 2009b, Taguchi *et al.* 2009, Lamb 2012, and Islam *et al.* 2013). These are thought to be comparable to the context for this study in terms of being collectivist societies where English is taught as a foreign language. In addition, the L2 Motivational Self System emerged as a result of dissatisfaction with the ‘integrativeness’ concept that dominated L2 motivation research for decades but was of limited usefulness in helping to account for learner L2 motivation in EFL contexts where contact with L2 speakers is minimal (such as Saudi Arabia), and in a contemporary world in which the ownership of English is no longer specific to certain target groups of speakers (Coetzee-Van Rooy 2006). This study will explore the relationship between ICC and reported motivation to learn English through the lens of the L2 Motivational Self System. By examining the relationships that may exist between ICC and the Ideal L2 Self, and the way in which these may in turn influence the motivated behaviour in a sample of EFL learners, this study will consider ICC from a new angle. Furthermore, it will follow four male Saudi students with different types of future L2 selves (high Ideal L2 Self and strong Ought to L2 Self) throughout their first year in the UK to monitor possible changes in their behaviour.

In theoretical terms, this study will contribute to L2 motivation and ICC research by applying and developing concepts from previous work by researchers such as Csizér and Kormos (2008a), Dörnyei *et al.* (2006), and Clément *et al.* (1994) to a different

population. As the Literature Review showed, previous ICC studies have used attitudes to the L2 community as the main mediating variable between ICC and L2 motivation. However, this study will investigate whether future L2 self-guides function as important mediators on the following basis: Saudi students with high levels of ICC in Saudi Arabia have had the opportunity to develop strong Ideal L2 Selves, which have served to motivate their study of English and perhaps their application for scholarships. On the other hand, students with little or no ICC may have other motives for studying English and coming to the UK, having been prompted by a sense of duty, or to please a significant other (e.g. members of their family). The L2 Motivational Self System predicts that a strong Ideal L2 Self will be closely associated with a strong L2 motivation while the Ought to L2 Self will be associated with weaker L2 motivation. All these assumptions will be tested in this study.

In addition, based on previous studies by Taguchi *et al.* (2009) and Dörnyei *et al.* (2006) this study assumes that the Ought to L2 Self may function as a strong motivator for Saudi students as they come from a collectivist Arab culture where the family has a strong impact on student's career and academic choices. This hypothesis will also be tested.

Furthermore, when the Saudi students are in the UK, they will have plenty of opportunities for ICC and this study will follow four Saudi students to explore the nature of their behaviours in terms of language learning, use of the language in social life, and patterns of interaction with non-Arabic speakers.

From a practical perspective, as previously mentioned, Study Abroad Programmes are available to all Saudi citizens who meet the conditions mentioned above (section 2.8). In other words, any student from any region of Saudi Arabia may legitimately apply for and be awarded a scholarship. It also follows that not all Saudi scholarship students will

have had the same level of ICC, since this does not form part of the criteria for obtaining a scholarship. Nevertheless, as previous studies have shown, ICC is a potentially important factor in L2 motivation and in L2 learning. Hypothetically, then, students who have had little or no ICC in Saudi Arabia, and do not have any desire for ICC in the UK, may have less motivation to learn English and fewer opportunities to practise this language, which in turn may negatively influence their levels of educational progress and achievement. Such a scenario would potentially represent a waste of Saudi government money. Therefore, the results of this study may suggest that a change in government policy would be advisable, encouraging the MOHE to provide an ICC course for Saudi scholarship holders before they travel abroad to study.

Scholars like Coleman (1997) and Jackson (2008) have highlighted the importance of providing adequate ICC preparation programmes for students travelling to study abroad. Jackson (2008), for example, arranged a seven-month programme to prepare 15 students from Hong Kong prior to their travelling to the UK to attend a five-week course. This ICC programme included discussion of topics like the host environment, the host culture, sojourners' personal traits and intercultural adjustment. During the course the participants wrote essays on various topics, attended L2 culture courses and EFL literacy seminars, and went to the theatre to see Shakespearean plays (to introduce students to an aspect of L2 culture). The Saudi study abroad programmes would be unlikely to provide such extensive preparation, but the study might usefully identify areas of life which a short preparatory course could focus on.

### **3.6 Summary**

This chapter has presented the theoretical background to ICC research and L2 motivation research. It started by shedding light on research on study abroad

programmes focusing more specifically on research regarding Saudi sojourners. Then it examined ICC research and problematised ICC as a concept in the contemporary globalised era. After that, research was presented on L2 motivation. The discussion of this topic started by defining motivation before looking at the history and development of L2 motivation research, starting from integrativeness Gardner and Lambert (1959) and proceeding to L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei 2005). The section has concluded with a number of motivational concepts that were relevant to this study e.g. milieu and vision. The following section of the chapter explored research conducted on the relationship between ICC and L2 motivation research. The final section outlined the rationale for and the significance of this study, highlighting the research gap it is intended to fill and articulating the aims of the study.

## 4 CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Research questions

1. What is the relationship between prior levels of ICC and reported motivation to learn English among pre-foundation Saudi sojourners newly arrived in the UK?
  - a) What is their prior level of ICC?
  - b) How is ICC related to the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System?
  - c) What is the relationship between the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System and reported learning effort?
2. How do participants with distinct motivational profiles on arrival (as measured by the questionnaire) recognise and respond to opportunities for ICC and for L2 learning over the course of their first year of study in the UK?

As the research questions show, this study aims to obtain a general impression of the whole cohort of new arrivals whilst also attempting to produce a detailed portrait of a small sample of individuals by following their progress throughout their first year in the UK. This gives the study a “combined inductive-deductive” type of reasoning (Cohen *et al.* 2007, p. 6). The first research question is intended to assess the level of ICC amongst new Saudi sojourners, determine the possible relationship between their prior ICC and the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System (Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, and language learning attitudes), and investigate the relationship between the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System and the reported learning effort. Therefore, this type of inquiry means that the first research question is based on a deductive type of reasoning, in that it tested the L2 Motivational Self System in a different context.

On the other hand, the second research question is intended to explore whether the reported motivational profiles (high Ideal L2 Self and strong Ought to L2 Self) on arrival help to explain the learning behaviour of a small sample of newly arrived sojourners (four male participants) during their first year, and lead to unanticipated outcomes. Thus, the second research question can be regarded as drawing on an inductive mode of inquiry, in that it attempts to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' ICC and L2 learning behaviour in a new environment throughout a whole academic year.

## **4.2 Research design**

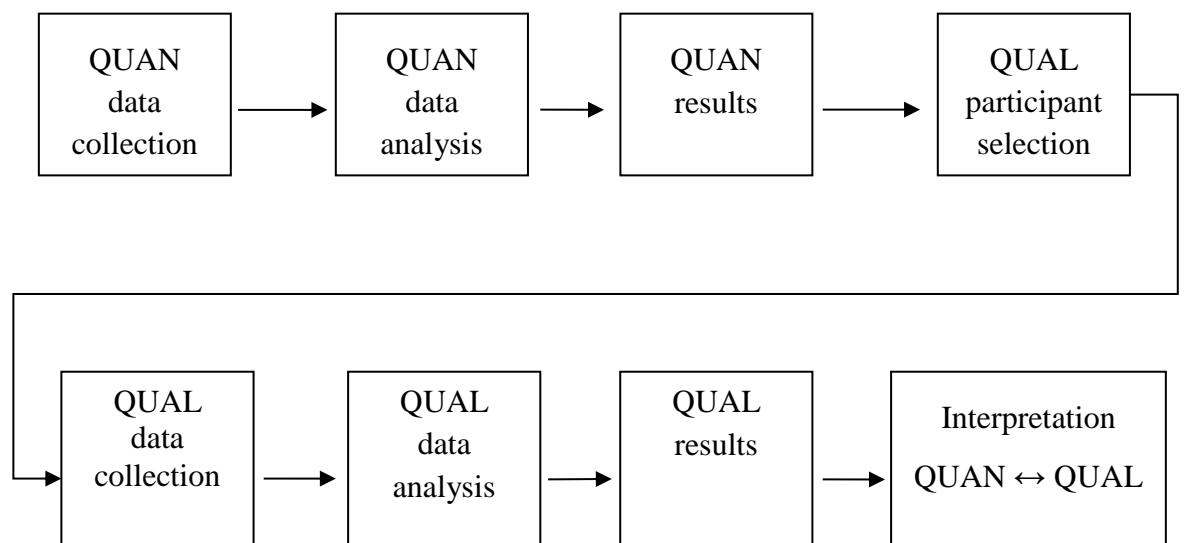
Three main issues were taken into consideration when designing this project, namely, the research paradigm, the research approach and the research strategy. This project adopted a pragmatic paradigm, combining features from two distinct paradigms, the positivist and the interpretive. In terms of the research approach, the study followed a mixed methods approach as reflected in its two distinct phases: a quantitative phase that used structured questionnaires followed by a qualitative phase in which semi-structured interviews (three rounds) were conducted. With regard to a research strategy, the study followed a sequential strategy in which both methods are given equal weighting (all these elements here are covered in further detail in sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2, and 4.2.3).

In this research design, quantitative data were nationally collected from across the UK and then analysed in order to answer the first research question (RQ1) and to select an appropriate sample of participants (four male sojourners) for the qualitative phase (consisting of three rounds of semi-structured interviews). Following each round of interviews, the data was analysed and based on these results, the interview questions for the next round were created. After the last round of interviews, the qualitative data from



all three rounds was analysed altogether and then integrated with the results of the quantitative phase in order to answer the second research question (RQ2). As previously mentioned, the rationale for this design was to attempt to obtain a general impression of the whole cohort of newly arrived Saudi sojourners whilst also attempting to produce a detailed portrait of a small sample of individuals by following their progress throughout their first year in the UK. Figure 4.1 below illustrates the design of the study.

**Figure 4.1: Design of the current study (Adapted from Creswell and Clark (2007: 73))**



KEY: UPPERCASE letters refer to the dominant method (QUAN = quantitative); (QUAL = qualitative)  
 LOWERCASE letters refer to the less dominant method (quan = quantitative); (qual = qualitative)  
 → refers to the sequential mixed method design  
 ↔ refers to the integration of both methods during interpretation

The following sections provide a justification for the choice of research design for this study and explain the relevant concept they embody.

#### **4.2.1 The research paradigm: pragmatic**

Two distinct paradigms, the positivist and the interpretivist, are generally prominent in the Social Sciences and educational research, reflecting the different ideologies behind the quantitative and qualitative methods respectively (Grix 2010). The positivist paradigm employs the methodological approaches typically used in the Natural

Sciences and involves objective analysis of phenomena and social realities in the forms of “laws or law-like generalizations” (Cohen *et al.* 2007, p. 10). One of the critiques of the positivist paradigm is that it takes a simplistic view of “complex human and social realities, [viewing] human behaviour as static, fixed and limited while denying the role and importance of intention, individualism and freedom” (Cohen *et al.* 2007, p.18). Interpretivists, on the contrary, believe that in the Social Sciences issues should be investigated subjectively as the experience of the participants can be shared with the researcher in detail. In other words, the researcher focuses on the context and participant opinions in an attempt to understand, interpret, and clarify social realities (Grix 2010, Cohen *et al.* 2007).

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003, p. 713 ) define pragmatism as

A deconstructive paradigm that debunks concepts such as ‘truth’ and ‘reality’ and focuses on ‘what works’ as the truth regarding the research questions under investigation. Pragmatism rejects the either/or choices associated with the paradigm wars, advocates for the use of mixed methods in research, and acknowledges that the values of the researcher play a large role in interpretation of results.

Pragmatism is a philosophical system that moves beyond the dichotomy of the positivist and the interpretivist paradigm and borrows features from both paradigms (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009, Cohen *et al.* 2007, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004). The pragmatist believes that “decisions regarding the use of either (or both) methods [i.e. quantitative/qualitative] depend on the current statement of the research questions and the on-going phase of the inductive-deductive research cycle” (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009, p. 87). Therefore, in pragmatic research the choice of method depends

on determining that which would best serve the research purpose in a given context (Creswell 2008, Dörnyei 2007).

#### **4.2.2 The research approach: mixed methods**

A mixed methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative approaches was adopted. Taking into account the complexity and multidimensionality of motivation (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011, Pintrich 2003) and the diversity of human experience, the mixed methods approach is likely to give a more comprehensive picture of the nature of L2 motivation of newly arrived Saudi sojourners and their experience of ICC thus enhancing the research validity to a greater degree than a single method approach would (Taylor 2010, Creswell 2008, Dörnyei 2007). A questionnaire was used to help investigate possible relationships between ICC and reported motivation to learn English among pre-foundation Saudi sojourners newly arrived in the UK. This was employed in order to measure student levels of ICC and to help identify students with high Ideal L2 Self, and strong Ought to L2 Self, upon their UK arrival. Then a qualitative approach was adopted in the selection of a small sample of students according to their profile in order to explore possible changes in their L2 learning behaviour.

Before justifying the decision to select the mixed methods approach for this study, the sections below will highlight briefly the main characteristics of quantitative and qualitative research methods, and of the mixed methods approach.

##### **4.2.2.1 Quantitative research methods**

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, p. 14 ) state that “quantitative purists believe that social observations should be treated as entities in much the same way that physical scientists treat physical phenomena”. Dörnyei (2007, pp. 32-34 ) lists the main characteristics of quantitative research, arguing that the most significant distinguishing

feature of quantitative research is that it is centred on numbers. He observes, however, that although numbers are powerful, in terms of mathematical discipline, they are weak in themselves without contextual backing in research: Dörnyei (2007, p. 32) “They [numbers] are faceless and meaningless unless we specify exactly the category that we use the specific number for, and also the different values within the variable”.

This means that *a priori* categorization must be carried out in advance of the actual study and work is required to specify the categories and values as definitions and value descriptors must not be ambiguous. This preparation phase takes time and effort but after administration of the instrument, the research process becomes much smoother and preliminary results can usually be obtained within a short space of time.

The second characteristic of this method is that quantitative researchers are interested in identifying the common features of groups of people rather than individual differences. This means that quantitative researchers focus their studies on variables which capture common features and are quantified by counting, scaling or by assigning values to categorical data.

Finally, as Dörnyei (2007, p. 34 ) explains, quantitative researchers are interested in the generalizability of data and the formulation of universal laws: “Numbers, variables, standardized procedures, statistics, and scientific reasoning are all part of the ultimate quantitative quest for facts that are generalizable beyond the particular and add up to wide-ranging, ideally universal, laws”.

On the one hand, the main strengths of quantitative research are that it is systematic, focused, rigorous, tightly controlled and involves precise measurement. In addition, in terms of findings, it produces reliable and replicable data, which might be generalizable to other contexts. Despite the often arduous preparation phase, the quantitative research

process is relatively quick in the analysis phase as data is usually analysed using statistical computer software.

On the other hand, quantitative research has some significant shortcomings. The fact that quantitative research deals with a vast number of participants and averages out their responses makes it impossible to do justice to the subjective variety of an individual life. Moreover, figures used in quantitative research are the result of different processes that focus on generalization and ignore reasons for particular observations or dynamics that may have influenced the situation under examination. Therefore, qualitative researchers view quantitative research as “overly simplistic, decontextualized, reductionist in terms of its generalizations, and failing to capture the meanings that actors attach to their lives and circumstances” (Brannen 2005, p. 7).

#### **4.2.2.2 Qualitative research methods**

According to Dörnyei (2007), in qualitative research the researcher may start the research process with a completely open mind, without even setting out to test preconceived hypotheses. This makes the study open and fluid, meaning it is flexible enough to respond to new openings, or details which emerge during the investigation process. Therefore, during the study research questions might change, evolve or be refined.

Another distinguishing characteristic of qualitative research is that it takes place in authentic settings in order to describe social phenomena as they occur spontaneously. Qualitative research also focuses on the insider perspective as it aims to explore the participant views of the studied situation or phenomenon. Last but not least, qualitative research is described as ‘interpretive’ because the research outcomes are the result of

the researcher's interpretation of data. In this respect, as Miles and A.Huberman (1994, p. 7 ) note, the researcher acts as "the main measurement device in the study".

One of the main strengths of qualitative research is that it can help to explore how and why social phenomena occur. In quantitative research, when the researcher encounters contradictory results, data do not offer much help in finding convincing explanations. Qualitative research, on the contrary, generates rich data that help the researcher to find possible explanations for such contradictory results as well as providing a better understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

Like the quantitative research approach, the qualitative approach has several weaknesses. As the sample size is relatively small, it is difficult to generalise the findings produced to other settings. In addition, as the researcher needs to obtain rich and thick data this makes both the data collection stage and the data analysis stage time consuming (Dörnyei 2007, Eisenhardt 1989). Finally, the researcher plays a crucial role in analysing the data meaning that, as Miles and A.Huberman (1994, p. 10) highlight, "the strengths of qualitative data rest very centrally on the competence with which their analysis is carried out".

#### **4.2.2.3 Mixed method**

Dörnyei (2007, p. 163 ) explains that in a mixed methods research approach both quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analysed within a single study and the researcher makes an attempt to integrate both approaches at one or more stages of the research process. In other words "If you visualize a continuum with qualitative research anchored at one pole and quantitative research anchored at the other, mixed methods research covers the large set of points in the middle area" (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004, p. 15).

Combining qualitative and quantitative methods in mixed methods research has several advantages, the first being that this enables the researcher to bring out the best of both approaches and eliminate the weaknesses, with the strengths of one method compensating for the weaknesses of the other. For example, qualitative features such as words, pictures and narrative can be used to add meaning to numbers (the heart of quantitative research) whilst “numbers can be used to add precision to words, pictures and narrative” (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004, p. 21). Furthermore, the mixed methods approach is particularly appropriate for multi-level analysis of complex issues as it allows the researcher to obtain data about the individual (micro level) and the broader societal context (macro level) at the same time Dörnyei (2007) and to obtain a fuller understanding of the target phenomenon (Sandelowski 2003). Moreover, stronger evidence for research outcomes can be provided through the convergence and corroboration of findings, verifying one set of findings against another to increase the validity and generalizability of the results.

However, mixed methods research is not without its shortcomings. Firstly, the researcher must be well trained in order to be qualified to manage both paradigms at the same time, and Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) and Dörnyei (2007) believe that the vast majority of researchers lack the methodological skills to handle both qualitative and quantitative data equally competently. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) argued that since it can be difficult for a single researcher to carry out both quantitative and qualitative research, mixed methods studies may require a research team. Last but not least, mixed methods research is more expensive and more time consuming than mono-method research, whether quantitative or qualitative.

#### 4.2.2.4 Combining questionnaires and semi-structured interviews

It can be seen from above that this study aims to investigate two distinct levels. At the macro level, it attempts to measure the intensity of ICC for a large sample of Saudi undergraduate sojourners newly arrived in the UK, to investigate the relationship between ICC and the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System (Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, and Language Learning Attitudes), and to investigate the relationship between the three constructs of the L2 motivational Self System and the motivated behaviour. At the micro level, it intends to explore whether the motivational profiles (high Ideal L2 Self and strong Ought to L2 Self) reported on arrival in the UK would help to explain the ICC behaviour of the four selected male participants during their first year of study. Such an aim could not be achieved by employing a mono-method research approach; therefore, a mixed methods approach was adopted meaning that two instruments from two distinct research approaches were used, namely, questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

Using questionnaires to investigate motivational constructs is a conventional method in the field of L2 motivation research, with many studies using Likert scales including (Kormos *et al.* 2011, Taguchi *et al.* 2009, Lamb 2004, Dörnyei and Csizér 2002, Deci *et al.* 2001, Clément *et al.* 1994, and Gardner 1985). Questionnaires enable the researcher to survey a large group of people and receive data within a short space of time, which is not possible in interviews. In addition, in terms of analysis, processing questionnaire data is much faster and more straightforward than analysing interviews, especially using computer software. Additionally, questionnaires can offer anonymity to the respondents, particularly in surveys that deal with sensitive issues. However, as Dörnyei (2007, p. 115) cautions, the questionnaire is not a suitable instrument “for probing deeply into an issue and it usually results in rather superficial data”.



As the study rationale established (see section 3.5), part of this research is exploratory, and for this reason semi-structured interviews were used to compensate for the fact that questionnaires are an inadequate instrument for probing for details and explanations.

Kvale (1996, p. 11) asserts that:

The use of the interview in research marks a move away from seeing human subjects as simply manipulable and data as somehow external to individuals, and towards regarding knowledge as generated between humans, often through conversations.

In interviews, participants are able to discuss their own interpretations of their world and their personal point of view on particular situations or phenomena. For this reasons, Cohen *et al.* (2007, p. 349) have claimed that “the interview is not simply concerned with collecting data about life: it is part of life itself, its human embeddedness is inescapable”.

To sum up, the decision was taken to combine questionnaires and semi-structured interviews in an attempt to produce the method that was best suited to answering the study’s research questions. Questionnaires were employed to investigate the intensity of ICC for a large sample of mixed male/female L2 learners (the cohort of Saudi undergraduate sojourners newly arrived in the UK), to determine the possible relationship between their prior ICC and the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System (Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, and language learning attitudes), and to investigate the relationship between the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System and the reported learning effort. This could not have been achieved by using a qualitative instrument such as interviews. Interviews were used in addition, though, as the best means of exploring possible developments in the ICC and L2 learning

behaviour of four male study participants during their first year, which could not have been achieved using questionnaires.

#### **4.2.3 The research strategy: sequential (QUAN → QUAL)**

In designing mixed methods projects it is important to consider which aspect will dominate in the study, quantitative or qualitative. In the mixed methods research literature, a system of uppercase and lowercase letters (explained in the Key to figure 4.1) is generally used to denote the dominant and less dominant method (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009, Creswell and Clark 2007, Dörnyei 2007, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004).

It is also important to decide on the timing for combining both the methods since projects can be conducted sequentially or simultaneously (the latter type of design can be referred to as simultaneous, parallel or concurrent). The mixed method literature normally uses an arrow symbol (→) to designate sequential mixed design and a plus sign (+) to indicate parallel mixed design (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009, Creswell and Clark 2007, Dörnyei 2007).

Taking the dominance and timing factors into account, the research strategy used in this study can be described as ‘sequential QUAN → QUAL’. The study is sequential since the two strands (quantitative and qualitative) occurred chronologically. The study began with a quantitative phase: questionnaire distribution among the Saudi sojourners newly arrived in the UK. Based on the results of this initial quantitative phase four male participants were selected to participate in the second qualitative phase. Each method was used to address a related research question (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009). In terms of dominance, the quantitative component (QUAN) and the qualitative component (QUAL) had an equal status. The study primarily aimed to investigate the intensity of

ICC for the new cohort of Saudi undergraduate sojourners prior to their UK arrival, to determine the possible relationship between prior ICC and the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System (Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, and Language Learning Attitudes), and to investigate the relationship between the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System and the motivated behaviour amongst the new arrivals. The qualitative phase was considered to be equal dominant since a reasonable sample of participants were interviewed in order to explore the extent to which they would recognise and respond to opportunities for ICC and for L2 learning over the course of their first year of study in the UK.

### **4.3 Sampling**

This section will discuss the various issues which must be considered when selecting a sample for a study of this type.

#### **4.3.1 The sampling design**

As previously mentioned, this study aimed to investigate a very specific population, namely:

- a) Saudi sojourners;
- b) At pre-foundation level in their studies;
- c) Based in the UK;
- d) Entering their first year of study in the UK HE system;
- e) Spending the full academic year in the UK HE system.

The whole of this population was initially targeted by a questionnaire, and then a small sample of participants were selected from the respondents for follow-up interviews, according to their profile based on specific criteria (i.e. high Ideal L2 Self and strong

Ought to L2 Self). Two key issues were taken into consideration before recruiting participants for this study; the sampling scheme and the sample size.

#### **4.3.1.1 The sampling scheme**

Collins *et al.* (2007, p. 271 ) define a sampling scheme as “the explicit strategies used to select units (e.g. people, groups, settings, and events) for the study”. There is a consensus among scholars e.g. Collins *et al.* (2007), Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007), and Patton (2001) that there are two main types of sampling. In the case of the first type, random sampling, “every member of the wider population has an equal chance of being included in the sample; inclusion or exclusion from the sample is a matter of chance and nothing else” (Cohen *et al.* 2007, p. 110 ). However, in the second type, non-random sampling: “some members of the wider population definitely will be excluded and others definitely included (i.e. every member of the wider population does not have an equal chance of being included in the sample)” (ibid.). Due to the nature of this study, a non-random (i.e. purposive) sampling scheme was selected. Furthermore, as the study followed a mixed methods approach, a homogeneous sampling scheme was utilised in the quantitative phase because the participants selected needed to have similar specific characteristics (pre-foundation Saudi sojourners about to start their first year of study in the UK), whilst in the qualitative phase a nested sampling scheme was employed given that “the qualitative sample is a sub-sample of the quantitative sample” Riazi and Candlin (2014, p 148 ) because a sample of those who participated in the quantitative phase were selected on the grounds that they matched specific criteria (high Ideal L2 Self, and strong Ought to L2 Self).

#### 4.3.1.2 The sample size

For a mixed methods study of this type, the sample size needs to meet the requirements for both the quantitative and the qualitative research design. The quantitative phase of the research was looking at possible relationships between prior ICC and reported motivation to learn English of newly arrived undergraduate Saudi sojourners, and can therefore be described as correlational. On the other hand, the qualitative phase was investigating possible changes in the ICC behaviour of a sample of participants over the course of a whole academic year. The research design for the qualitative phase, then, was a case study since the intention was to follow four individual EFL learners who represented different motivational profiles measured against specific criteria (e.g. high Ideal L2 Self and strong Ought to L2 Self) in order to explore how would they behave in an ‘uncontrolled’ context (Bloor and Wood 2006).

Cohen *et al.* (2007, p. 101) emphasise that there is “no clear-cut answer” regarding the correct size for a sample as that depends both on the nature of the study and the nature of the population which is being scrutinised. However, there is a consensus that in quantitative studies the larger the sample is, the better, since this enhances reliability and enables the use of more sophisticated statistics (Cohen *et al.* 2007, Collins *et al.* 2007, Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2007).

Another issue affecting sample size in quantitative studies is the number of variables and the type of statistical tests that will be administered. This study is correlational, including six variables beside the criterion measure, and Cohen *et al.* (2007, pp. 101-102) suggest that “correlational research requires a sample size of no fewer than 30 cases”, with 30 cases for each variable of the scale as a rule of thumb. Therefore, six variables with 30 cases for each imply a minimum sample size of 180 cases. Other experts such as Onwuegbuzie *et al.* (2004) suggest the minimum sample size for

correlational research design is 64 participants for one-tailed hypotheses and 82 participants for two-tailed hypotheses. It can be seen, then, that the number of participants in the quantitative phase, which was 257 ( $n = 257$ ), exceeded the minimum required number. This total (257) represented 9.2% of the whole cohort of pre-foundation Saudi sojourners newly arrived in the UK in 2012, which numbered 2780 (males = 1488; females = 1292) (Ministry Deputyship for Planning and Information 2012).

The other strand of this mixed methods study was qualitative and followed a case study strategy, attempting to explore how a small sample of selected participants would behave in a natural setting. Creswell (2002) asserts that the minimum number of participants for a case study research design should range between three and five. Four male participants were recruited for the qualitative phase ( $n = 4$ ), which was above the minimum required sample size. The participants represented the desired L2 motivational profile: two participants scored high on the Ideal L2 Self dimension and two participants represented strong Ought to L2 Self (see Table 4.1).

Efforts were made to recruit a mixed sample distributed evenly between males and females for both strands of the study (quantitative and qualitative). Unfortunately, for cultural reasons (see section 2.1.2) the female response rate for the questionnaire was poor (see section 5.1) and no females volunteered for the interviews.

**Table 4.1: Distribution of interviewees according to their Ideal L2 self, and Ought to L2 self**

<b>Pseudonym of Participants</b>	<b>Ideal L2 Self</b>	<b>Ought to L2 Self</b>
<b>Zizo</b>	High	Weak
<b>Badr</b>	High	Weak
<b>Mido</b>	Low	Strong
<b>Sufi</b>	Low	Strong

In conclusion, the number of participants recruited to both quantitative and qualitative strands of the study satisfied sample sizes as recommended by researchers in this field (including Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009, Cohen *et al.* 2007, Collins *et al.* 2007, Creswell and Clark 2007, and Filak and Sheldon 2003).

#### **4.3.2 The procedure for recruiting the sample**

Help was sought from more experienced Saudi students who were members of the 43 Saudi Students' Clubs based in various different cities and towns across the UK. Thanks to the help of the Saudi Students' Club officials, no difficulties were encountered in accessing newly arrived Saudi sojourners. One of the functions of the Saudi Students' Clubs is to help newly arrived Saudi students, therefore, these clubs are usually contacted by scholarship students, even before they arrive in the UK. Subsequently, the Saudi Students' Club network was the optimal way to access the participants needed for this study.

Officials from clubs in various parts of the UK were contacted and asked for help in gaining access to new undergraduate Saudi sojourners. Due to my professional links and the nature of the study, few problems were experienced in gaining access to Saudi students from different parts of the UK, with only two clubs failing to cooperate. However, as expected (given my insider knowledge of the conservative of Saudi culture (see section 2.1.2) the vast majority of those who responded (some 86%) were male students since most of the Saudi females for cultural reasons did not welcome being recruited to participate in studies especially those conducted by men. The number of returned questionnaires was 257 ( $n = 257$ ), which represented 9.2% of the total cohort of Saudi sojourners newly arrived to study in the UK in 2012, as previously noted.

For the purpose of the second phase of the study involving interviews, a section was included in the questionnaire asking students who wished to volunteer to be interviewed to add their email or contact number. As expected, given Saudi conservative cultural conventions (see section 2.1.2), it was even more difficult to find any females willing to participate in the qualitative stage. Therefore, the interview sample consisted of males only.

From those questionnaire participants who had volunteered to take place in the qualitative phase, participants were selected who represented the following motivational dispositions: high/low Ideal L2 Self, and strong/weak Ought to L2 Self. Then, from that initial sample, for practical reasons (including time and data management, risk and cost of travelling to distant areas of the UK) four male participants ( $n = 4$ ) were selected, all of whom were living in Leeds (my own area of residence) at the time of data collection. It is worth mentioning that the University of Leeds attracts large numbers of international students in general and Saudi students in particular (UK Council for International Student Affairs 2011).

#### **4.4 Data collection instruments**

The study was conducted in two phases using two different types of data collection instruments. For the initial quantitative phase an electronic version of the questionnaire was created using the Google document service. After obtaining permission from 41 of the 43 Saudi Students' Clubs around the UK, the questionnaire link was emailed to the Saudi Students' Club officials in October 2012, who were asked to distribute this link to newly arrived undergraduate Saudi students in their region.

In the second qualitative phase, four male participants who were newly arrived undergraduate Saudi students were selected from selecting a number of who represented



the following motivational dispositions: high/low Ideal L2 Self, and strong/weak Ought to L2 Self. These participants were interviewed a total of three times during the course of their first year of study in the UK: in November 2012, February 2013, and May 2013.

#### **4.4.1 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was the main tool used for collecting quantitative data. This was designed to measure prior ICC of Saudi sojourners newly arrived in the UK, to investigate possible relationships between prior ICC and the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System, and to investigate the possible relationship between the three constructs and the reported learning effort. Therefore, the questionnaire needed to ascertain:

1. Students' prior ICC.
2. Students' Ideal L2 Self.
3. Students' Ought to L2 Self.
4. Students' language learning attitudes.
5. Reported learning effort.

The questionnaire used in the study was piloted before distribution. Therefore, this section focuses firstly on the pilot study, the procedures followed for distribution, results obtained, and any lessons learnt and changes made as a consequence. The following section details the conduct of the questionnaire phase for the main study.

##### **4.4.1.1 The pilot study**

The questionnaire which was used is based on a five-point Likert scale with each response being allocated a score ranging from one to five. Thus, strongly disagree = 1 and strongly agree = 5. The questionnaire was adapted from examples used in previous

studies concerning the previous constructs (e.g. ICC, Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, and language learning attitudes) including Ryan (2009b), and Csizér and Kormos (2008b). Where necessary, the wording of questionnaire items was adjusted to suit the target population of the study. Various models and instruments used to investigate the ICC/L2 motivation relationship were reviewed as well as numerous examples of motivation questionnaires (e.g. Csizér and Kormos 2009, Ryan 2009b, Taguchi *et al.* 2009, Yashima 2009, Csizér and Kormos 2008b, Kormos and Csizér 2007, Szaszko 2007, and Dörnyei *et al.* 2006). Finally it was decided to include eight motivational variables in the questionnaire. Taking into consideration that newly arrived students might have low levels of English proficiency, the questionnaire was conducted in Arabic.

After constructing the questionnaire, various friends and colleagues in the School of Education at the University of Leeds, particularly those with research interests in L2 motivation, were asked to give their opinion about the questionnaire's wording, comprehensibility and suitability of the questionnaire items. Following their feedback and discussion, any necessary changes were made. Attention was also given to producing a user-friendly questionnaire that could be relatively quickly and easily completed by participants. (The final pilot version took approximately 25 minutes to complete.) In addition, following Ryan (2008, p. 151), special attention was paid to ensure that:

1. The content was not harmful or excessively instructive.
2. Clear instructions were given regarding the administration of the questionnaire.
3. The anonymity of participants was assured.

The first draft of the questionnaire, which consisted of 52 items, was then translated from English into Arabic (the mother tongue of the target participants). Both the

English and Arabic versions were sent to several close acquaintances who are Saudi PhD students specializing in English-Arabic translation and they checked the translation and suggested rewording of some items. Finally, the Google Documents' website was used to create an on-line version of the questionnaire which was piloted in January 2012 with the help of some 56 respondents (males = 49; females = 7) who like the target participants (18-21 -year-old) were in their first year of study in the UK. These respondents came from four cities: Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield, and York.

This pilot study was also used to check whether electronic distribution and collection of the questionnaire was feasible, thanks to the collaboration of the officials in four Saudi Students' Clubs officials who send out the electronic link to the questionnaire to newly arrived Saudi students in their region.

The pilot study raised several issues. A number of items were added, rewritten, or removed. Most importantly, the internal consistency coefficient test revealed problems in the reliability of two of the scales, namely fear of assimilation and direct ICC (see Table 4.2). This resulted in the removal of the fear of assimilation construct. In addition in an attempt to create a reliable scale for the prior ICC of the participants, the direct ICC scale was combined with the indirect ICC scale, which had attained a highly reliable value (see section 4.6.1). This follows the views of Aubrey and Nowlan (2013, p. 147 ) who advise that combining "both direct and indirect interactions" into one ICC variable is likely to enhance its reliability. On the positive side, administering the questionnaires electronically had proved both efficient and effective and the level of participant cooperation was encouraging, despite assertions by experts such as Bryman (2012), and Cohen *et al.* (2007) that the researcher presence increases response rate. However, although the process of electronic distribution via four Saudi Students' Clubs

was successful, it emphasised the necessity of ensuring the cooperation of Club officials in order to guarantee a good return rate.

**Table 4.2: Reliability coefficient for the pilot study scales**

Scales	No. of Items	Inter-Item Correlation	Whole Scale
Intended learning effort	5	.30	.68
Direct ICC	3	.24	.48
Indirect ICC	6	.40	.85
Milieu	8	.33	.80
Fear of assimilation	4	.21	.54
Perceived importance of ICC	6	.38	.78
Ideal L2 Self	10	.39	.86
Ought to L2 Self	6	.43	.82
Language Learning Attitudes	4	.56	.83

#### 4.4.1.2 The main study

The final version of the questionnaire consisted of seven scales and a total of 47 items.

Table 4.3 explains the purpose of each variable and gives an example item:

**Table 4.3: Questionnaire variables**

No.	VARIABLE	PURPOSE	EXAMPLE ITEM
1.	Previous ICC (pre-UK study)	This variable concerns any previous ICC and/or type of ICC that the newly arrived Saudi student may have had with L2 speakers or people from other cultures who do not speak Arabic either in Saudi Arabia or abroad.	<i>How often have you used English to communicate with non-Arabic speakers in Saudi Arabia (e.g. in hospitals)?</i>
2.	Milieu	This variable focuses on the attitudes of friends and people who had been around the student towards learning EFL and/or ICC.	<i>Most people who were around me in Saudi Arabia encouraged me to make contact with people from other countries.</i>
3.	Perceived importance of ICC	This variable aimed to investigate why the students found it important to be involved in situations of ICC	<i>More contact with others using English will make me want to learn English.</i>

4.	Ideal L2 Self	This variable aimed to investigate to what extent Saudi students had a vivid image of themselves as L2 users in the future.	<i>I could imagine myself living abroad and using English effectively for communicating with the locals.</i>
5.	Ought to L2 Self	This variable aimed to investigate the role played by a significant other (e.g. parent, friend) in motivating Saudi learners to learn English.	<i>I believed that learning English was necessary to me because people surrounding me expected me to do so.</i>
6.	Language Learning Attitudes	This variable aimed to investigate whether learners enjoyed the experience of learning EFL	<i>I was always looking forward to my English classes.</i>
7.	Intended Learning Effort	This scale was used as the criterion measure to determine the effort that the learners thought they had put into learning English	<i>I was working hard at learning English.</i>

The final version of the questionnaire was distributed for feedback as previously from friends and colleagues in the School of Education, University of Leeds and any necessary changes made. The same process as previously was also followed to check that the questionnaire had been accurately translated from English to Arabic and any errors were corrected in keeping with their suggestions. Once again, the Google Documents' website was used to create an online version of the questionnaire.

When the final version of the questionnaire was ready, collaboration was sought from officials and members of the 43 Saudi Students' Clubs around the UK, using contact details from the official Club web site (Saudi Students Clubs and Schools in the UK 2012). Some 41 in total agreed to collaborate. Using these contacts, the questionnaire was distributed electronically to all newly arrived undergraduate Saudi students across the UK in October 2012 i.e. during the first month of their stay. The questionnaire also included a section asking anyone who would like to volunteer to participate in the qualitative stage of the study (i.e. interviews) to add their email.

#### **4.4.2 Interviews**

The second, qualitative phase of the study used interviews as the main data collection tool. Based on the results of the initial quantitative phase questionnaire, four male students were selected in accordance to their Ideal L2 Self and Ought to L2 Self profile in order to explore whether their different motivational dispositions would have an effect on their ICC behaviour.

Semi-structured interviews were used in order to allow participants to “respond to a certain set of questions” and also to have “the freedom to talk about what is of interest or importance to them” (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2010, p. 102 ). As with the questionnaire, initial interview questions were discussed with friends and colleagues from the School of Education, University of Leeds, to obtain feedback regarding wording, comprehensibility and suitability. Then the finalised interview guide questions were translated from English to Arabic (the mother tongue of the target participants) and both versions were sent to the same PhD Saudi students with expertise in English-Arabic translation who had previously assisted with checking the questionnaire translation. This resulted in some items being reworded. The same process was repeated for each round of interviews.

##### **4.4.2.1 Criteria for interviewee selection**

For the purposes of the study, two main variables were considered when selecting interviewees for the qualitative phase of the study: high Ideal L2 Self, and strong Ought to L2 Self. The chosen interviewees needed to represent different dispositions with regard to these variables in order to explore whether:

- Students with High Ideal L2 Self were likely to take up opportunities for L2 learning through more ICC with locals (in the UK).

- Students with strong Ought to L2 Self would tend to avoid such ICC (in the UK).
- Or, whether there might be a further option, which would be more complicated than either of the above two suggestions?

Therefore, the following selection was made:

- Two interviewees with high Ideal L2 Self and weak Ought to L2 Self.
- Two interviewees with low Ideal L2 Self and strong Ought to L2 Self.

In order to divide the participants into one of three groups (i.e. high, neutral, and low) for each one of the two variables (Ideal L2 Self and Ought to L2 Self), the median of the respondent answers for each scale was used. Given that a five-point Likert scale with scores ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree, the length of category was calculated using this level according to the following law:

$$\text{Degrees of freedom/Levels of answer} = \text{Length of category.}$$

Therefore the length of category is calculated as follows:

$$[(5-1)/ 5] = (0.8)$$

Thus, the median of the respondent answers was used as follows:

- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Less than 1.8 | Strongly Disagree |
| 2. 1.8 - 2.6     | Disagree          |
| 3. 2.6 - 3.4     | Neutral           |
| 4. 3.4 - 4.2     | Agree             |
| 5. 4.2 - 5.0     | Strongly agree    |

In other words, any participants who gained a median greater than 3.4 in one of the two determined variables (Ideal L2 Self and Ought to L2 Self) was identified as having a

high disposition of the specified variable. On the other hand, any participant scoring below 2.6 was identified as having a low disposition. The three main dispositions are presented in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: The median of respondent answers to the three main dispositions**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>High</b>
Ideal L2 Self	1.0 - 2.6	2.6 - 3.4	3.4 - 5.0
Ought to L2 self	1.0 - 2.6	2.6 - 3.4	3.4 - 5.0

Having identified those participants with the desired dispositions, four male participants were finally selected based on two further criteria:

- Feasibility (i.e. data and time management).
- Accessibility (i.e. those who lived in Leeds).

Table 4.1 shows the profile of the interviewees according to their Ideal L2 Self and Ought to L2 Self.

Each of the participants was interviewed three times during his first year in the UK in order to see whether there were differences in terms of their engagement in ICC and in their willingness to exploit active language learning opportunities. The results of the analysis of each interview provided the starting point for the next, since this served to identify issues which needed to be raised in the next interview.

At the beginning of the first interview, the purpose of the study was explained and interviewees were reminded that their participation was voluntary. Each participant signed a written consent form that assured data confidentiality and participant anonymity and explained that any information given would be used for research purposes only. Just before the beginning of each interview, the participant's permission to record the interview was sought. The interview venue was a place that the



participants were familiar with such as their university campus or a public café. Given the participants' relatively low English competence, interviews were conducted in Arabic. The participants' time and commitment were a priority for the researcher; therefore, the interviews followed a friendly chat format and lasted approximately 30 minutes (the longest interview lasted 36 minutes and the shortest 27 minutes). Finally, interviews were transcribed in order to be analysed using the NVivo 10 software.

The first round of interviews was conducted in November 2012 immediately after the results of the questionnaires were available and interviewees had been selected. The initial interview was used to gain an insight into the participant's background (educational, social, economic, etc.) and to obtain a general impression about their opinions and their perceptions of:

- How much ICC they had had experienced
- What type of ICC they had had experienced
- How they were planning to learn English
- What they thought about opportunities for ICC
- Whether they would like to get involved in ICC, if this was available.

The second round of interviews was conducted three months later (February 2013) in order to gain an impression of developments in their L2 learning behaviour e.g. whether they had been involved in ICC with non-Arabic speakers; whether they had succeeded in establishing any significant relationships and if so, how would they categorise these (e.g. acquaintances or friends). The third and final round of interviews was conducted three months later (May 2013). This round was used to get a more detailed insight into the development of each interviewee's L2 learning behaviour and ICC experiences.

A further point which needs to be mentioned here is the timing of the interviews, with a three-month interval between each interview round. This was designed to give the participants a chance to have a proper experience that they could speak about. Finally, conducting three rounds of interviews at three-monthly intervals was a strategic decision taken so that a detailed and more nuanced impression of the individuals could be created from three snapshots of the ICC the participants might have experienced at three important points during their first year in the UK. November was their first month in the UK, by February they had already spent four months studying there, and by May most of them had been accepted by a University for their foundation year and were preparing to return home to spend the summer holidays with their families, so it was the last chance to meet them before they left for Saudi Arabia. Table 4.5 provides an overview of the field work phases and the data generated:

**Table 4.5: Field work summary**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>RESEARCH TECHNIQUE</b>	<b>DATA GENERATED</b>
October 2012	Questionnaire	Questionnaires distributed by electronic link to 2780 newly arrived Saudi students: 257 questionnaires returned
November 2012	Interviews (round 1)	Audio recording (average duration = 30 minutes) of individual conversation with each participant (n= 4)
February 2013	Interviews (round 2)	Audio recording (average duration = 30 minutes) of individual conversation with each participant (n= 4)
May 2013	Interviews (round 3)	Audio recording (average duration = 30 minutes) of individual conversation with each participant (n= 4)

#### **4.5 Procedure for data analysis**

Since this study followed a mixed methods approach, each approach was analysed using an appropriate method.

#### 4.5.1 Quantitative data

The main software used to analyse the quantitative data was Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistics 21). As soon as the quantitative data was received, any negatively worded items were reversed and a mean was created for each scale. Following this, several statistical tests were administered. Firstly, in order to check the reliability of the scales, the internal consistency coefficient was calculated. This tests “the degree to which the items that make up the scale were all measuring the same underlying attribute (i.e. the extent to which the items ‘hang together’)” (Pallant 2010, p. 6). Cronbach’s coefficient alpha, which is “the most commonly used statistic” (ibid.), was then applied to the data. According to the results of the reliability coefficient test, the scales attained internal consistency (see section 5.2).

The descriptive statistics in the data were then produced. This procedure is recommended in order to “describe the characteristics of the sample” as well as to “check the variables for any violation of the assumptions underlying the statistical techniques that will be used to address the research questions” (Pallant 2010, p. 53). In this instance, the descriptive statistics which were used included: mean, median, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis. The skewness and kurtosis were used to assure that the quantitative data was normally distributed, which the results of these tests confirmed (see section 5.1).

Since this study was interested in identifying possible relationships between ICC and the reported motivation to learn English for a group of pre-foundation Saudi students during their first year in the UK. Two statistical techniques were applied to the data. The first technique, known as the Pearson correlation was administered to “explore the strength of the relationship” between the variables of the scale (Pallant 2010, p. 103). The second technique, referred to as multiple regressions, is “a more sophisticated

extension of correlation” that is used “to explore the predictive ability of a set of independent variables on one continuous dependent measure” (Pallant 2010, p. 104). These measures included intended effort and the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System. The regression analysis using intended effort as the criterion measure revealed which of the variables contributed significantly to the effort that the learners reported that they put into learning EFL. Using the Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, and language learning attitudes respectively as the dependent variable was intended to help identify which of the variables contributed to these variables. The results of these calculations are reported in the next chapter (see sections 5.3 and 5.4).

#### **4.5.2 Qualitative data**

Since, in certain respects as a fellow Saudi who was also a student, the researcher was similar to the interviewees, they tended to view him as an ‘older brother’. At the same time, they also looked up to him since he was more experienced in terms of his age and length of time spent in the UK, and was also a PhD student who had therefore succeeded in his prior studies. Saudi cultural norms thus meant that participants felt in a position to seek help from the researcher, both in academic and non-academic terms. For non-academic help, the participants sought advice in finding Middle Eastern restaurants and shops, and booking football pitches. For academic help, the participants sought help in searching for relevant articles either online or at the university library, and in some cases to speak to the language centre administration.

In order to limit the influence of my relationship with the participants beyond the research on my research, I did the following. Before carrying out the interviews, the interviewees read and signed a consent form in which I emphasised that I was not

assessing their performance but rather was interested in their actual behaviour. During the interviews, I made a conscious effort not to give evaluative responses to their comments about the issues under investigation e.g. their ICC with non-Arabic speakers. Through doing so I hoped that the effect of ‘the older brother relationship’ would be minimal.

While analysing the data, I was also aware of the ‘social desirability bias’ which means that study participants sometimes “behave the way they think they are expected to” (Taylor 2010, p. 140); (Dörnyei 2007). In addition, it was useful to bear in mind Mann’s (2011) assertion that every participant’s account should be regarded as ‘a world view’ that was co-constructed in a unique discursive setting to which the participant brought their own agenda, a useful concept when interpreting interview data.

The qualitative data generated from the three rounds of interviews was subjected to ‘thematic analysis’, which is “a data reduction and analysis strategy by which qualitative data are segmented, categorised, summarised, and reconstructed in a way that captures the important concepts within the data set” (Ayres 2008, p. 867). The process of the thematic analysis followed the six phases suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87): 1) “familiarizing yourself with your data”; 2) “generating initial codes”; 3) “searching for themes”; 4) “reviewing themes”; 5) “defining and naming themes”; 6) “producing a report”.

In the first phase of familiarising myself with the data, I transcribed the recording as recommended by Dörnyei (2007, p. 246) “the first step in data analysis is to transfer the recording into a textual form”. The transcripts included indications of intonations, stress and emotional visualisation (e.g. laughter) which it was thought would be useful for interpreting the experiences of the participants, as “almost anything can be perceived as potential data” Dörnyei (2007, p. 160). After reading the transcripts several times, these

were fed into NVivo 10 (a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software programme) for coding.

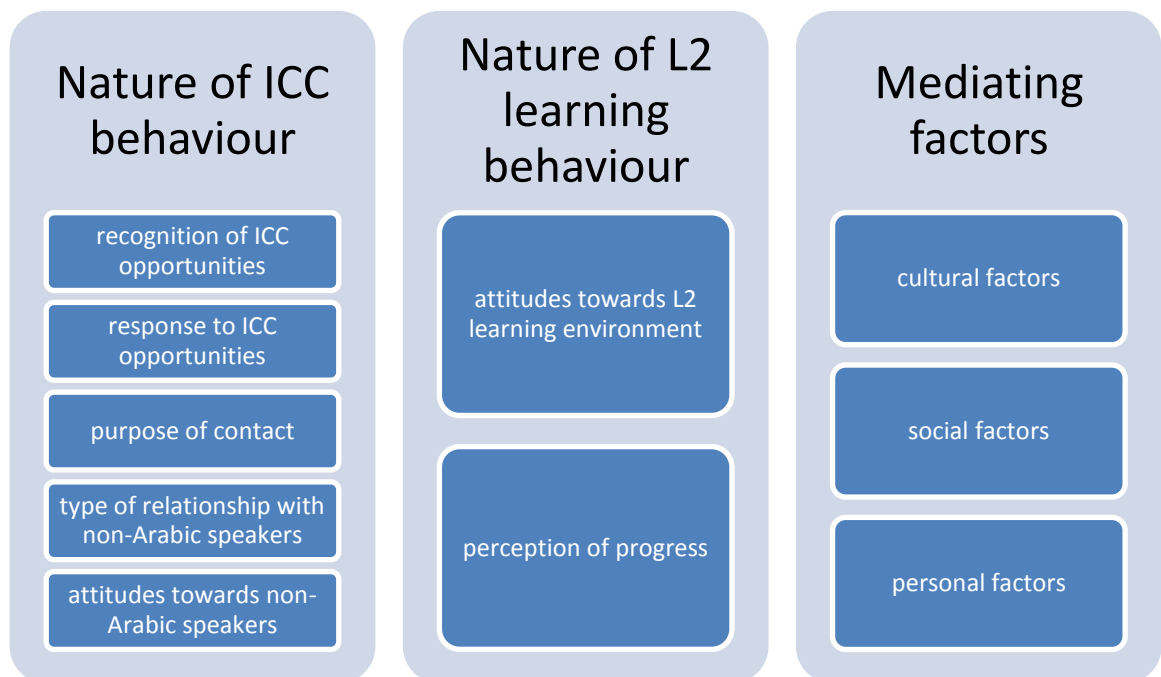
The second phase involved 'generating initial codes'. The process of coding entailed "reducing the data into meaningful segments and assigning names for the segments" (Creswell 2007, p. 148). With the research questions in mind, the account of each participant was again perused, in search of paragraphs, sentences, or phrases that were relevant to the three main themes: 1) nature of the ICC behaviour; 2) nature of the L2 learning behaviour; 3) mediating factors that impact on their experiences. Some of the codes attached to the participants' accounts were based on relevant topics from the L2 motivation research literature and social psychological research on ICC. Other codes emerged inductively from the data based on phrases or meaning units used in "text segments". For example, codes including 'social support', 'culture shock', and 'stereotypes' were based on relevant literature, whilst codes including 'forbidden activity', and 'dancing with the opposite gender' were based on meanings expressed by the participants.

The third phase 'searching for themes', "involved sorting the different codes into potential themes, and collating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes" (Braun and Clarke 2006, p. 89). In this context, a theme is understood to be "a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organises the possible observations, and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon" (Boyatzis 1998, p. 161 ). Codes with common characteristics were grouped under one broader theme. For example, drinking alcohol was a code that was allocated to a larger theme (forbidden activities) along with other activities such as dancing with the opposite gender that were articulated by the participants as forbidden activities under Islamic observance. These forbidden activities were in turn allocated to a larger theme (religion)

as religion was the basis on which these activities were forbidden. Then religion was allocated to a larger theme (cultural factors) as religion can be considered to be part of the culture, which in turn was associated with the main theme (mediating factors) that impacted on the participants' experiences (see the example in appendix D).

The coding process generated five themes that described the nature of the participants' ICC behaviour, two themes that described the nature of the participants' L2 learning behaviour, and three themes that summarised the mediating factors that impacted on their experiences. Figure 4.2 represents the themes generated:

**Figure 4.2: Themes of the study**



In the fourth phase, themes were reviewed to check whether these “work in relation to the coded extracts” (Braun and Clarke 2006, p. 87). Then the fifth phases entailed ‘defining and naming’ the themes in “an ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme” (Braun and Clarke 2006, p. 87). After that, the codes were revised once again, in an attempt to discover any overlapping or redundant codes or codes that did

not fit within a theme. The codes were then re-sorted into relevant themes. The last stage of this phase was identifying "the essence of what each theme is about (as well as the themes overall), and determining what aspect of the data each theme captures" (Braun and Clarke 2006, p. 92).

The final phase was to 'produce the report'. A cross-case report (see section 6.2) was firstly produced, based on the three main themes (nature of ICC behaviour, nature of L2 learning behaviour, and mediating factors that impact on the participants' experiences). NVivo 10 was used to help with inspecting the frequency of reporting each theme for each participant. Using the node option, the frequency for each node (i.e. theme) can be identified under the ribbon of references. By double clicking the theme a window below opens including three options: summary, reference, and text. The summary identifies the frequency of reporting the theme by each participant, which can be linked to the source (i.e. participant's transcript). The frequency of reporting a theme might help to gain a better understanding of how prominent a theme is across both participants and time points.

As Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 93) recommended only "vivid examples, or extracts which capture the essence of the theme" were included in the across-case analysis. Nonetheless, this type of report can only give a limited view of the participants' experiences, as Ayres *et al.* (2003, p. 871) assert that:

Qualitative data management strategies that depend solely on coding and sorting texts into units of like meaning can strip much of this contextual richness (of individual experience) away. To prevent this, some authors have recommended treating individual accounts as whole cases or stories.

Therefore, a within-case analysis was carried out in order to provide "a detailed description of each case" that began from the participants' experiences before they came



to the UK (see section 6.3). Each story covered their pre-arrival experiences as well as their experiences in the host environment that they shared with me during three rounds of interviews (November 2012, February 2013, May 2013).

#### **4.6 Quality of data and measurement**

The employment of two distinct strands of methods (quantitative and qualitative) can represent a huge challenge when using mixed methods research. Therefore, the quality of each strand should be assessed separately (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009). In quantitative research, validity is viewed as important because it relates to “whether the data represent the constructs they were assumed to capture”, and reliability is equally important as it relates to “whether the data consistently and accurately represent the constructs under examination” (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009, p. 209). On the other hand, the same principles in qualitative research are referred to as ‘credibility’, which focuses on “whether the researcher’s writings are credible to the constructors of the original multiple realities” Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 296) and dependability, which focuses on “the extent to which variation in a phenomenon can be tracked or explained consistently using the “human instrument” across different contexts” (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009, p. 209). Further information can be in Ary *et al.* (2010) and Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Each strand of the study will be discussed separately below. The quantitative strand will be assessed in terms of validity and reliability whilst the qualitative strand will be assessed in terms of credibility and dependability.

##### **4.6.1 The quantitative strand: validity and reliability**

It is not possible for a research study to achieve ‘perfect validity’ (i.e. 100%); therefore it is better to envisage validity as “a matter of degree rather than an absolute state” and

to attempt to improve the level of validity through “careful sampling, appropriate instrumentation and appropriate statistical treatment of the data” (Cohen *et al.* 2007, p. 133).

Two types of validity were relevant to this study, namely ‘content validity’ and ‘external validity’. Content validity demonstrates that the instrument has covered all aspects of the investigated concepts fairly and comprehensively (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009, Cohen *et al.* 2007). Such validity may be achieved (if possible) by a thorough search of the relevant literature and striving to design “a carefully systematised theoretical framework” (Taylor 2010, p. 139 ). Thus, the elements relating to the main issues dealt with in this study (i.e. ICC, Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self) were covered in both depth and breadth (Cohen *et al.* 2007).

External validity refers to “the degree to which the results can be generalised to the wider population, cases or situations” (Cohen *et al.* 2007, p. 136). Taking into account that generalisation is problematical, conclusions may be drawn from the results of the sample (n = 257) which are generalizable to the wider context of the newly arrived pre-foundation Saudi students in the UK (i.e. 2780 students) as long as the sample was carefully selected and data was analysed using appropriated statistical techniques.

In terms of the reliability of the instrument, the most commonly used measure in quantitative research was applied, namely the internal consistency coefficient (also known as Cronbach’s coefficient alpha). According to Cohen *et al.* (2007, p. 506), the recommended values of Cronbach’s coefficient alpha for educational research are:

- > 0.90      very highly reliable
- 0.80-0.90    highly reliable
- 0.70-0.79    reliable

- 0.60-0.69 marginally/minimally reliable
- < 0.60 unacceptably low reliability

However, they note that other scholars suggest that the reliability level is acceptable “if it is 0.67 or above” (ibid.). In addition, Pallant (2010, p. 97 ) warns that Cronbach’s coefficient alpha is sensitive to the number of items in the scale. Therefore, it is normal to find very low Cronbach’s coefficient alpha values for short scales (i.e. scales that have fewer than 10 items). By Pallant’s (2010) reckoning, almost all the scales used in the questionnaire would be regarded as short. Consequently, obtaining low values was inevitable (only one scale, ‘intended learning effort’, was affected). In such instances, it is recommended to report the mean inter-item correlation for items. Briggs and Cheek (1986) assert that the optimum values range between 0.2 and 0.4, which all the scales met (see section 5.2). To sum up, then, it can be claimed that the questionnaire scales attained internal consistency, supporting the conclusion that the instrument used was reliable.

#### **4.6.2 The qualitative strand: credibility and dependability**

As Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.300) note it is not an easy job to “persuade audiences that the findings of your study are worth paying attention to”. However, certain issues should usually be considered to help ensure that qualitative research is thought of as ‘trustworthy’. Three issues were thus taken into consideration in order to ensure that the results of this study are taken seriously, namely, ‘credibility’, ‘transferability’, and ‘dependability’.

Credibility exists when “there is a correspondence between the way the respondents actually perceive social constructs and the way the researcher portrays their viewpoints” (Mertens 2005, p. 254). This credibility can be increased by sending written reports to

participants, asking them for their views regarding the findings and inviting them to provide feedback, which will be done when this study is completed.

Transferability in qualitative research is analogous to external validity as a quality of quantitative research. Despite the fact that naturalistic research fails to meet “the conventional research criteria of generalizability” Cohen *et al.* (2007), experts like Edge and Richards (1998, p. 350 ) state that this is not the researcher’s task since they expect the transfer “across educational contexts to be most effectively created by the reader, from richly contextualised, problematized and theorised reports and interpretations, [that] are resonant with the reader’s own contextualized experience”. The researcher’s task is to provide “a clear, detailed and in-depth description” in order to help “a very small potential audience” to draw their own conclusions and possibly link this to their own personal context (Cohen *et al.* 2007, Gomm *et al.* 2000).

In qualitative research, dependability is equivalent to reliability in quantitative research i.e. it relates to the possibility of obtaining similar findings if a similar study was conducted using a similar sample. Scholars like LeCompte *et al.* (1993, p. 332 ) suggest that this replication notion “may be simply unworkable for qualitative research”. In order to increase the credibility of this study, strategies suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) were followed, for example, peer debriefing which involved presenting study data and analysis procedures to a “disinterested peer” (who was a professionally trained researcher working on other topics) and also discussing various aspects of this study in academic settings (e.g. conferences and seminars) and in friendly chats. Another strategy was ‘prolonged engagement’ since many months were spent in the field in order to “build trust with the participants”, which helped me to be “aware of the participants’ multiple perspective” (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009, p. 213). In addition, all the participants were interviewed by myself in order to reduce “interviewer

variability error” (Bryman 2012). Finally, to increase the quality of the whole project attempts have been made to ensure that this research is as transparent as possible by offering a thorough description of all aspects of the study; for example, the methodology, the sampling design, and the procedures used for recruiting participants.

#### **4.7 Ethical considerations**

Ethically, this study had three main aspects. The first regarded the officials and members of the Saudi Students’ Clubs who were contacted by me seeking permission to conduct the study in their region and gain access to newly arrived Saudi students. These individuals were contacted by email or telephone, details of which were openly available on the official website of the Saudi Students’ Club (Saudi Students Clubs and Schools in the UK 2012). Later, a written information and consent form was sent to the same officials with the aim of gaining access to students in each region of the UK. When their permission was obtained, the questionnaire was distributed electronically by them to newly arrived Saudi students across the UK.

The second issue concerned getting informed consent from the Saudi student participants. Some statements were included at the beginning of the questionnaire in order to: 1) obtain the consent of the newly arrived Saudi students to participate in the questionnaire; 2) inform them that the questionnaire was not a test and would not affect them in any way; 3) Inform them that their participation was voluntary; 4) Demonstrate appreciation for their participation; 5) Confirm that the data would only be used for research purposes and that confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained. A separate section asked students who would like to volunteer in the qualitative phase for their permission to use the emails or contact details they provided to contact them later.

Regarding the qualitative data, the previously mentioned issues (1-5) were explained verbally and participants were asked to sign a written informed consent. In addition, participants were informed of their right to leave at any stage of the study and asked for their permission to record the interviews.

A report on any ethical issues raised by this study was submitted to the University of Leeds Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee and ethical approval for this research was granted on the 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2012 (reference AREA 11-124).

#### **4.8 Summary**

This chapter presented the methodological considerations which underpin this study. After identifying the research questions which determine the focus of this study, issues relating to the design of the study were presented including the research paradigm (pragmatic), the research approach (mixed methods), and the research strategy (Sequential: QUAN → QUAL). A rationale for the decisions taken regarding the sampling design and scheme was also provided, and the procedures followed for recruiting the study participants were also detailed.

The chapter also discussed the data collection instruments to be used (questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews) and explained how they were designed, piloted (questionnaire only), and analysed. The chapter also described the procedures that were followed in an endeavour to enhance the quality of the data and measurement (e.g. validity and reliability for the quantitative strand, and credibility and dependability for the qualitative strand). The chapter concluded by describing how ethical concerns had been addressed.

As mentioned previously, a mixed methods approach was adopted in order to address different aspects of the research questions. Both the quantitative and the qualitative data

were administered sequentially and these findings will be presented separately. Both quantitative and qualitative findings will be integrated in the discussion chapter as recommended by (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998).

## 5 CHAPTER FIVE: QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

This chapter will focus on the findings that were generated from the quantitative data and will discuss a range of topics including descriptive statistics, reliability, correlation, and regression analysis.

### 5.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics are used to “describe the characteristics of the sample”, as well as to “check the variables for any violation of the assumptions underlying the statistical techniques that will be used to address the research questions” (Pallant 2010, p. 53). This section will include descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis.

The target population of the study was the pre-foundation Saudi students newly arrived in the UK. Some 257 participants participated in the quantitative phase of the study (i.e.  $n = 257$ ). More than half of these participants were aged 19. Approximately 40% of them were aged 18. For more details regarding the age of the participants see Table 5.1. With regard to gender, the vast majority of the participants were males (86%) as shown in Table 5.2. Given the researcher’s insider knowledge of the Saudi Arabian culture, a low response rate was predicted from female Saudis given that the researcher himself was male.

**Table 5.1: Distribution of participants according to age**

N	AGE	%
99	18	38.5
132	19	51.4
15	20	5.8
11	21	4.3
<b>TOTAL = 257</b>		<b>TOTAL = 100</b>



**Table 5.2: Distribution of participants according to gender**

<b>GENDER</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Female	36	14
Male	221	86
<b>TOTAL = 257</b>		<b>TOTAL = 100</b>

Now the normality of the data will be assessed. The notion of normality refers to the assumption that “the distribution of the scores on the dependent variable is normal” (Pallant 2010, p. 59). This is usually described as “a symmetrical, bell-shaped curve, which has the greatest frequency of scores in the middle with smaller frequencies towards the extremes” (Gravetter and Wallnau 2004, p. 48 ). The normality of a set of data can be assessed by checking the values of ‘skewness’ and ‘kurtosis’ (Pallant 2010, Gravetter and Wallnau 2004). Perfect normal distribution would obtain a skewness value of 0, which is “rather an uncommon occurrence in the Social Sciences” (Pallant 2010, p. 57). Like to skewness the perfect normal distribution would obtain a kurtosis value of 0, which is rarely witnessed in the Social Sciences (Pallant 2010, p. 57).

In Social Sciences studies, skewness is almost inevitable, and does not “necessarily indicate a problem with the scale, but rather reflects the underlying nature of the construct being measured” (Pallant 2010, p. 64). In addition, Tabachnick and Fidell (2007, p. 80 ) assert that in a large sample (more than 200 cases) a skewed variable “often does not deviate enough from normality to make substantive difference in the analysis”. In other words, “the significance level of skewness is not as important as its actual size” (Tabachnick and Fidell 2007, p. 80). The same is true of kurtosis as “the impact of departure from zero kurtosis also diminishes with large samples” (ibid).

Therefore, data can be regarded as normal when the values produced do not exceed “2.0 for skewness and 7.0 for kurtosis” (Pallant 2010).

The normality can also be assessed by inspecting histograms and normal probability plots. In a histogram, the normally distributed data will “follow the shape of the normal curve with most scores occurring in the centre, tapering out towards the extremes” (Pallant 2010, p. 68). While “a reasonably straight line in the normal probability plots suggests a normal distribution” (Pallant 2010, p. 63) (see appendix B: for graphs of histograms and normal probability plots, as known as a Normal Q-Q Plot.

Based on the values of skewness and kurtosis and after inspecting the histograms and normal probability plots, the data was not perfectly normally distributed, as one might expect from a study in this field. Nonetheless, it can be concluded that the distribution of scores was reasonably ‘normal’ (Pallant 2010). Table 5.3 below presents the values of skewness and kurtosis.

**Table 5.3: Skewness and kurtosis values**

VARIABLE	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION	DISTRIBUTION	
			Skewness	Kurtosis
ICC	2.6	.81	.22	-.60
Milieu	3.8	.63	-.52	.62
Perceived Importance of ICC	4.5	.44	-.62	.03
Ideal L2 Self	4.2	.50	-.47	-.14
Ought to L2 Self	3.1	.97	-.11	-.69
Language Learning Attitudes	3.9	.79	-.80	.75
Intended Learning Effort	4.0	.54	-.36	.71

A number of implications arise from Table 5.3. Firstly, it can be seen that the skewness value for Intended Learning Effort (i.e. the criterion measure) was negative (-.36) while the kurtosis value was positive (.71), which indicates that the scores were clustered and peaked at the high values. Taking the mean for the same variable into account (4.0 out

of 5), this may indicate that the participants were ready to expend a great deal of effort in learning English.

Comparing the values of two variables, namely ICC (skewness = .22 and mean = 2.6 out of 5) and Perceived Importance of ICC (skewness = -.62 and mean = 4.5 out of 5), it can be argued that although almost half of the participants had low ICC experience before coming to the UK (as 108 participants scored a mean of 2 or below), the vast majority of the participants found it important to be involved in ICC situations (as 251 participants scored a mean of 4 or above).

Finally, the values of the language learning attitudes variable (skewness = -.80, kurtosis = .75, and mean = 3.9 out of 5) indicated that the scores were clustered and peaked at the high values, which may in turn suggest that the learners had enjoyed the experience of learning English.

Furthermore, investigating the values of the mean and standard deviation allows one to make inferences regarding the motivational orientation of the whole sample. For example, the mean value of the Ideal L2 Self is (4.2 out of 5), indicating that the participants in this study were likely to have high Ideal L2 Self.

## **5.2 Reliability analysis**

The internal consistency coefficient was administered to test “the degree to which the items that make up the scale are all measuring the same underlying attribute (i.e. the extent to which the items ‘hang together’)” (Pallant 2010, p. 6). Cronbach’s coefficient alpha was used since this is the most commonly employed statistic. There is consensus in the Social Sciences that the commonly accepted standard should be above 0.60 (Pallant 2010, Cohen *et al.* 2007). For more details about this issue see section 4.6.1.

Moreover, scholars like Briggs and Cheek (1986) and Pallant (2010) recommended that the mean inter-item correlation for the items should be reported to support Cronbach's coefficient alpha for short scales (i.e. those scales that contain fewer than 10 items) with values that are below .60. Briggs and Cheek (1986) affirm that the optimum values range between .2 and .4. The values for Cronbach's coefficient alpha and the mean inter-item correlation are listed in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4: Reliability coefficient and inter-item correlation**

SCALES	NUMBER OF ITEMS	MEAN INTER-ITEM CORRELATION	CRONBACH'S COEFFICIENT ALPHA VALUE
<b>Intended Learning Effort</b>	5	.24	.60
<b>ICC</b>	10	.40	.87
<b>Milieu</b>	8	.29	.76
<b>Perceived importance of ICC</b>	6	.34	.73
<b>Ideal L2 Self</b>	8	.32	.79
<b>Ought to L2 Self</b>	6	.46	.84
<b>Language Learning Attitudes</b>	4	.53	.81

Table 5.4 shows that almost all the scales maintained acceptable internal consistency as the Cronbach's coefficient alpha values scored above 0.60. However, there was one exception, Intended Learning Effort, the criterion measure, which scored 0.60. Taking into account the number of items (five items i.e. a short scale) as well as the mean of inter-item correlation, which was .24 (within the optimum value range), it can be seen that this scale also attained an acceptable internal consistency. Therefore, it was decided to maintain all the scales for further analysis.

The Ought to L2 Self, which is one of the three constituents of the L2 Motivational Self System, maintained a very high reliability value (.84), unlike studies such as those by Lamb (2012) and Kormos and Csizér (2008), all of which failed to attain acceptable

reliability values. Nevertheless this high reliability value was in line with other studies such as those by Islam *et al.* (2013) and Taguchi *et al.* (2009) that also took place in collectivist contexts including Japan, China, Iran and Pakistan. It is worth mentioning that the high reliability of Ought to L2 Self and Milieu (.84 and .76, respectively) underscored the influence of the people who were around the students e.g. family members and friends during the L2 learning process. This in turn might help the Saudi students included in this study to be aware of the possible negative consequences that they might face if they failed in their L2 learning.

### 5.3 Correlation analysis

One of the principal aims of this research focuses on investigating the relationship between ICC and the reported motivation to learn English of the new arrival Saudi students. In order to explore the strength of the relationship between the variables of the scale, a correlation analysis was carried out, the findings of which are shown in Table 5.6:

**Table 5.5: Correlations of the scales**

SCALES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. ICC	—						
2. Milieu	.205	—					
3. Perceived Importance of ICC	.151	.304	—				
4. Ideal L2 Self	.341	.318	.527	—			
5. Ought to L2 Self		.173	.243	.231	—		
6. Language Learning Attitudes	.201	.152	.437	.420	.308	—	
7. Intended Learning Effort		.236	.487	.482	.399	.627	—

Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

It is clear that there was a correlation between the criterion measure (i.e. Intended Learning Effort) and the tripartite Self System (i.e. Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self and Language Learning Attitudes); the values were .482, .399, and .627, respectively. However, the only strong correlation was between the criterion measure and Language Learning Attitudes, while the correlation between the Ideal L2 Self and the motivated behaviour as well as between the Ought to L2 Self and the motivated behaviour was moderate. Table 5.6 below shows how the strength of the correlations was determined, based on the suggestions of Cohen (1988).

**Table 5.6: The strength of correlation, adapted from Cohen (1988, pp. 79-81)**

Value of the Correlation Co-Efficient	Strength of the Correlation
.50 – 1.0	Strong
.30 - .49	Moderate
.10 - .29	Weak

The Ideal L2 Self correlated with a number of scales e.g. ICC, Perceived Importance of ICC, Milieu, and Language Learning Attitudes; these values were .341, .527, .318, and .420, respectively. The only strong correlation of the Ideal L2 Self was with Perceived importance of ICC. These values suggest that the importance that L2 learners attached to contact situations beyond textbooks might have helped them to envisage themselves as English users. In the same vein, there was a moderate correlation between Milieu and the Ideal L2 Self, which might highlight the influence that the family might have had on the image that the learners had created for themselves because they wanted to conform with their family's expectations (especially in a collectivist society such as Saudi Arabia). Similarly, the correlation between the Language Learning Attitudes and the Ideal L2 Self suggests that positive attitudes towards learning English might have enhanced the creation of an Ideal L2 Self image.

In a collectivist society like that of Saudi Arabia, the family exercises a powerful influence over its members, particularly the young generation (Papi 2010, Caldwell-Harris and Ayçiçeği 2006, Al-Saggaf 2004). Therefore, the Milieu scale deserved attention. It correlated with the ICC, the Perceived Importance of ICC, the Ideal L2 Self, and the Intended Learning Effort (see Table 5.5). Although these correlations were moderate, they might reflect the role that the family might have played in either facilitating ICC (directly or indirectly) or preventing this.

Finally, the constituents of the L2 Motivational Self System (the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought to L2 Self, and the Language Learning Attitudes) revealed a relationship among them. However, not to the extent that it raises the doubt that they were measuring the same thing or what is known as the ‘multicollinearity’, which takes place when the correlation between the variables is too high (more than .7) (Pallant (2010).

#### **5.4 Regression analysis based on Intended Learning Effort as the criterion measure**

In order to address the two questions below:

1. How well did the six variables used in the model (ICC, Milieu, Perceived Importance of ICC, Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, and Language Learning Attitudes) predict the effort put in by participants in learning English (Criterion Measure)?
2. Which variable was the best predictor of the Criterion Measure?

A stepwise multiple regression analysis was applied which is “a more sophisticated extension of correlation” and is used “to explore the predictive ability of a set of independent variables on one continuous dependent measure” (Pallant 2010, p. 104). In

this case, the dependent variable is the Intended Learning Effort i.e. the criterion measure.

Using SPSS, the example used in Pallant (2010) was followed to test whether the assumptions of multicollinearity and normality were violated and if there were any outliers needing to be excluded before evaluating the model and its variables. Multicollinearity exists “when the independent variables are highly correlated (i.e. more than .7)” (Pallant 2010, p. 151). The data showed that the assumption of the multicollinearity had not been violated as the values of bivariate correlation among the independent variables did not exceed .7 (see Table 5.5). In relation to normality, the data indicated that there was no major deviation from normality. Finally, from the data (i.e. scatterplot chart) it was not necessary to exclude any outlier.

#### **5.4.1 Evaluating the model**

In order to know how much of the variance in the Criterion Measure or dependent variable was explained by our model, the R Squared value needed to be examined. The Criterion Measure in the case of this study was the effort that the participants put into learning English. The value was .510 meaning that this model explains 51 % of the variance in the effort that the participants had put into learning English, which answers the first of the two questions posed at the beginning of section 5.4. Taking into account the levels found in other L2 motivation research, this result might be considered ‘highly respectable’ Dörnyei (2009, p. 31) because the model managed to find the factors that seem to account for over half of the Criterion Measure. In addition, the statistical significance of the result was found to be .01 (i.e. the p value < 0.01). In other words, it can be claimed that the model reached statistical significance.



#### 5.4.2 Evaluating each of the independent variables

This step was undertaken in order to find out which of the independent variables included in our model contributed to the prediction of the dependent variable i.e. the Criterion Measure (the effort that the participants put into learning English). This can be predicted by inspecting the Beta values (Table 5.7):

**Table 5.7: Results of regression analysis of the motivational scales with Intended Learning Effort as criterion variable**

VARIABLE	FINAL MODEL		
	B	SE B	Beta
Language Learning Attitudes	.29	.04	.42*
Ought to L2 self	.11	.03	.19*
Ideal L2 Self	.19	.06	.17*
Perceived importance of ICC	.20	.07	.17*
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>		.51	
<b>F for change in R<sup>2</sup></b>		9.14*	

\*p<.01.

The interpretation of these values was that the variables that predicted the effort that the participants put into learning English, “when the variance explained by all other variables in the model was controlled for” Pallant (2010, p. 161) was Language Learning Attitudes (42%), followed by Ought to L2 Self, (19%) then Ideal L2 Self and the Perceived Importance of ICC (both 17%). This answers the second of the two questions posed at the beginning of section 5.5. In addition, the p value of these variables was less than .01 i.e. significant. Therefore, it may be concluded that Language Learning Attitudes, Ought to L2 Self, Ideal L2 Self and Perceived Importance of the ICC had “made a unique, and statistically significant, contribution to the prediction” (Pallant 2010, p. 161) of the effort that the participants put into learning English.

## **5.5 Regression analysis for the L2 Motivational Self System**

A stepwise multiple regression analysis based on the three components of the L2 Motivational Self System (Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, and Language Learning Attitudes) was applied to investigate how the variables of the scale contributed towards the three constructs. These results will be examined one by one.

### **5.5.1 Regression analysis based on the Ideal L2 Self**

As previously, a number of assumptions were tested including multicollinearity, normality, and existence of outliers before evaluating the model and its variables. The data showed that the multicollinearity assumption had not been violated as the values of bivariate correlation among the independent variables did not exceed .7 (see Table 5.5). In addition, the data indicated that there was no major deviation from normality and no outliers needed to be excluded.

#### **5.5.1.1 Evaluating the model**

The R squared value was examined to determine how much of the variance in the criterion measure (i.e. the Ideal L2 Self) was explained by the model. The value was .418, which means that the model explained 42 % of the variance of how the learners envisaged themselves as L2 users. Such results might be regarded a high figure in L2 motivation research (Dörnyei 2009). Furthermore, the statistical significance of the result was also inspected and the value was .04, meaning that it can be claimed that the model reached statistical significance ( $p < 0.05$ ).

#### **5.5.1.2 Evaluating the independent variables of the model**

The Beta values were inspected in order to know which variables of the model contributed to the prediction of the dependent variable (Ideal L2 Self).

**Table 5.8: Results of the regression analysis with Ideal L2 Self as criterion variable**

VARIABLE	FINAL MODEL		
	B	SE B	Beta
Perceived Importance of ICC	.37	.06	.33*
ICC	.15	.03	.24*
Intended Learning Effort	.25	.05	.27*
Milieu	.08	.04	.11*
R <sup>2</sup>		.42	
F for change in R <sup>2</sup>		4.21*	

\*p<.05.

As Table 5.8 shows, the Perceived Importance of ICC variable was the best predictor of the image that the learners had created for themselves as future L2 users (explaining 33% of the variance). The effort that the learners put into learning English was also a key predictor of how they envisaged themselves as future L2 users by explaining 27% of the variance. Learners' ICC experiences, both direct and indirect, also had an impact on their images of themselves as future L2 users (explaining 24% of the variance). The significant contribution of ICC and the Perceived Importance of ICC indicated that the contact opportunities that students had had, helped them to create a strong positive image of themselves as L2 users. Finally, the Milieu (i.e. people who were around the learners in Saudi Arabia e.g. parents) contributed marginally (11%) to the images that the learners had had of themselves as future L2 users.

### 5.5.2 Regression analysis based on the Ought to L2 Self

As previously, assumptions concerning multicollinearity, normality, and the existence of outliers were tested before evaluating the model and its variables. The data showed that the multicollinearity assumption had not been violated as the values of bivariate correlation among the independent variables did not exceed .7 (see Table 5.5). In

addition, the data indicated that there was no major deviation from normality and no outliers needed to be excluded.

### 5.5.2.1 Evaluating the model

The R squared value was inspected to find out how much of the variance in the criterion measure (i.e. Ought to L2 Self) was explained by the model. The value was .159 meaning that the model explained 16% of the variance of how the learners were motivated to learn English in order to satisfy an authority figure (i.e. significant other) in their life (e.g. a parent) or to avoid an unpleasant experience (e.g. failure). The results of this model might be regarded as below average (Pallant 2010). Moreover, the statistical significance of the result was .01, meaning that it can be claimed that the model reached statistical significance ( $p < 0.01$ ).

### 5.5.2.2 Evaluating the independent variable of the model

Only one variable contributed to the prediction of the dependent variable (Ought to L2 Self), which was the Intended Learning Effort (see Table 5.9). The Beta value indicated that the effort that learners put into learning English contributed significantly (40%) to their motivation to learn English in order to please someone they respected and/or to avoid an unwanted outcome like failure (i.e. Ought to L2 Self). Such a figure could be regarded as exceptionally high in L2 motivation research Dörnyei (2009) as the model managed to identify the factor that seems to account for 40 % of the Ought to L2 Self.

**Table 5.9: Results of the regression analysis with Ought to L2 Self as criterion variable**

VARIABLE	FINAL MODEL		
	B	SE B	Beta
<b>Intended Learning Effort</b>	.71	.10	.40*
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.16		
<b>F for change in R<sup>2</sup></b>	48.25*		

\* $p < .01$ .

### **5.5.3 The regression analysis based on the Language Learning Attitudes**

As previously, a number of assumptions were tested like multicollinearity, normality, and the existence of outliers before evaluating the model and its variables. The data showed that the multicollinearity assumption had not been violated as the values of bivariate correlation among the independent variables did not exceed .7 (see Table 5.5). In addition, the data indicated that there was no major deviation from normality and no outliers needed to be excluded.

#### **5.5.3.1 Evaluating the model**

In order to know how much of the variance in the criterion measure (Language Learning Attitudes) was explained by the model, the R squared value was clarified as .429. In other words, the model explained 43 % of the variance of the learners' attitudes towards the immediate learning environment. This result can also be regarded as exceptionally high in L2 motivation research Dörnyei (2009) as the model managed to find the factors that seemed to account for almost half of the learners' attitudes towards the immediate learning environment. In addition, the statistical significance of the result was also clarified as being .016, so it is possible to claim that the model reached statistical significance with  $p < 0.05$ .

### 5.5.3.2 Evaluating the independent variables of the model

In order to know which variables of the model contributed to the prediction of the dependent variable (i.e. Language Learning Attitudes), the Beta values were identified (see Table 5.10).

**Table 5.10: Results of the regression analysis with language learning attitudes as criterion variable**

VARIABLE	FINAL MODEL		
	B	SE B	Beta
Intended Learning Effort	.78	.08	.54*
Perceived importance of ICC	.30	.10	.16*
ICC	.11	.05	.12*
R <sup>2</sup>	.43		
F for change in R <sup>2</sup>	5.9*		

\*p<.01.

Table 5.10 shows that the effort that learners put into learning English was the best predictor of the learners' language learning attitudes (explaining 54% of the variance). Furthermore, learner perception of the importance of contact with non-Arabic speakers was a key predictor of the learners' language learning attitudes (explaining 16% of the variance). The ICC that the learners had had, either direct or indirect, also was a key predictor of the learners' language learning attitudes (explaining 12%).

## 5.6 Summary

In this chapter the findings generated from the quantitative data were presented. The chapter began by focusing on the descriptive statistics for this study, which showed that the data was reasonably normally distributed. As predicted from personal insider knowledge of the conservative nature of Saudi culture, the gender factor was a salient cultural issue in explaining the fact that female participants made up only 14% of the

whole population for the study. Some inferences can also be made from the descriptive statistics; for example, Ideal L2 Self was prominent among the participants of the study.

The chapter also presented the findings of the following statistical tests: reliability analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. The reliability analysis showed that all the scales included in the study questionnaire (ICC and L2 Motivation Questionnaire) maintained acceptable internal consistency.

The correlation analysis showed a correlation between Intended Learning Effort and the three components of the L2 Motivational Self System (Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, and language learning attitudes). Regression analysis showed that the Language Learning Attitudes was the best predictor of the reported levels of English learning effort. Contrary to previous studies, this study found that the Ought to L2 Self was a stronger predictor of the effort learners put into learning English than the Ideal L2 Self, which may have a cultural explanation (see section 7.2.3.2). Combining the correlation analysis results with those of the regression analysis revealed that the three constructs did have some relationship among them, however not to the extent that it raised doubts that they were measuring the same thing, a phenomenon known as multicollinearity. In addition, the regression analysis revealed that the three constructs did not influence each other.

## 6 CHAPTER SIX: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

### 6.1 Introduction

The quantitative phase allocated participants into two main categories: those with high Ideal L2 Self and those with strong Ought to L2 Self. This categorisation is assumed to have a meaning and implication regarding the behaviour of the participants. Hypothetically, one would expect the participants with high Ideal L2 Self and high ICC to get involved in more contact situations with non-Arabic speakers, while the participants with strong Ought to L2 Self and low ICC are likely to be less interested in such active contact situations and to concentrate instead on their L2 learning. In the qualitative phase four male participants who were typical examples of each category were selected (i.e. two participants with high Ideal L2 Self and other two, with strong Ought to L2 Self) in order to explore the extent to which their initial categorisation helps to explain their actual behaviour during their first year of study in the UK. Table 2.1 below summarises the main background characteristics across the participants.

**Table 6.1: Interviewee profile summary**

	<b>Mido</b>	<b>Sufi</b>	<b>Zizo</b>	<b>Badr</b>
<b>Type of Future Self</b>	Ought to L2 Self	Ought to L2 Self	Ideal L2 Self	Ideal L2 Self
<b>Family's economic status</b>	Rich	Middle class <sup>1</sup>	Rich	Middle class
<b>Order in family</b>	Oldest	Youngest	Second oldest	Oldest
<b>Father's occupation</b>	Senior military officer	Civil servant	CEO	Civil servant
<b>Mother's occupation</b>	Head teacher	Housewife	Teacher	Housewife
<b>Father's educational level</b>	Bachelor	Secondary school	PhD	Secondary school
<b>Mother's educational level</b>	Bachelor	Secondary school	Bachelor	Intermediate
<b>Family's location in Saudi Arabia</b>	Dammam	Makkah	Jeddah	Riyadh
<b>Type of school</b>	Private	State	Private	State
<b>Previous experience of travel abroad</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No

<sup>1</sup> Based on Al-Bishr, B. 2013. *Saudi Arabia Now Has a New Working Class* [online]. [Accessed 02/09/2014].



Table 6.1 shows that the participants came from different backgrounds (socially, academically, and economically). All four male participants lived in big cities in Saudi Arabia. Such cities are a cosmopolitan mix of different ethnicities, cultures, and languages, and might have given the participants the chance to experience ICC even before coming to the UK. In addition, two participants came from rich backgrounds, which had given them the privilege of studying at private schools (which tend to have better educational environment in terms of quality and facilities), and of travelling abroad for pleasure and study, while the other two came from less privileged backgrounds and studied at state schools and had not had the chance to travel abroad. With regard to the participants' order in their families, two participants were the oldest sons, which was likely to have made them the focal point of attention of their families and to have particular social responsibilities and duties (a prevalent view in the Saudi society), while the other two were not, which might have meant they were subject to less parental pressure.

The chapter will be divided into two main sections; across-case analysis and within-case analysis. The chapter begins with the across-case analysis section in order to give an overview of the experiences of all the four participants during their first year in a pre-foundation course. The second section (within-case analysis) will attempt to provide a detailed portrait of the complexity of the experiences of each participant. Table 6.2 presents the abbreviations that will be used in this chapter.

**Table 6.2: Abbreviations used to indicate source of citation**

PARTICIPANT'S PSEUDONYM	FIRST INTERVIEW	SECOND INTERVIEW	THIRD INTERVIEW
	NOVEMBER 2012	FEBRUARY 2013	MAY 2013
<b>Mido</b>	Mido 1	Mido 2	Mido 3
<b>Sufi</b>	Sufi 1	Sufi 2	Sufi 3
<b>Zizo</b>	Zizo 1	Zizo 2	Zizo 3
<b>Badr</b>	Badr 1	Badr 2	Badr 3

## 6.2 Across-case analysis

This section focuses on the three main themes that describe the experiences of the participants during their first year in the UK. The first is the nature of their ICC behaviour, which is made up of five themes: recognition of ICC opportunities, response to ICC opportunities, purpose of contact, type of relationship of the participants with non-Arabic speakers, and attitudes towards non-Arabic speakers. The second is the nature of their L2 learning behaviour, which includes two themes: participants' attitudes towards L2 learning environment and their perception of progress. The final concerns mediating factors that impact on the participants' experiences, which consist of three types of factors: cultural, social, and personal.

Although these themes are presented separately for organisational purposes, it is clear that they are interrelated as will be seen below.

### 6.2.1 The nature of ICC behaviour

This section refers to the five themes that describe the nature of the participants' ICC behaviour. The first theme, recognition of ICC opportunities, tapped into whether the participants recognised ICC opportunities. The second theme, response to ICC opportunities, looked at how the participants responded to ICC opportunities they had

recognised. The third theme, purpose of contact, summarised the reasons that the participants reported as having encouraged them to make contact with non-Arabic speakers (native speakers and non-native speakers of English). The fourth theme, the type of relationship described how the participants view their relationships with those non-Arabic speakers they managed to make contact with. The fifth theme, attitudes towards non-Arabic speakers, looked at the attitudes of the participants towards contact with non-Arabic speakers, which might affect their ICC activity. Table 6.3 below shows the frequency of occurrence of each theme for each participant across the three rounds. Each one of these themes will be illustrated with examples taken from the participants' accounts in the following sections.

**Table 6.3: Frequency of reporting the themes that represent the nature of the participants' ICC behaviour**

<i>NAMES</i>	<b>THEMES</b>					<b>Total</b>
	<b>Recognition of ICC opp.</b>	<b>Response to ICC opp.</b>	<b>Purpose of contact</b>	<b>Type of relationship</b>	<b>Attitudes towards non-Arabic speakers</b>	
<b>Mido 1</b>	13	16	3	2	6	40
<b>Sufi 1</b>	8	6	0	0	8	22
<b>Zizo 1</b>	9	12	5	3	7	36
<b>Badr 1</b>	14	16	4	3	5	42
<b>Mido 2</b>	19	18	6	3	4	50
<b>Sufi 2</b>	13	11	2	2	8	36
<b>Zizo 2</b>	17	19	8	6	4	54
<b>Badr 2</b>	21	20	7	7	5	60
<b>Mido 3</b>	8	10	0	0	2	20
<b>Sufi 3</b>	6	5	1	1	4	17
<b>Zizo 3</b>	11	9	3	3	1	27
<b>Badr 3</b>	9	8	4	2	2	25
<b>Total</b>	148	150	43	32	56	

Table 6.3 shows that the participants' recognition of and response to the ICC opportunities were the salient themes. In addition, the table reveals the relative enthusiasm for ICC behaviour of the participants when they arrived which continued and increased towards the middle period of the year but dropped off very steeply towards the end of that year. Explanations for these trends are given below.

### **6.2.1.1 Recognition of ICC opportunities**

All the four participants had recognised the existence of ICC opportunities since the first round of interviews (November 2012), one month after arrival at the host environment. They explained that interaction with non-native speakers was easier, given that the participants were studying at the Language Centre with other international students who were more open to contact than British students who were out of reach most of the time. Zizo described these problems:

I have tried to interact with British people but I failed. They are hard to find. At the language centre we study with students from Japan, Korea, Italy, and China. And in the accommodation, the British students have their own clique. [Zizo 1]

Over the course of their first year, their recognition of ICC opportunities increased as Badr stated:

We [Badr and his Saudi fellows] are surrounded by people from all over the world all the day long from the accommodation, to the language centre to the shops basically everywhere. [Badr2]

Towards the end of their first year (around May 2013), the participants recognised that the ICC opportunities had begun to decline due to exams and other reasons. The participants were busy preparing for IELTS in order to obtain the prerequisite score for

acceptance at the foundation level the following year and other international students were busy for similar reasons.

### **6.2.1.2 Response to ICC opportunities**

During the first month after their arrival, the participants were reluctant to engage in interaction with people from different cultural backgrounds (native and non-native speakers) for various reasons including culture shock (see the section 6.2.3 for details). As can be seen from table 6.3, over time the participants became familiar with the host environment and succeeded to varying degrees in engaging in ICC interactions particularly with other international students. For example, like Mido, and Badr, Zizo was willing to engage in interaction with people from different cultural backgrounds as described here:

Recently, I have made new relationships with a number of international students. From Nigeria, India, Japan, etc. We usually go out together. There is another British student who is studying Arabic. Sometimes we interact using standard Arabic but most of the time we speak English. [Zizo 2]

Sufi was not successful in engaging in ICC interaction outside the Language Centre, and mentioned a number of reasons that hindered his ICC interaction, for instance, a lack of proper social skills (for more details see section 6.2.3).

Since the opportunities for ICC declined in term three (see section 6.2.1.1 above), participant responses to such ICC opportunities also declined.

### **6.2.1.3 Purpose of contact**

Despite the fact that not all the four participants were all similarly successful in their exploitation of ICC opportunities they articulated similar reasons for ICC interaction to

take place. They mentioned reasons such as ‘to practice English’ for interacting with native speakers as Badr acknowledged in the first interview:

I prefer to interact with British students to practice my English. There is no benefit to be gained in practicing English with the Japanese students at the language centre.

[Badr 1]

Mido described his own technique for exploiting interaction with native speakers to improve his English:

One of my strengths is that I like to apply any grammar rule I have learned as soon as I have the opportunity. So when I chat with a native speaker, I try to use that new grammar rule in my conversation. But if I read such a rule without applying it in an authentic conversation I will forget it. [Mido 2]

Another purpose for exploiting ICC opportunities was ‘to know about other’s culture’, especially when establishing contact with non-native speakers. Mido added that building his self-confidence was the main purpose behind interacting with non-Arabic speakers:

I use the bus every day where there are plenty of contact opportunities. Contacting with others will help me to gain more self-confidence but the problem is that I am a shy person. If I had more courage I would exploit such opportunities. I always ask my friends to speak for me. I don’t want to suffer the consequences if someone ignores me. [Mido 1]

#### **6.2.1.4 Types of relationship with non-Arabic speakers**

Zizo was the only participant who created a friendship outside the Saudi group (L1 group) when he made friends with a number of Italian students and paid them a visit

during the Easter holiday. Apart from that, participants' relationships with international students remained at the level of acquaintance. For example, Badr here describes his contact with a number of international students at his accommodation,

I don't think such contact will make friends, we are acquaintances only. We don't go out together or anything, only greetings and some chatting if we meet. [Badr 2]

Getting to know British students, even as acquaintance, was more difficult as Zizo explains:

I have tried hard to create relationships with British students at the accommodation as an acquaintance but I couldn't. They have their own cliques. It is extremely difficult to create relationships with British students [Zizo 2]

Sufi was the only participant who could not create any type of relationship with non-Arabic speakers.

#### **6.2.1.5 Attitudes towards non-Arabic speakers**

Influenced by stereotypes, which will be discussed later (see cultural factors section 6.2.3.1), the participants arrived with particular attitudes towards non-Arabic speakers. All the four participants arrived with negative attitudes towards the British, referring to them as 'arrogant', 'not liking non-British people', and being 'introverted', as comments below show:

The British people are introverted. They don't like to interact with international people. [Mido 1]

Before I came here, I heard that the British are racist and they hate immigrants. [Zizo 1]

Three of the participants (Mido, Badr, and Zizo) had positive attitudes towards international students, explaining that interacting with them was necessary to learn about their culture:

Interacting with other international students is important. This will help me to be more open-minded about their cultures. [Badr 1]

I discovered interesting issues about their [his Spanish classmates] culture like their food and clothes. They have strange customs in Spain like when they release some bulls onto the streets. If I hadn't interacted with them, I wouldn't have known that. [Mido 1]

However, Sufi arrived with negative attitudes towards all non-Arabic speakers (native and non-native speakers) which was based on his father's advice:

I think that the students who are here (in the UK) haven't come to have friends; they have come to study only. My father is always telling me that I am here to study hard get high marks and go back home. So I am here to study only not to create relationships with others, apart from other Saudis of course. [Sufi 1]

### **6.2.2 Nature of L2 learning behaviour**

The second main theme that describes the nature of the participants' L2 learning was made up of two topics; the first relates to their attitudes towards the L2 learning environment, which includes English teachers, teaching methodology, and peers as well as their evaluation of their L2 learning course. The second, 'perception of progress', involves the participant's personal perception regarding their English progress, their suggestions for their own language improvement, and issues that affected their English progress. Table 6.4 below shows the frequency of occurrence of each theme per case.



**Table 6.4: Frequency of reporting the themes that represent the nature of the participants' L2 learning behaviour**

<i>Names</i>	<i>Themes</i>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Attitudes towards L2 learning environment</b>	<b>Perception of progress</b>	
<b>Mido 1</b>	15	15	30
<b>Sufi 1</b>	13	13	26
<b>Zizo 1</b>	16	17	33
<b>Badr 1</b>	11	14	25
<b>Mido 2</b>	9	6	15
<b>Sufi 2</b>	6	5	11
<b>Zizo 2</b>	8	6	14
<b>Badr 2</b>	9	7	16
<b>Mido 3</b>	12	13	25
<b>Sufi 3</b>	15	16	31
<b>Zizo 3</b>	14	14	28
<b>Badr 3</b>	12	13	25
<b>Total</b>	140	139	

Table 6.4 summarises that the L2 learning behaviour of the participants fluctuated throughout their first year. The participants arrived at the UK with positive attitudes towards the L2 learning environment that they felt they would make a progress with the L2. Towards the middle of their first year, their positive attitudes towards the L2 learning environment dropped as well as their perception of progress. Towards the end of their first year (the official language learning period) the participants' perception of progress and their attitudes towards the L2 learning environment increased again. Finally, as the table also shows, the increase in their attitudes towards the L2 learning

environment changed in response to their perception of progress at L2. This suggests a connection between the participants' attitudes towards the L2 learning environment and their expectations of progress.

### **6.2.2.1 Attitudes towards L2 learning environment**

When the four participants arrived at the Language Centre, they encountered L2 learning experiences that were different from those they were used to in Saudi schools. English teachers were native speakers who used English as a medium of instruction while English classes in Saudi schools were taught by Arabic speakers who used Arabic as the medium of instruction. The teaching methodology was also different: in Saudi Arabia, they were accustomed to traditional teaching methods that relied heavily on repetition of words and phrases, memorization, and monotonous grammatical rule drills (see section 2.1.6 for details), whereas the Language Centre employed more communicative teaching methods that emphasised group and pair-work with non-Arabic speaking peers. These changes created initial feelings of excitement as these accounts describe:

Studying English here [at the language centre] is excellent. The activities and teaching methodologies are fantastic. For example, here the teacher doesn't ask us questions like what does this mean or give us a passage with some questions to be read and answered. No! Here the thing that I like the most is when the teacher says 'Work with your partner'. This is very useful to practice and improve my English as I will speak to the non-Arabic speaker partner next to me. [Sufi 1]

Here [at the language centre] for example they use learning through entertainment but there [in Saudi Arabia] they focus on memorizing the words, whether you understand or not. Here they try to teach us and when they feel that we are bored

they use games to entertain and teach us at the same time. For example, how to create a question that is grammatically correct while playing a game. [Badr 1]

In term two, the participants were preparing specifically for IELTS in addition to their more general language learning. All four participants found that the L2 learning process became harder, which affected their attitudes towards the L2 learning environment (the language centre). For example, they complained about various aspects such as the high volume of homework, the difficulty of the IELTS tasks, the long hours they spent at the language centre (between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.), and the low L2 competence of their peers as the following accounts describe:

One of the greatest obstacles is the IELTS tasks. In the IELTS I need to do the tasks in a specific time. I can't work under time pressure. I think I am the type of person who works efficiently at long-term tasks [Badr 2]

In my class there is a group of Japanese students, an Italian girl, a Chinese girl, and 2 Korean girls. There is no benefit in interacting with them. I mean that my speaking is much better than theirs. But honestly, the writing skills of the Japanese students are exceptional. [Zizo 2]

We spend 21 hours a week in the language centre, which is exhausting. We start at 9 a.m. and finish at 4 p.m. I wake up around 8 a.m. and walk to the Language Centre. It takes me about half an hour. When I got home, I feel tired so I sleep till 10 p.m. Then I do my homework, writing reports, summaries and then do some self-study before going to bed around 3 a.m. [Sufi 2]

During their last interview, toward the end of their first year after obtaining the required scores in the IELTS and securing their places at the foundation level next year, the attitudes of the four participants towards the L2 learning environment again became more positive.

Overall, the attitudes of the participants towards the L2 learning environment fluctuated from being enthusiastic and excited about the new and different learning environment on arrival to complaining about various aspects of the L2 learning environment towards the middle of their language learning period, when they had to work hard and the pressure of the IELTS exam was immense. Their attitudes once again became positive towards the end of their first year when they had succeeded in obtaining the required IELTS score and securing their foundation level places for the following year.

#### **6.2.2.2 Perception of progress**

During the first interview (one month after arrival), the four participants were positive that their English would quickly develop in a short space of time as Zizo and Sufi describe here:

In a few months, I can see myself as being a very fluent English user, even better than my tutors. They are native speakers so it would be impossible to be better than them but I mean in the way I express my ideas. [Zizo 1]

I am confident that my English will improve before the next interview [in February 2013] and by that time I will be a better English user. Yeah, I will improve [Sufi 1]

Like Badr, they also spoke about their plans for improving their English:

My reading needs to be improved. I can comprehend and read to some extent but I need to improve the speed of my reading. Another thing is that I need to expand my vocabulary repertoire. Because when I read I find that there are plenty of words that I don't know the meanings of. I have a plan which I hope that will be accomplished. The plan is that I am going to borrow a book from the library before going back to Saudi Arabia during the Christmas holiday. This book was recommended by my tutor. He mentioned that this book will help me to enrich my vocabulary repertoire.

So hopefully, during the month I will spend in Saudi Arabia I will try to memorize as many words as I can. [Badr 1]

During the second interview (February 2013), all the four participants were preparing for the IELTS exam. The participants needed to obtain a minimum prerequisite score in order to be accepted for the foundation year the following year. The IELTS pressure was high (see their comments above section 6.2.2.1) and when the participants were asked about how they perceived their progress, they acknowledged that their English had not progressed as they hoped, which caused some disappointment and frustration.

I have studied English before arriving in the UK. I thought that my English would progress immediately. But I am really disappointed as I think that I need to spend more time in studying English. [Mido 2]

They gave a number of reasons to explain their slow progress with English. For instance, Zizo and Badr mentioned that they did not pay enough attention to their English learning either because they were bored or lazy:

I think the main reason was because that I was lazy to read. I think reading is a key factor in improving English; reading newspapers, books, stories, etc. Another thing is that I became bored with English learning. [Zizo 2]

I don't spend enough time studying. Although I feel that I have progressed in terms of critical thinking and writing reports I still think I need to work harder. [Badr 2]

Mido mentioned other reasons like:

There are plenty of Saudi students at the language centre. I also watch Arabic satellite TV. [Mido 2]

Sufi blamed the lack of progress on the Language Centre:

Last term there was a class called ‘British Culture’, which was not so useful. There was a lot of information which I don’t think concerns us [Saudi students]. And in terms of English learning I found it useless. [Sufi 2]

The last round of interviews took place after the participants had secured their places in the foundation year, and all four interviewees expressed the belief that their English had progressed. They mentioned reasons for their progress such as writing reports and assignments, reading many articles in different disciplines (e.g. economy and law), and practicing English during interaction with non-Arabic speakers as the following account summarises:

My English has progressed for a number of reasons such as doing a lot of reading in different disciplines and writing reports and assignments. However, I believe the main issue that helped my English to progress was interacting with other international students. When I communicate with them I make mistakes then correct them and make progress, and so on. [Badr 3]

Overall the participants arrived with unrealistic expectations of how fast they would progress, which was probably due to their limited understanding of language learning based on their experiences in the Saudi context that linked language learning to passing exams (see sections 2.1.5, 2.1.6, and 2.1.7). These unrealistic expectations changed to feelings that they had not been sufficiently successful towards the middle of the language learning period when the pressure of IELTS was high. This pressure probably raised participants’ awareness of the implications of failing, which in turn was likely to have affected their perception of progress. Towards the end of the language learning period, when the participants’ passed IELTS and secured their places at the foundation level for the following year, they perceived that their English had progressed. This

change in perception of progress compared to the change of their attitudes towards the L2 learning environment (as discussed in the previous section) suggests that the change was purely exam-related based on the views they brought from the Saudi context regarding language learning. Once the participants had passed the exam they recognised that their L2 had progressed. Moreover, the corresponding change in the participants' attitudes and perception of progress suggests that they were interrelated. When the participants recognised that their L2 had progressed, their attitudes towards the L2 learning environment changed positively.

### **6.2.3 Mediating factors that impact on the participants' experiences**

This section presents the third main theme that looks at the mediating factors that affected the participants' experiences during their first year in the UK. These factors were grouped into three main types; the first type were cultural and were related to the wider cultural context (i.e. the culture that the participants came from and the cultures of the people they were interacting with), including factors such as stereotypes, religion, culture shock, and cultural competence. The second type was social and concerned the participants' relation with the wider social context (back home in Saudi Arabia and here in the UK), and included factors such as milieu, social support, significant events, and the lack of institutional support. Finally, the personal factors focus on personal characteristics that influence the participant's behaviour, and included two main issues self-confidence and social skills. Table 6.5 shows the frequency of reporting each type of factors by the participants across three rounds of interviews.

**Table 6.5: Frequency of reporting the themes that represent the mediating factors**

<i>NAMES</i>	<i>THEMES</i>			<b>Total</b>
	<b>Cultural</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Personal</b>	
<b>Mido 1</b>	10	13	4	27
<b>Sufi 1</b>	11	10	5	26
<b>Zizo 1</b>	14	13	0	27
<b>Badr 1</b>	12	11	0	23
<b>Mido 2</b>	10	12	2	24
<b>Sufi 2</b>	9	13	6	28
<b>Zizo 2</b>	16	17	0	33
<b>Badr 2</b>	15	14	0	29
<b>Mido 3</b>	5	4	5	14
<b>Sufi 3</b>	4	2	3	9
<b>Zizo 3</b>	6	3	0	9
<b>Badr 3</b>	6	5	0	11
<b>Total</b>	118	117	25	

From the table it can be seen that the cultural and social factors were more salient than the personal factors. The cultural and social factors affected all the four participants, while the personal factors affected only two participants (Mido and Sufi).

### **6.2.3.1 Cultural factors**

As seen in section 6.2.1.5, the participants arrived at the UK with particular attitudes based on stereotypes, which affected their ICC behaviour. The stereotypes were mainly about the British as the following accounts show:

The British people are introverted. They don't like to interact with international people. I don't want to put myself in an embarrassing situation so I haven't approached British people as they may ignore me. [Mido 1]



Just like other international students who come to the UK, we held the view that British people that they are selfish and are not willing to help others and sometimes racists. [Badr 1]

Before I came here, I heard that the British are racist and they hate immigrants.  
[Zizo 1]

One participant (Badr) arrived with positive stereotypes about one particular ethnic group (the Japanese) that immediately changed after meeting them at the language centre:

Before interacting with the Japanese students I had the views that all Saudis have that the Japanese are extraordinary. They work like machines; they are extremely smart, etc. I found such an image was fake. I discovered that they are sometimes simple-minded, lacking in confidence, and do not perform well. [Badr 2]

During the first few weeks after arrival, three of the participants (Zizo, Badr, and Sufi) suffered from severe culture shock, which almost made them give up their scholarships as the following accounts show:

During my second week I wondered why I had come here [to the UK] and I intended to go back home especially when my mother called me. I had severe homesickness. Although the accommodation was full of other Saudi students psychologically I wasn't OK, especially because that was my first trip without my family. [Badr 1]

I suffered a lot from the moment I arrived at Leeds. The rooms were very small. I redesigned my room as I relocated the wardrobe and the bed. I remember that the following week I visited other Saudi students in another accommodation and I found that their room were spacious just like our rooms in Saudi Arabia. So I went to the accommodation office trying to cancel my contract and move to the other accommodation but they told me that I couldn't. I felt disappointed. Another issue

was that I don't know how to cook so since I had arrived I had eaten fast food, pizza, Indian, Lebanese, etc. I was really fed up with the food. I suffered from depression and I was ready to cancel my scholarship and travel back home [Zizo 1]

As soon as I arrived, I felt that my brain couldn't cope with the changes for a few days; then I got used to it. [Sufi 1]

Another cultural factor that hugely affected the participants' experiences was religion. All the four participants articulated religious accounts that impacted on their experiences. For example, Badr articulated that religion was the main reason behind his contact with the Japanese students in the language centre:

The Japanese students are curious to know about the religious rituals we practice such as prayers. I also want to know about their beliefs. [Badr 1]

Religion also caused difficulties for other participants during interaction with other international students; for example,

When I interact with other international students, there are issues that I avoid such as religion as some of them even do not believe in God! Sometimes they ask 'why you don't drink? I try to change the subject. You know there are things that they see as normal but we don't. [Mido 2]

At the weekends they [non-Muslims] have parties, go to night clubs, drink alcohol, etc. You know these are forbidden activities. We cannot do that. Their life style is different from ours. [Zizo 2]

Being culturally competent regarding the cultural differences and knowing how to deal with them affected the ICC behaviour of two participants (Zizo and Mido). Zizo exploited the cultural differences between him and a number of Italian students to create relationships, which he strengthened later by visiting them in Italy during the Easter

holiday. Zizo recognised that one of his L1 norms would get the attention of these Italian young men:

The only way to hang out with them [a group of Italian students] was when I invited them to go out to a café for ‘Shisha’. They liked Shisha because it was something new for them as they like to try new things [Zizo 2]

On the contrary, cultural differences made Mido refrain from interacting with non-Arabic speakers when he used his L1 cultural norms (i.e. being helpful to the elderly) and found these were misunderstood. Mido offered to help an old man to close his open rucksack, which the old man misunderstood as an attempt at theft (for details of the story see section 6.3.1.4).

Overall, the frequency of reporting cultural factors that affected the participants’ ICC activity was high on arrival as they arrived with stereotypes and suffered from culture shock. Since the participants’ ICC activity increased towards the middle of their first year, and involved encountering cultural difference, their reporting of cultural factors that affected their ICC activity also increased. Towards the end of their first year the participants’ involvement in ICC interaction decreased, which might have explained the drop in reporting cultural factors.

### **6.2.3.2 Social factors**

The milieu from which they had come, especially the influence of their fathers, impacted on the participants’ decisions in the host environment even before they arrived. The four participants articulated that the decision for applying for the scholarship and/or selecting the discipline of study had been due to their significant others’. For example, in Zizo’ case his father and uncle played an important role:

I am here [at Leeds University] because my father was always encouraging me to study abroad. As a former student of Leeds University my uncle recommended it.  
[Zizo 1]

In the other three cases, the main decision regarding study had been taken by the participant's father:

My father wanted me to study abroad and study medicine or engineering. [Badr 1]

I actually planned to study in King Fahd University and after graduation looking for a job and that is it. But my father asked me to apply for the scholarships so I went there and applied for it. [Sufi 1]

Mido had already spent a year at Jubail University College in Saudi Arabia:

I completed the foundation year. But when my father got the scholarship and the whole family was going to move to the UK, he told me to drop out and join them.  
[Mido 1]

The influence of these significant others transcended borders as stereotypes which had been conveyed impacted on the participants' interaction with the non-Arabic speakers (see the examples in section 6.2.3.1 above).

During the initial stage of their arrival, three participants (Zizo, Sufi, and Badr) suffered from culture shock. During such unpleasant experiences, the more experienced Saudi students especially those at the participants' accommodation provided them with essential social support as the following account testifies:

When I arrived at the accommodation, I was lucky to meet a number of Saudi students who had already spent a year here. They helped me a lot in getting through the bad psychological state I was in. They also helped me to understand the life style here; what to do where to go, etc. So in that aspect I didn't suffer as I was supposed to [laughter]. [Badr1]

Mido (who was lacking self-confidence) cited other examples of social support:

I always ask my friends to speak for me. [Mido 1]

Or in the case of Sufi:

I can't leave the accommodation alone. I feel insecure so I always ask my Saudi friends to go out with me. [Sufi 2]

There were some significant events in connection with social factors. Two participants (Sufi and Mido) were victims of incidents that affected their behaviour and made them refrain from interacting with non-Arabic speakers. Sufi's account below describes the significant event that he experienced:

Once when my flatmate was speaking to me, I mimicked his accent unconsciously. He became furious as he thought that I was mocking him. This makes me afraid of interacting with him or other non-Arabic speakers. I may mimic their accent again.  
[Sufi 2]

Mido experienced an incident with an elderly gentleman with the rucksack who was suspicious that Mido was trying to steal something from his rucksack and not trying to help him closing it. The old man started swearing at Mido who could not reply or explain what he was doing. After this, Mido restricted his contact to other Saudi students.

The final social issue that all the four participants complained about was the lack of institutional support at the level of the language centre and the university accommodation for enabling the participants to meet more non-Arabic speaking university students from outside the language centre or their accommodation. As Badr described his disappointment with the activities at the Language Centre:

During the term we study for 21 hours a week from the morning to late afternoon. We need some activities like football to help us to break the routine. The only activity is a trip with the Language Centre's students at the end of the term. [Badr 3]

Zizo asserted a similar point:

The language centre doesn't create opportunities to meet other international or British students. I mean at the language centre we only meet with other international students who are learning English like the Japanese and Chinese students. Our [Saudi students] language competence is far better than theirs. If we had the opportunity to work with students from outside the language centre in a project or a group only then we can practice and improve our English [Zizo 2]

Another issue commented on by two participants (Badr and Zizo) which they believed showed a lack of the institutional support at the accommodation level involved the fact that they had been housed with other Saudi students.

To sum up, since the first round of interviews (November 2012), the participants highlighted social factors reporting factors such as milieu and social support as affecting their involvement in interaction with non-Arabic speakers. Towards the middle of their first year, along with the increase in their involvement in ICC interactions, the reporting of social issues also increased. The participants had to cope with cultural differences that caused in some cases significant events that made them seek social support from co-nationals. Towards the end of their first year, reporting of social factors decreased as participants' ICC activity declined. This might suggest that the social and cultural factors increase in parallel to the increase of the participants' involvement in ICC interactions.

### 6.2.3.3 Personal factors

From the moment they arrived at the UK, self-confidence was a factor which affected two participants in particular (Sufi and Mido). They spoke openly about their lack of self-confidence and how it affected their interaction with non-Arabic speakers and how their Saudi fellows helped them. For example, Mido asked his Saudi fellows to speak on his behalf, and Sufi asked his Saudi fellows to accompany him.

By the second round of interviews, Mido had started to build up his confidence as he got used to interacting with the people sitting next to him on the bus:

Now I don't have a problem to interact with non-Arabic speaking strangers. Every morning at the bus stop I chat with strangers, especially old people. I find them more open to contact. I ask them about the weather and start a conversation. If I get to the bus stop first, I let them get on the bus first just to break the ice and start a chat. [Mido 2]

Sufi followed a similar strategy and started interacting with his flatmates. However, Sufi encountered a problem when he mimicked the accent of his flatmate, which made him angry and according to him, this is the result of a personal issue:

...my social skills were weak. I think this problem is due to social media and video games. [Sufi 1]

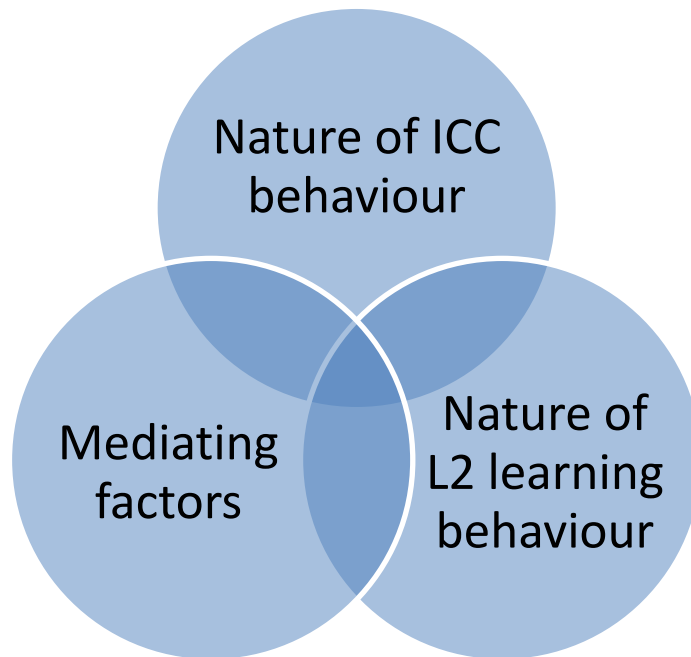
This hit Sufi's self-confidence and made him avoid interaction with non-Arabic speakers as he was afraid of repeating the experience. Towards the end of the academic year, the incident involving the old man which happened to Mido restricted his interaction with other people.

In conclusion, the stories of these two participants may suggest that for students lacking in self-confidence moving to another cultural setting raises additional difficulties.

### 6.2.4 Conclusion

It can be seen that the main three themes (presented above) that represent the participants' experiences: 1) nature of ICC behaviour, 2) nature of L2 learning behaviour, and 3) mediating factors, are interrelated. For example, the pressures of the L2 learning environment (e.g. exams) as well as other cultural, social, and personal factors all need to be considered in order to understand the trajectory of the participants' ICC experiences. The figure below represents the interrelation among the main three themes that represent the experiences of the participants.

**Figure 6.1: The participants' experiences**



The extent and form of this interrelationship is different for each participant. There were personal differences among the participants themselves, for example Mido reported issues with his self-confidence and Sufi reported issues with his social skills, as well as differences in the circumstances that surrounded them culturally (for instance, Mido had not experienced severe culture shock like the other three participants) and socially (for example, Zizo and Badr had not experienced significant events), which made each set of



experiences unique. In order to do justice to their unique experiences, it is also necessary to present the story of each participant separately. The following section will present the stories of the participants one by one.

### **6.3 Within-case analysis**

This section of the chapter will sketch out the personal background of each participant, looking at their personal characteristics and their family's economic status. It will also trace their previous contact with non-Arabic speakers in Saudi Arabia before they arrived to study in the UK in October 2012. The rationale behind this probing into the participants' lives before arrival in the UK is to attempt to understand how social, cultural, political, and historical factors which they brought with them from their previous life experiences might affect their behaviour, decisions, and adjustment during their first year as sojourners in the host environment. This information might also help to explain how each individual came to have high Ideal L2 Self or strong Ought to L2 Self.

Each participant's story is divided into three sections presented in chronological order, according to the timing of the interview rounds. The first round of interviews took place in November 2012, the second in February 2013, and the final round was in May 2013. Finally, each of the student biographies ends with a summary of the main issues that will be taken forward into the discussion chapter (chapter Seven).

#### **6.3.1 Mido**

##### **6.3.1.1 Pre-arrival**

Mido came from a rich family as his father was a senior military officer and his mother a head teacher. He lived in Dammam (the capital city of the Eastern Province) before

coming to the UK and was the oldest among his siblings. Being the oldest as well as a male in Saudi society made him the main focus of attention in his family and if Mido is successful personally, this is also viewed as a success for his family as a whole. Mido's parents, especially his father, believed that success was determined by being successful in terms of education. In turn, being educationally successful was determined by being a successful English language learner. Therefore, Mido's father was keen that his oldest son should learn English as soon as he started primary school, a subject which is not provided at that age in the Saudi state system. His family's economic status enabled them to afford the tuition fees required to allow their son to attend a private school, where he learnt English from year one of primary school:

My parents were very keen that I should be successful in my educational life in general and in English learning in particular. My father is always saying "English is the basis for all aspects of your life. Without English you can't do anything". Therefore, I studied at a private school where I studied English from year one. In addition, every summer I used to study in English Language Centres. My father also paid for private English tutors to come to our house and teach me. [Mido 1]

Mido was privileged to be a member of a family that could afford his tuition fees to learn English. However, he recognised that this made a great number of the people around him jealous, believing that he had been born with a silver spoon in his mouth. Some were discouraging while others were supportive as Mido said:

There were people around me who called themselves friends but they weren't. They were always trying to discourage me from studying English. They would say things like: "Why do you waste your time studying English? Look at us! We're all weak in English and it's not done us any harm" and things like that. But to be fair, there were other people who encouraged me to study English. They said things like: "Good for you! English is important for everyone". [Mido 1]

In 2009, when Mido was 16, his father sent him to attend an English course held in a boarding school in the UK for six weeks in the summer. Only then did Mido realise that despite the fact he had been learning English since he started his educational journey at the age of six what he had learnt was useless:

That shouldn't be called studying. [...] We kept studying the alphabet till year six. Then from year six onwards we studied the national curriculum which started again with the alphabet, so what we studied was rubbish. [Mido 1]

Mido felt embarrassed when he described an incident that happened on the summer school as soon as he arrived at the boarding school:

When the supervisor entered the room he said "It's lunch time". I couldn't grasp what he was saying. He repeated it again and again and again. Eventually, he used a sign [moving his hand towards his mouth]. I was so embarrassed at that moment. I felt I was so stupid [laughter]. [Mido 1]

Mido's trip to the UK was his first trip away from his family and he was happy to find a group of Saudi students at the same boarding school. He ended up staying with the group where they used Arabic all the time:

In the UK there were seven or eight Saudis in the school out of 200 pupils. Because we came from the same country we tended to chat with each other. [Mido 1]

However, after returning to Saudi Arabia, Mido realised that having been among an Arabic-speaking group had not helped him to learn English as he expected. Mido regretted having wasted the opportunities for active ICC and he attempted to compensate for that by exploiting every potential opportunity to contact with non-Arabic speakers and use English:

My journey to the UK changed my perspective on English. After I went back to Saudi Arabia, I started to use English in my daily life; for example, when someone

knocked at the door I would ask ‘Who is it?’ [In English]. And when I went to a restaurant I used English to communicate with the waiters. Whenever I met a non-Arabic speaker, I exploited the opportunity to practise the language. [Mido 1]

The following summer (2010) Mido’s father decided to send him to attend an English Language course in New Zealand. He also paid for his son to live in a home stay during the two months that the English course lasted. Mido said that he did not have any idea about the New Zealand journey till two days before his trip. Although he did not have any choice other than to accept his father’s decision, he stated that it was a pleasant surprise.

Based on his previous experience, in order to learn English Mido avoided Arabic speakers as soon as he arrived in New Zealand and managed to make friends with a student from Hong Kong who was also studying at the same Language Centre. In the host family’s house there was a small library where he used to read a story on a weekly basis. With the help of the host family Mido’s English had progressed steadily, as he realised after he returned to his school in Saudi Arabia:

I noticed the progress in my English when I returned to my school. My idea of just passing the English test changed to learning English. I participated a lot in classes. I was one of the best students in the class. Even the teacher was really pleased about my level of English. He kept saying that my English level was exceptional. I used to know most of the words that were written on the board. [Mido 1]

When Mido finished his secondary school studies in Dammam in 2011, he attended Jubail University College, where he studied a foundation year. In 2012, despite having successfully completed a year at the University, he had to drop out and join the whole family in moving to the UK as Mido’s father had obtained a scholarship to study there. Given his position and economic status, Mido’s father was able to afford the tuition fees

for his son to attend a Language Centre before he obtained a full scholarship from the Saudi Cultural Bureau. His family lived in Leeds where his father attended an English language course whilst Mido attended another course in Bradford, travelling to and from the Language Centre every day by bus.

Mido had a supportive milieu as his family were concerned about his learning in general and his L2 learning in particular. However, he had no choice about whether to learn English or not as his parents, and especially his father, had made the choice for him to leave University and go with his family to the UK; they even applied for his scholarship. Mido tried hard to please his parents and be obedient, which probably explained his strong Ought to L2 Self. In addition, he had limited experience of everyday life in English-speaking countries as he was taken care of both in the British boarding school and the New Zealand home stay.

#### **6.3.1.2 November 2012**

The first round of interviews (November 2012) took place one month after Mido arrived in the UK. He mentioned that he was unable to make contact with non-Arabic speakers apart from his classmates and tutors. In contrast to his decision in New Zealand two years previously, Mido limited his contact outside the classroom to other Saudi students:

In the Language Centre I'm in contact with my tutors and my classmates. At the end of the day I go back home. Outside the classroom I only hang around with Saudi guys. [Mido 1]

With his Saudi friends, Mido used to go to the cinema almost every weekend. Some weekends they also went to Manchester to see football matches. Although he was aware of the abundance of ICC opportunities especially at the bus stop, train stations, cinema,

or during bus and train journeys, he had not attempted to approach anybody. Mido described his reasons for this decision:

I use the bus every day where there are plenty of contact opportunities. Contacting with others will help me to gain more self-confidence but the problem is that I am a shy person. If I had more courage I would exploit such opportunities. I always ask my friends to speak for me. I don't want to suffer the consequences if someone ignores me. [Mido 1]

Mido was optimistic that the sojourn environment would be supportive enough to help him build his social self-confidence. Since most people viewed Mido as 'just another' international student the social pressure was minimal which might help him to build up confidence by trial and error with a minimal threat to his loss of face, something he would not be likely to experience at home. It is worth mentioning that Saudi society is generally critical of individuals and tends not to be supportive of those with special issues (e.g. lack of self-confidence) like Mido sometimes to the extent of gloating at people's difficulties.

During the first month of his sojourn Mido did not try to make contact with non-Arabic speakers outside the Language Centre but when he was alone (without his Saudi friends) on the bus, for example, he used to spend his time reading a newspaper or using his phone. He was anxious about contact with British people as he thought that they were not approachable and sometimes did not even like making contact with them:

The British people are introverted. They don't like interacting with international people. I don't want to put myself in an embarrassing situation so I haven't approached British people as they may ignore me. I wait for them to initiate contact, as soon as they start chatting to me I will keep the conversation going. Sometimes I interact with bus drivers asking 'Where is this bus going', or 'Can I

have a full day ticket?' I spend my time in the bus reading the *Metro* [a free newspaper distributed on public transport]. [Mido 1]

Mido did not have any strong feelings about his new L2 learning experience. Based on his previous experience of learning English abroad (UK and New Zealand), Mido was able to cope with the different L2 learning environment (i.e. the Language Centre). He did not feel any pressure to put more effort into English learning as his English competence matched the level of the group in which he had been placed.

### **6.3.1.3 February 2013**

It took Mido six weeks after his arrival in the UK to have the courage to start interacting with non-Arabic speakers, especially British people at the bus stop or in the bus. He approached older people (i.e. pensioners) as he found them more open to contact than busy young people. In order to establish contact Mido used strategies like asking about the weather, or letting them get onto the bus first in order to break the ice and start a conversation. Mido found this daily informal chat with British pensioners was a useful way of building up his social self-confidence. The few contact opportunities that Mido had, helped him to make progress in his language learning. He described a strategy that he had followed when holding conversations with native speakers (British):

One of my strengths is that I like to apply any grammar rule I have learned as soon as I have the opportunity. So when I chat with a native speaker I try to use the new grammar rule in my conversation. But if I read such a rule without applying it in an authentic conversation I will forget it. [Mido 2]

Mido focused mainly on his formal L2 learning in the classroom or using the self-access area in the Language Centre, his aim being to obtain the required IELTS score (6) to enter the foundation year at a UK University. However, Mido was not really satisfied as he thought that his progress was slower than he had expected.

Mido's frequent contact with the British people on the bus gave him a more positive attitude towards the host country and its culture with each passing day. However, his attitude towards native speakers remained negative, perhaps the result of the social and linguistic inequality that he felt, which seemed to reinforce his negative stereotypes about the L2 speakers:

Every day I become more impressed with the role that the UK plays in the world. The UK is a world leader in many domains like economics, military, politics, everything. I think that the UK is the best country for education and research. In terms of technology it is among the top countries. New gadgets and technology can be obtained in the UK as soon as they are released. They [the British] have a respectful culture. Last week I visited a museum in York where they display gadgets and machines that they used in the past. They have a great history. Sometimes I think they [the British people] are justified in being arrogant because of their great history. I think that they are introverted but at the same time they are friendly and smile all the time. I mean they are not aggressive. [Mido 2]

Mido started to complain about the learning experience at the Language Centre:

At the moment I am working very hard preparing for the IELTS. At the same time, the tutors ask us to do homework and write reports, which add an extra burden. I feel anxious and exhausted. [Mido 2]

#### **6.3.1.4 May 2013**

Mido progressed in his English learning and obtained the required prerequisite IELTS score (which was 6) to enter the Foundation year the following year in early April. This reduced some of the pressure to learn English and gave him more time to make contact with non-Arabic speakers and build up his self-confidence more. Mido succeeded in making contact with other international students from Spain, Portugal, and USA.



However, he found that being involved in relationships with them would mean compromising some of his basic Islamic principles. Drinking alcohol and going to mixed gender parties that involved alcohol, dance, and music are forbidden in Islamic culture, and these events took place in venues such as night clubs that Mido could not go to as a Muslim. This made it difficult for him to establish relationships with non-Arabic speakers especially those of a similar age (18 and 19 year-olds).

Therefore, Mido preferred to make contact with non-Arabic speaking Muslims as they would share common issues like avoiding alcohol and consuming non-halal food. In addition, they could share similar rituals (e.g. prayer), which could enhance the chances of staying together and possibly establishing a relationship. These common issues were likely to determine whether they would remain acquaintances or become close friends. However, being a Muslim was not enough to guarantee a successful relationship as Mido prioritised another issue in forming friendships:

We should have some common interests. That's important for me. I would like to have a friend who is knowledgeable about football. So we have something in common to discuss. [Mido 3]

Mido continued his frequent habit of chatting to strangers at the bus stop or to the person sitting next to him in the bus, which helped him to gain some self-confidence and fluency, until one day in mid-May he had an unpleasant incident that destroyed the confidence he had built up so far:

Once I was waiting for a bus at a bus stop, and there was an old man with a rucksack which was open. I approached him and said: "Excuse me, your bag is open. Do you want me to help you close it". He became suspicious and walked away and started swearing at me. [Mido 3]

Mido was very embarrassed and probably due to his limited confidence, he felt unable to explain that he was using his L1 cultural norms (i.e. being helpful to the elderly), which were misunderstood. After this incident, Mido restricted his contact to his Saudi friends. The third interview was just two weeks after this trauma and he was still suffering in terms of self-confidence and could not bear going through a similar experience. However, Mido insisted that in time he would be able to make contact again with non-Arabic speakers.

Mido described his L2 learning experience as successful as he had progressed in almost all language skills and had obtained the required IELTS score. He finished his English course in June 2013 before returning to Saudi Arabia with his family during the summer. In September 2013, Mido would start his foundation year at Wolverhampton University but his family were to stay in Leeds where his father was to start his Master's degree, which would give Mido the chance for the first time in his life to live independently in student accommodation. He was looking forward to his forthcoming independent life:

It [the pre-foundation year] is a good experience in many ways. My English progressed; I lived life in a British style. However, I am not independent yet as I still live with my family. But I will become independent when I move to Wolverhampton. [Mido 3]

### **6.3.1.5 Summary**

Mido avoided most of the active ICC opportunities and focused on his L2 learning and obtaining the required prerequisite IELTS score. Of course, he did make some contact when using public transportation but he kept himself away from active contact situations that might lead to establishing potential relationships e.g. participating in social events.

However, having strong Ought to L2 Self was not the only reason for Mido's ICC behaviour. He highlighted a number of mediating factors that had also influenced his ICC activity. For example, a lack of self-confidence was a decisive factor as it kept Mido away from frequent active contact opportunities for six weeks. Another factor was religion because, being a Muslim, Mido could not go to parties that included drinking alcohol and dancing that young people of his age would normally attend to socialise and form relationships. Therefore, Mido approached non-Arabic speaking Muslims in order to avoid such forbidden issues. However, Mido was not able to create a relationship with these people without a common interest.

Furthermore, Mido's stereotypes relating to non-Arabic speakers, especially the British, mainly transmitted by the milieu, affected his ability to make ICC. It was only after he made informal contact outside the classroom with British people (after six weeks of arrival), that Mido started to refute stereotypes such as 'The British do not like to interact with international people'. His contact with British people helped him to develop a positive attitude towards the UK (i.e. the L2 environment) and its culture (i.e. the L2 culture) but not towards British people (i.e. the L2 speakers) as he continued to hold negative views such as 'British people are arrogant and introverted'. This inability to refute stereotypes might be an indication of the social and linguistic inequality that Mido felt when making contact with L2 speakers.

Another important mediating factor was cultural competence. Due to the fact that Mido lacked competence in British culture he applied L1 norms in the L2 context (i.e. in the incident with the man with rucksack). This damaged Mido's level of self-confidence and probably made him question the stereotypes he refuted again.

## 6.3.2 Sufi

### 6.3.2.1 Pre-arrival

Sufi came from a middle class family as his father was a civil servant and his mother was a full-time housewife. He lived with his family in Makkah, and was the youngest of six siblings, having two older brothers and three older sisters. Sufi had attended his local state school as his father's limited income did not enable him to send any of his six children to a private school. As the only breadwinner in the family, Sufi's father was always busy as was his mother, taking care of her family. Since both Sufi's brothers were much older than him they used to go out with their friends and leave him alone whilst his three older sisters were either busy with their studies or helping their mother with the housework. Sufi said that the only way that he was able to deal with this situation was to spend his time playing games like 'Resident Evil' and 'Driver' on his Play Station. The characters in the games he played all used English. Even during the early years of primary school when English was not included in the national curriculum, Sufi found himself repeating what the characters were saying unconsciously even though he did not understand what they were saying:

I used to stay at home most of the time playing Play Station games. When I was really engaged in the story of the game I would hear them [the characters of the game] saying some phrases in English. Then I would repeat what they had said. Sometimes when they said a phrase then they would pause for a while. I found myself imitating the phrase that they just had said. [Sufi 1]

With Sufi's family leaving him to his own devices, he continued to live a parallel life with his Play Station games that used English while was growing up. This meant that Sufi was fascinated by English even before he started learning this language in year 6 (when he was 12 years old), as he explained:

I started studying English at school in year 6 but I was curious about English even before starting studying that in school. For example, the way the letter ‘a’ can be written in lowercase and uppercase. So I can say that I started learning English even before I studied it at school. I know it is bad to say such a thing but my family were not concerned about my learning apart from the Quran. For example, “What did you study? Do you have any homework?” and so on. They didn’t care. [Sufi 1]

At intermediate and secondary school, besides playing Play Station, Sufi began to watch English films and television series, to listen to songs with English lyrics, and to use social media. This was meant he was living in a virtual (English-speaking) world in parallel with the actual (Arabic-speaking) world. Therefore, it was not surprising that Sufi’s social skills were weak as he said:

When I got older and started learning English in school I began watching films, listening to songs, and using the internet. I used social media a lot and sometimes in a dangerous way. For example, as soon as I woke up I used to check Facebook; before I went to bed I used to check Facebook. Sometimes even if I was eating and received notifications then I had to check them; social media took up most of my time. I couldn’t manage to find friends outside the school because my social skills were weak. I think this problem is due to social media and video games [laughter].

[Sufi 1]

When Sufi graduated from secondary school in 2012, he intended to study in Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, his father (the most influential authority figure in the Saudi family) told him to apply for a scholarship to study abroad and he did not have any choice.

In contrast to Mido, Sufi had not had a supportive milieu. He mainly learned his English either at school or from video games and the internet. Unfortunately, excessive use of this virtual world combined with the lack of encouragement he experienced in his

milieu had an impact on his personality, which was to affect his contact activity (see below sections 6.3.2.2, 6.3.2.3, and 6.3.2.4). Despite this lack of attention to his English learning in particular, Sufi applied for the scholarship simply because his father asked him to do. Sufi's endeavour to please his family and gain their attention may be the explanation for his strong Ought to L2 Self.

### **6.3.2.2 November 2012**

The furthest Sufi had travelled before coming to the UK was 40 miles, from his house in Makkah to Taif or Jeddah (two cities in Saudi Arabia). In addition, it was the first time that he had travelled without his family. Sufi had read about the UK before he arrived, but still received a tremendous shock when he arrived, to the extent that it seemed completely unreal to him. He described his impressions of his first few days in the UK when I met him just three weeks after his arrival:

Although I had read about this country before I came here, when I arrived and was actually living here I found it different. The weather, for example, is cold. The steering wheel is on the right-hand side of the car. I knew these things before coming here [to the UK]. But I found the actual experience different from reading about it. As soon as I arrived, I felt that my brain couldn't cope with the changes for a few days; then I got used to it. You know I came from Makkah, from a small crowded area in Makkah. So when I arrived here it was a tremendous shock for me. [Sufi 1]

In the first interview Sufi showed a positive attitude towards the L2 learning process.

Sufi liked the method that the Language Centre used in teaching English:

Studying English here [in the Language Centre] is excellent. Their activities and teaching methodologies are fantastic. [Sufi 1]

He was impressed by some aspects of the country:

The UK plays a leading role in the world especially in terms of inventions. I don't think that it plays a leading role in economic terms but it is advanced and developed in terms of research and technology. [Sufi 1]

However, Sufi arrived the UK with the intention of not making contact with non-Arabic speakers as a result of his father's advice:

I think that the students who are here [in the UK] haven't come to make friends. They have only come to study. My father is always telling me that I am here to study hard, get high marks and go back home, not to make friends. So I am only here to study; not to form relationships with others, apart from other Saudis, of course. [Sufi 1]

Sufi lived in student accommodation in a flat with other five non-Arabic speaking students from the UK, Japan, and Hong Kong. He used to see them in the kitchen at dinner time but did not make the kind of contact that might lead to forming a relationship:

We [Sufi and his flatmates] just meet at dinner time, say hello to each other and that is it. Then I go to my room. There is a TV in the common room downstairs but I don't go there because I don't have friends in the residence. [Sufi 1]

Sufi lacked self-confidence and the right kind of social skills to make contact with his flatmates so he kept to himself in his room all the time. In the Language Centre, Sufi was delighted to find other Saudi students i.e. people from the real world he left behind in Makkah. He sought security in this Arabic-speaking world and stuck to this group of Saudi students. Sufi did not feel safe outside of this Saudi group or his room so when he wanted to leave the residence he used to ask for help from his fellow Saudis:

I try not to go out alone. If I have to leave the residence alone I feel insecure. I keep asking myself why someone is looking at me, did I do something wrong, etc. So I don't go out alone. I always ask my Saudi friends to go out with me. [Sufi 1]

Sufi kept attempting to use English while communicating with other Saudis, which was not appreciated:

When I am with my Saudi friends I try to chat with them using English, and they keep asking me: "Why do you use English?" What can I say? [Sighs deeply]. I want to learn and practise my English. I speak English for a while but then I find that they get angry with me [laughter]. Only then do I speak Arabic. [Sufi 1]

Sufi felt caught in a dilemma as he had realised the importance of contact for practicing English, but his fellow Saudis preferred to use Arabic amongst themselves. At the same time due to his personality and his father's advice he felt unable to make contact with non-Arabic speakers:

I believe that if you think about English as a subject you will find it hard. But if you look at English in terms of practice you will like it as that gives you a reason to learn. I would like to make contact with non-Arabic speakers to practise my English but the problem is I can't do that by myself, I need the help of my Saudi friends. [Sufi 1]

### **6.3.2.3 February 2013**

For two months after his arrival Sufi did not make contact with any non-Arabic speakers apart from his classmates and tutors in the Language Centre. With the help of his fellow Saudis, Sufi ignored his father's advice and managed to make contact with a number of non-Arabic speakers like his flatmates. However, the experience of the virtual world (e.g. Play Station) that Sufi used to live in influenced him while he was



chatting with one of his flatmates who was British. Sufi unconsciously mimicked his accent (as he used to do when one of the game's characters speaks), which made his flatmate angry as he thought that Sufi was mocking him. Sufi's self-confidence suffered a blow so he was afraid of having a similar experience, which made him avoid contacting non-Arabic speakers.

Sufi focused mainly on studying English inside and outside the Language Centre; for example, using the Self Access area, the university library, and his room in the residence and his English progressed steadily. However, Sufi began to question his previously wholly positive views about the Language Centre:

I am progressing slowly. Last term there was a class called 'British Culture', which was not so useful. There was a lot of information which I don't think concerns us [Saudi students]. And in terms of English learning I found it useless. [Sufi 2]

At the same time, though, Sufi enjoyed another class that focused on presentation skills, finding it a useful opportunity to build his self-confidence.

In term two (January 2013), Sufi also began to prepare for IELTS by attending classes at the Language Centre focused on this. Again, Sufi showed himself to be a good independent learner who discovered his weaknesses and worked on these:

When we started I didn't pay much attention to these [IELTS] classes but I discovered that it was serious as I was the last student to finish reading. I realised that I needed to work hard and practise skills like skimming and scanning. My reading skills have become more efficient. I listen to BBC Radio 4 to enhance my listening skills. I also practice writing essays on many topics e.g. economy, health, charity, etc. following academic style. With the help of my tutors my vocabulary repertoire has expanded and my English is progressing. [Sufi 2]

Sufi started preparing himself for IELTS two months prior to the exam that he took in March 2013.

#### **6.3.2.4 May 2013**

Sufi succeeded in obtaining a mark of seven, more than the required IELTS score for the foundation year (which was six). Therefore, just a few weeks after Sufi started term three in April, he obtained the acceptance letter for the foundation year that would start the following year. As he explained Sufi was satisfied about his English learning progress apart from his writing:

I think my English has progressed more than I predicted. For example, in reading I found that my reading skills have progressed. When I came I was a very slow reader in comparison to other students in my group. Then I focused on skim and scan reading and practised again and again. Eventually I found that I can finish with them and sometimes faster. Nothing has changed with my writing skills since I took the IELTS. My speaking skills are good. My listening has developed, too. In general, I am satisfied about the progress of my English. [Sufi 3]

Despite attending presentation classes Sufi did not have the courage to make proper contact with non-Arabic speakers outside the Language Centre. He needed the help from his Saudi group to make informal contact with non-Arabic speakers outside the Language Centre and tried again but with disappointing results:

I went with two other Saudi friends to the Global Café and we chatted with a few international students for a while. The chat was boring and I couldn't find an appropriate topic to speak about. Since then I haven't gone back again. I was disappointed as one of my goals was to make friends with non-Arabic speakers but I failed. [Sufi 3]

Sufi's hopes of making contact with non-Arabic speakers and forming relationships were dashed so he focused on his English learning and strengthened his relationship with the fellow Saudis:

My relationship with other Saudi students became stronger. But in terms of making contact with non-Arabic speakers I don't expect to make contact with them. I don't think there's any chance. Nothing has changed yet and I don't think anything will change. [Sufi 3]

Sufi was a good reader, which helped his English to progress despite lack of contact with non-Arabic speakers. He read many articles on different topics including law, economics, health, and science. Therefore, this had helped him to change from being a person who just accepted what others say into a critical thinker who asked for facts or for scientific evidence to back up what was said. He realised this and described it as a scary change as it might create problems for him especially with authority figures like his father as they might think that Sufi was just challenging them:

I have changed since I arrived. For example, instead of being just a normal person like anyone else in society, now I think critically, I ask about every piece of information and search for the facts instead of accepting things at face value. This is a scary change as it is difficult to swim against the current. [Sufi 3]

When I met Sufi at the end of May he was packing his luggage to travel home to spend the summer holidays with his family in Makkah before returning in September 2013 to start his foundation year.

### **6.3.2.5 Summary**

Sufi adopted a positive attitude towards his L2 learning experience and his English progressed steadily. He was placed in the most advanced group in the Language Centre and succeeding in obtaining a higher score than he required in the IELTS exam.

Unfortunately, he was unable to make the most of the many situations for active contact during his pre-foundation year. Having a strong Ought to L2 Self was not the only reason for Sufi's avoidance of such contact as he mentioned other contributory factors. Sufi had personal issues that kept him away from contact with non-Arabic speakers, for example, his own shyness, lack of social skills and low self-confidence. However, such personal issues did not stop him from contacting and making friends with other fellow Saudis, which suggested that such issues only existed when he made contact with foreigners.

Although Sufi had positive attitudes toward the L2, the L2 learning experience, and the L2 culture this did not help him to make real contact (i.e. that might potentially lead to a relationship) with any member of the British community. Therefore, it might be concluded from Sufi's case that having positive attitudes toward the L2, the L2 learning context, and the L2 culture may help to enhance L2 motivation disposition, which in turn may increase the effort that the L2 learner puts into L2 learning, which in turn may improve the L2 learner's progress towards competence. However, without a stable level of self-confidence, good social skills, and positive attitudes towards the L2 speakers meaningful contact and potential relationships are unlikely to result.

Milieu had an impact on Sufi's behaviour during his first year in the UK. His father's influence remained with him as did his stereotypical views that sojourners should only be interested in studying not in making relationships. This prevented Sufi from forming friendly relationships with non-Arabic speakers, even with his flatmates.

Sufi confirmed the social support that other Saudi students provided for him. They helped him to leave the residence as he always felt unsecure to leave alone. They also encouraged him to go to the Global Café that was organised by the University Students Union. Outside of this, though, there was a lack of institutional support at the Language

Centre level as it did not organise social events or sports tournaments that would enable its international students to meet and interact with local students (British).

### **6.3.3 Zizo**

#### **6.3.3.1 Pre-arrival**

Zizo came from a wealthy family of high academic achievers. His father, a Chief Executive Officer in one of the largest companies in Saudi Arabia, graduated with a PhD in Engineering from the USA whilst his uncle had obtained a PhD in Business Management from the University of Leeds. Zizo's mother was a teacher. Zizo, the second oldest son of five children, lived with his family in Jeddah. The economic status of Zizo's father had enabled him to send all his children to prestigious private schools, where they had studied English from year one, which the parents believed was important for their children's future. They had also supported them with extra-curricular resources like private English tuition and internet access. The internet helped Zizo to watch films, listen to English songs and use social media to make contact with non-Arabic speakers outside Saudi Arabia. His English was progressing steadily, but perhaps due to the fact he was still fairly young, Zizo did not realise the importance of English for his future career until he came to study in the UK.

Zizo used to spend summer holidays outside Saudi Arabia with his family. They had travelled to many destinations including France, Malaysia, India, South Africa, and Greece. This had helped Zizo to discover different cultures as he explained:

When I travelled abroad, I was keen to know about the country's culture. For example, when I travelled to India I had long conversations [in English] with the tour guide to find out about the places we went to and the history of India, their

language, their food, etc. I was keen to know everything about Indian culture. I really enjoyed my trip there. They have more than 15 languages. The food was excellent. When I travelled to South Africa I liked African dance. It was unique. Making contact with other people helped me to understand their cultures and habits.

[Zizo 1]

When Zizo was in secondary school, his older brother obtained a scholarship to study in Canada and he used to contact his brother using Skype. Sometimes he had the chance to chat with his brother's non-Arabic speaking friends who were from other countries (Japan and Brazil).

Just like his siblings, Zizo's father had been preparing him to study abroad since he started his academic journey at the age of six. Zizo accepted willingly his father decision to apply for a scholarship after he graduated from secondary school in 2012. The influence of his father and his uncle was instrumental in the planning for study abroad as they decided where and what he should study. Zizo's father advised him to study Law as there are currently promising job opportunities in this field in the Saudi labour market while his uncle, who studied at Leeds University, recommended it as having a good academic reputation.

Zizo received considerable support for his English learning from his milieu as they provided him with much-needed extra-curricular resources (e.g. private English classes). In addition, his family members had set him excellent examples as successful L2 users (e.g. his father, uncle, and also older brother). Furthermore, the internet also provided an important platform for his L2 learning. Zizo was exposed to L2 artefacts and contact with non-Arabic speakers outside Saudi Arabia either by using social media or during the family holidays every summer. All these circumstances may have helped Zizo to create an image of himself as an L2 user with a high Ideal L2 Self.

### 6.3.3.2 November 2012

Like the other Saudi students, Zizo spent his first two weeks in the UK settling in and completing administrative tasks, such as opening a bank account, signing his accommodation contract, arranging health insurance, and exploring the city. Zizo's English was better than that of many other newly arrived Saudi students. Therefore, some of them asked him for help:

My fellow Saudis asked me to contact their bank, health insurance company, and the Language Centre because all of that was in English. Even when they wanted to order from a restaurant sometimes they asked for help. [Zizo 1]

After Zizo settled down and began the English course he started to experience difficulties in adapting to the new environment. The weather was getting colder and it rained most of the time. In addition, he became bored with the food. As neither he nor his flatmates could cook, Zizo had to order take away food from restaurants and tried various meals from different restaurants, none of which were to his liking. Furthermore, Zizo hated his room which he found small in comparison to rooms in another accommodation where he visited other Saudi students. Zizo redesigned his room by relocating the wardrobe and the bed, an attempt to exert some control over his new environment which may indicate his response to culture shock. Zizo attempted to cancel his contract in order to move elsewhere but he could not as he had entered into a long-term contract. Moreover, he found it difficult to adapt to the academic style of the Language Centre. The result of all this culture shock nearly had serious consequences for Zizo as he became depressed and was about to cancel his scholarship and go back to Saudi Arabia.

Although Zizo had wide experience of travelling abroad, this did not help him to avoid certain negative psychological experiences typically suffered by other newly arrived

sojourners (including depression and feeling homesick). Zizo found that the experience of travelling abroad for pleasure was different from being a sojourner. This required him to settle into an environment which was utterly different from the experience of travelling for pleasure, socially, culturally, academically and even economically. Thus, for instance, when Zizo had travelled abroad with his family where his expenses were covered by his father, while as a sojourner he had travelled alone and had to be financially responsible for himself. In addition, when Zizo had travelled abroad for pleasure, the people he met were dealing with him as a customer, but in the UK he was dealing with people who were responsible for his scholarship, his tutors, classmates, fellow Saudis, and other non-Arabic speakers. Therefore, the relationships between Zizo and other people in these two contexts had been different in terms of power (socially and linguistically). This may have made Zizo feel inferior as a sojourner, which might not have been the case as a tourist.

Fortunately, a group of experienced Saudi students spoke to him and convinced him to stay and pursue his studies. In Saudi society, if someone failed to accomplish a task such as obtaining a degree, it would be regarded as a disgrace, which would haunt the person for the rest of their lives, if not the whole family. Zizo eventually changed his mind and decided to stay. His fellow Saudis thus played a vital role in supporting Zizo during this psychological crisis and proved crucial for his survival in this new environment.

Zizo was interviewed two weeks after he had threatened to go back to Saudi Arabia. He had then already settled down psychologically and had become enthusiastic about English learning as he explained:

In a few months, I can see myself as being a very fluent English user, even better than my tutors. They are native speakers so it would be impossible to be better than



them but I mean in the way I express my ideas. As you know I am going to study law so as a lawyer I need to master the language and be extremely fluent. [Zizo 1]

Zizo was an extroverted and energetic student who everyone in the Language Centre knew. Despite that Zizo lived in a flat where all his flatmates were Saudis, he managed to make friendships with a number of non-Arabic speaking students of different nationalities. However, Zizo believed that if he wanted to practise English, he needed to make contact with native speakers:

The flat where I live all my flatmates are Saudis. So every evening I go to the common room downstairs to chat with students from China, Italy, Japan, Spain, etc. I make contact with them to know about their culture, their behaviour, and make friendships but not to practise English. No one will go out to practise English with Japanese, for example. Their language is really terrible so there is not much benefit in practising English with them. They do not speak clearly and their listening is also weak so you have to repeat what you have said three times. If I could speak to a British person I could practise my English. I wish that there were some British students living in my flat so my English would develop in a very short time. I know a Saudi student who is extremely lucky as he lives in a flat with four British students in another residence. [Zizo 1]

Nonetheless, Zizo did have certain stereotypes (coming from his milieu) about the British such as being racist so he was cautious about making contact with them despite his respect for their polite behaviour as he described here:

Before I came here, I heard that the British are racist and they hate immigrants. But I like the British system as all the British people respect systems such as queueing and holding the door open for you. I like the word 'cheers'! Another thing is the attention they pay while you speak such as nodding their head. For example, when I speak to my tutor even for a long time he keeps eye contact and nods his head till I

finish. Another thing is using ‘sorry’ and ‘please’ to show respect to others. In Saudi Arabia we don’t have this type of culture. [Zizo 1]

Zizo also had the idea of living in the UK so he could study English law, which he believed would enable him to get a job and live in the UK in the future. Zizo and his fellow Saudis finished term one before Christmas and travelled back to Saudi Arabia during the Christmas holiday before coming back for term two in January 2013.

### **6.3.3.3 February 2013**

The second interview was four weeks after Zizo and his fellow Saudis started term two. Zizo had got used to the academic style of teaching English that the Language Centre followed. At the same time he found that the learning experience was not that positive taking into consideration the hours they spent either at the Language Centre or in writing reports and doing homework:

We spend 21 hours a week in the Language Centre, which is exhausting. When I go back to the residence, I spend hours writing reports and summaries. I also prepare for IELTS by attending IELTS courses and do self-study at the Self Access (self-studying area at the language centre). I really feel exhausted. [Zizo 2]

Zizo was delighted that with the help of one of his Fellow Saudis, he extended his relationships to include more non-Arabic speakers. He made meaningful contact with British students who lived elsewhere, which he thought might potentially lead to friendship:

Recently, I have met a number of British students. You remember \*\*\*\*\* [a Saudi fellow], the one I told you about in our first meeting. They are his friends and his flatmates. We usually go out together. During the last three weeks we have been out four times. [Zizo 2]

Zizo found an opportunity to practise English, which he believed would help his English to progress. However, maintaining a sustainable friendship with the British students was difficult as they rarely met (only four times in three weeks). Therefore, Zizo looked for more sustainable friendship with English-speaking students of other nationalities like Nigerians and Indians. He believed that they were more approachable than the British who usually had their own clique:

It is difficult to make a proper relationship with British students as we rarely meet; once every two weeks or so. I don't think such contact will make friends only acquaintances, I guess. But this contact will help to improve my English. I go downstairs to the common room where I usually meet English-speaking students e.g. Indians and Nigerian. We usually spend hours discussing general issues and play 'Play Station' together. [Zizo 2]

Zizo faced a number of issues that made it difficult to form relationships with some of the non-Arabic speakers who were not Muslims:

As Muslims our perspective is different from theirs. For example, at the weekends they [non-Muslims] have parties, go to night clubs, drink alcohol, etc. You know these are forbidden activities. We cannot do that. Their life style is different from ours. [Zizo 2]

Despite these behaviours which were forbidden to him (e.g. drinking alcohol), Zizo succeeded in forming a real friendship with a group of Italian students. Furthermore, Zizo worked to strengthen this friendship; for example, he and a group of his fellow Saudis planned to visit their Italian friends during the Easter holiday. At the end of term two, Zizo had applied for the IELTS test in March 2013 before he travelled with his fellow Saudis to visit their friends in Italy.

#### 6.3.3.4 May 2013

After the Easter holiday, Zizo's academic self-confidence received a major boost:

I obtained the IELTS score I needed, 6.5. I also obtained an acceptance letter for my foundation year. I am very satisfied that I got the required IELTS score, the acceptance letter and I can speak English fluently. So my confidence is extremely high. When I arrived one of my goals was to get the required IELTS score. I didn't imagine that I could get 6.5 easily. Another goal was to learn academic style, which I also mastered. I can read passages and get the gist, the argument, how to make a proper structure for an essay. Now I am doing an assignment about evaluating the jury system in the UK. I have read plenty of articles and I'm adding the final touches. When I arrived I didn't think that I would get to such level. I think that I exceeded my goal. [Zizo 3]

Also in term three most of Zizo's non-Arabic speaking friends finished their studies and left, either to go back to their countries or to go to other regions of the UK. Success in obtaining the required acceptance letter to start the foundation year the following year as well as the absence of Zizo's former friends gave him more time to relax and travel with his fellow Saudis to different areas of the UK e.g. London and Newcastle. This meant that in his last few weeks before travelling back home for the summer holidays, Zizo became less interested in making friends with non-Arabic speakers:

Recently, I haven't been trying as hard to make new friends. I couldn't do it properly. I mean I spend most of my time with my Saudi friends. We travelled to Newcastle, Manchester, London, etc. I rarely make contact with non-Arabic speakers: I spend approximately 90% of my time with other Saudi friends. [Zizo 3]

Zizo's behaviour of relapsing into his comfort zone (i.e. the Saudi clique) might indicate the possible fluctuation of ICC patterns. Nevertheless, looking further ahead, Zizo was optimistic that, unlike in the Language Centre, he would meet British students, which

would present a golden opportunity to make friends and find out about British culture from a first-hand experience.

Before the end of term three, Zizo finished his 52-week accommodation contract, which gave him the chance to change to better accommodation insofar as it was more spacious and nearer to the university. As soon as Zizo finished term three, he returned to Saudi Arabia to spend summer holidays with his family before coming back to begin the foundation year in September 2013.

#### **6.3.3.5 Summary**

Zizo's L2 learning experience was positive in general despite his struggle to adapt to the new L2 learning environment during his first few weeks and the huge effort he had to put into IELTS preparation courses during term 2. In addition, he succeeded in getting involved in ICC situations, although this was mostly with other international students as the British students remained out of reach. This highlights the role of English as a Lingua Franca even in an English-speaking host environment.

The involvement in active ICC situations with other international students was not always smooth or straight-forward as Zizo experienced a series of ups and downs. His case highlights a number of mediating factors that had an impact on his ICC patterns, for example, culture shock, Islamic prohibitions on certain types of activities, and stereotypes.

Zizo's case might also indicate that having positive attitudes towards a specific community does not necessary help to refute stereotypes. Zizo arrived in the UK holding stereotypes conveyed from his milieu about British people but at the same time he held positive attitudes towards English (L2), the UK (the country), and aspects of the behaviour of British people. Zizo also had the dream of living in the UK after obtaining

a degree in English Law. The contact situations which Zizo experienced with British people after arriving in the UK were mainly for transactional purposes (e.g. buying cinema tickets or groceries in the supermarket), or for academic purposes (e.g. with tutors). These did not help to refute the negative stereotypes. Therefore, in order to change negative stereotypes about a specific group of people (i.e. the British) it is likely that someone needs to make contact with members of that group in a more naturally relaxed social setting. However, the ways that male Saudi students typically relax (such as playing football), and the ways that their British counterparts relax (such as partying with alcohol) seemed to be incompatible.

Finally, Zizo referred to the lack of institutional support at the level of the Language Centre as it did not organise social events to help the Saudi students and other international students to make contact with their British counterparts. The same was true as the level of university accommodation as Zizo found himself sharing a flat with five other Saudi students.

### **6.3.4 Badr**

#### **6.3.4.1 Pre-arrival**

Badr was the oldest of his eight siblings in a middle-class family, his father being a civil servant and his mother a housewife. Badr's father had a moderate educational level having completed his secondary education whilst his mother was barely literate. Due to his father's limited income, Badr attended the state primary school nearest to his house in Riyadh. While still young, (at intermediate school level) Badr was given responsibility for helping his father to provide for the needs of his large family. Badr's father depended on his oldest son to help his younger siblings with their studies,

supervise their behaviour, and help with housework. Badr's father was extremely keen that his children should learn English but due to his economic status he was unable to afford the tuition fees demanded by private schools. Therefore, using the intermediate level state school curriculum for English, Badr's father started to teach English to his oldest son when he was in year four (aged 10). He began with the alphabet and taught him the meaning of some basic vocabulary he knew. Eventually, Badr's father found that he had no idea how to teach English and usually did not know the meaning of some words so he bought a dictionary for his son and asked him to translate English vocabulary and memorise it. Badr was the centre of family attention, striving to please his father and set a good example for his younger siblings.

Badr started learning English to please his father but grew to like this language and dreamt of being a competent English user. However, he found the English textbook and the teaching methodology used in his school were frustrating, as he explained:

Since the first moment I started learning English I dreamt that someday in the future I would be an excellent English user. But the circumstances didn't help me to achieve this. The curriculum, the teachers, and the schools didn't help. But I devoted myself to learning. The curriculum was so inadequate and uninteresting. Read, answer the questions and that was it. I wish that English teaching in our schools was better and included listening classes and discussion. This would help students to be more competent in English. [Badr 1]

Because of the unsatisfactory English language teaching in the state school, Badr looked for another way to support his English learning and pursue his dream of being a fluent English user:

The internet was the main source that enhanced my English language competence. I used Facebook to contact English speakers, watched YouTube, downloaded series

and films, etc. for example; I downloaded the whole seven seasons of an American series called *Super Natural*. I also created an account on Facebook, and then I searched for English-speaking friends to chat with, reading the posts they add to their Facebook page, and then writing some comments. [Badr 1]

Based on being a fluent English user, Badr created big dreams that he devoted himself to achieving:

I always see English as part of my life. I have an image of myself working in a big corporation where I will need English to contact with my colleagues from all over the world on a daily basis. I will also travel worldwide so I will need English for that too. I will also need English to keep myself up to date with developments in my discipline. English will also be needed to keep me informed about international news. I also have the intention of pursuing my studies Masters and PhD abroad. English will be essential for my future life. [Badr 1]

Badr graduated from secondary school in 2012 and applied for a scholarship, which was not purely his own decision as his father wanted him to study abroad and to study either medicine or engineering. Badr selected engineering.

Despite his family responsibilities as well as the moderate economic status of Badr's family, the encouragement and support (both financial and academic) of his father for his English learning helped him to create a vivid image of himself as a future English user. Badr kept this image alive, feeding it by striving to be competent. The internet was the main source that supported his L2 learning as his father could not afford to pay tuition fees either domestically or abroad. Badr's supportive milieu, his intrinsic interest in English, and the internet as an open resource were likely the reasons behind his Ideal L2 Self. In addition, Badr's endeavour to please his father and set a shining example for



his siblings corresponded with his high Ideal L2 Self, which may have helped his high Ideal L2 Self to exert its ‘motivational power’ (Dörnyei 2009).

#### **6.3.4.2 November 2012**

Badr arrived at the UK in October 2012, which was his first trip not only abroad but also without his family. Badr suffered from culture shock as he experienced every aspect of his new life for the first time ever (from student accommodation to the weather). Badr was used to living amidst the hustle and bustle of a family house with his parents seven other siblings but in the UK he was in his room alone in mixed student accommodation. Badr had been the centre of attention within his family while in the UK he was just another unrecognisable international student like the other hundreds of international students at his accommodation. Badr had to open a bank account and register with a health insurance company, both first time experiences. He described himself as lucky because he met a number of experienced Saudi students in his student accommodation who helped him to settle in.

In addition, Badr experienced international food for the first time, and did not enjoy this much. The weather also proved challenging and he became ill a few days after arrival. During his second week Badr faced the inevitable experience that most border crosser normally have:

During my second week I wondered why I had come here [to the UK] and I intended to go back home especially when my mother called me. I had severe homesickness. Although the accommodation was full of other Saudi students psychologically I wasn't OK, especially because that was my first trip without my family. [Badr 1]

Luckily, as with Zizo, some more experienced Saudi students living in the same accommodation helped him to overcome his negative feelings. The existence of his

fellow Saudis was crucial in order for Badr to adapt to the new environment as they supported him during his first steps.

Badr started term one in the Language Centre with students from different parts of the world e.g. Korea, China, and Japan. Badr was curious to make contact with them in order to know about their culture rather than practicing English with them or forming relationships:

I make contact with other international students in the Language Centre without any intention of forming relationships. I intend to be just an acquaintance. I don't want to be involved in any relationships whatsoever. The only reason I make contact with them is I want to know about their culture, their behaviour, etc. The Japanese students are curious to know about the religious rituals we practice such as prayers. I also want to know about their beliefs. The more contact I have the more I will know about other cultures and languages: Japanese, Italian, etc. [Badr 1]

Badr was impressed with the way English was taught in the Language Centre as he compared it to the way English had been taught at his school in Saudi Arabia:

Unlike English teaching in Saudi Arabia, here in the Language Centre, English is not only a school subject; it is a language. Here we study listening, writing, reading, and speaking'. We practice English inside and outside the classroom in restaurants, shops, etc. The Language Centre will enable me to work hard on things that can help me later in my studies like presentations, writing essays, reading articles, etc. In the Language Centre, they don't focus on language learning as they try to help us to be self-learners. [Badr 1]

Just like the other three participants, Badr arrived with negative attitudes towards the British people. He viewed the UK among the second most advanced countries in the

world after countries like Japan. In addition, Badr found British people introverted, which he thought of as positive in that they respect the privacy of others. At the same time, Badr was fond of other aspects of the host environment:

In my opinion academically the UK is the best country. The educational system in the UK focuses on the notion that the student should be knowledgeable at his discipline. The American system, for example, is just like our system (the Saudi Arabian educational system) in terms of examinations. So in the British system you have the chance to be innovative. The UK is an educational environment. Another thing is that the UK is the origin of the English language. I am really fond of the British accent, which is another reason why I came to study in the UK. [Badr 1]

Badr lived in a flat with five fellow Saudis, which made it difficult to make contact with non-Arabic speakers. Therefore, he used to go to the common room in the hall in the student residence in order to meet people from different cultures and have fun:

In my accommodation there is a common room. I go there to meet students from different cultural background, watch TV, and sometimes play table tennis. [Badr 1]

Badr finished term one at the Language Centre before Christmas then he travelled back to Saudi Arabia to spend the holiday with his family.

#### **6.3.4.3 February 2013**

Badr came back to the UK in January to attend term two. As soon as he arrived, Badr moved out of his old accommodation, a flat he shared with five fellow Saudis which was half an hour's walk from the Language Centre, to another flat that was a ten-minute walk from the Language Centre where he was the only Arabic speaker of five international students. This enabled Badr to have more contact with non-Arabic speakers outside the Language Centre. For example, Badr became a member of a group of students who were studying different disciplines. They used to gather frequently to

have long conversations discussing a range of issues from different disciplines. Furthermore, Badr joined a Facebook group of international students who were living in his accommodation. Moreover, Badr participated in tournaments that international students at the accommodation arranged. This helped Badr to extend his contact with non-Arabic speakers and to learn about different cultures. However, Badr could not manage to create meaningful relationships from such contact with non-Arabic speakers.

As he made more contacts Badr's English progressed steadily, as he explained:

Eventually, I found that I could understand what people say more easily than before. I have got used to the British accent gradually. [Badr 2]

Badr's English progressed and his contact with the non-Arabic speakers flourished with other international students because the British, whom he preferred to contact for English practice, were hard to find as they usually had their own clique. However, Badr managed to make contact with a number of British students who were Muslims and believed that they were different from non-Muslims:

Recently I met a number of British students. They are Muslims so I don't think that they represent British culture. I find that their culture is similar to ours [Saudi Arabian]. [Badr 2]

Also in term two, Badr registered for IELTS preparation classes in order to apply for IELTS test in March 2013. Badr found the first few weeks of the IELTS preparation classes disappointing as he found that the test was advanced in comparison to his English competence level, especially for the reading and writing tasks as he was the last student to finish the tasks. The time limit of the test presented a huge challenge for Badr as he became stressed under time pressure. He described his experience with the IELTS preparation classes:

I am satisfied to some extent. I am not good enough at reading and writing. Good but not good enough. One of the greatest obstacles is the IELTS tasks. In the IELTS I need to do the tasks in a specific time. I can't work under time pressure. I think I am the type of person who works efficiently at long-term tasks. [Badr 2]

With the help of the Self Access service in the Language Centre, Badr practised the IELTS test tasks in the run-up to the real test at the beginning of March 2013.

#### **6.3.4.4 May 2013**

After the Easter holiday Badr started term three before receiving the results of his IELTS test. He had successfully obtained the required prerequisite score for Foundation the following year. Badr explained that his level of English competence had developed for a number of reasons including reading many articles from various disciplines and writing reports and assignments. Nonetheless, Badr believed that the main reason for his English progress was his interaction with other international students mainly inside the language centre.

Despite Badr's awareness of his English progress, he was not satisfied:

Yes I obtained seven in IELTS but it is not a sign of progress in English. The progress was in the academic English. I have developed in writing and reading but not in speaking and listening. I need to get involved in more interaction with non-Arabic speakers in order to develop my speaking and listening skills. [Badr 3]

Moreover, Badr was not also satisfied regarding his interaction activity with other international students as he thought it was limited. He revealed the reason behind this limited interaction:

Because I already have my own clique of Saudi friends I couldn't have more contact with other international students. I mean if I had come alone, I would have

been involved in relationships with other international students. But I didn't have to because I had my Saudi friends. [Badr 3]

Badr believed that the role of the language centre was not only teaching English to international students. It should expand its mission to involve more social dimensions by organising social events such as football. Badr thought that such social events might break the routine of the school-like atmosphere and create more opportunities to meet students from outside the language centre.

After obtaining the required IELTS score, Badr contacted the university in order to get the acceptance letter, which took a couple of weeks. After that, Badr informed his sponsor about his success in obtaining the acceptance letter for the foundation year in order to confirm his financial support for the following year and to obtain tickets for the summer holiday. In addition, Badr was busy looking for new accommodation for the following year. While he was preparing for the following year, Badr's friends had finished their academic year and gradually began to leave for their summer holidays. When Badr had finished his preparations for the following year and before travelling to Saudi Arabia to spend the summer holiday with his family, he found some time to relax with his fellow Saudis, travelling to different regions of the UK that they had not visited.

I met Badr just before he travelled home for the summer holiday and I asked him to reflect on his experience of the year he had spent. He commented:

Since arriving in October 2012, I accomplished most of my goals but not all of them. For example, my goal was to exceed 5.5 in IELTS and I obtained 7. Another goal was to obtain the acceptance letter and I did. Overall, it was a very successful experience academically and culturally I gained useful experience. So many of the views I held about many issues have changed since I arrived. Next year I will be in

Foundation year so I will try to make contact with many people from different cultures and make friends. I will try to make up for what I have missed this year.

There will be many students from different cultures [in foundation year] so I will have an opportunity to make friends. [Badr 3]

At the end of term three, just like other his fellow Saudis, Badr travelled to Saudi Arabia to spend the summer holiday with his family before he returned in September 2013 to begin his foundation year.

#### **6.3.4.5 Summary**

Badr became involved in plenty of active contact situations with non-Arabic speakers and most of that contact was with other international students. His ICC involvement did not always go smoothly as he suffered from culture shock which took time as well as help from his fellow Saudis to overcome. However, when Badr found himself in a flat full of his fellow Saudis, this made contact with non-Arabic speakers difficult, so he took a number of steps in order to deal with this issue. Firstly, he changed his accommodation; secondly, he participated in a multi-disciplinary discussion group in his accommodation; thirdly, he participated in multinational and multicultural tournaments that were arranged by the international students in his residence, and finally, he became a member of an international group on Facebook.

Despite being involved in interaction with other international students, Badr believed that such interaction was below average in comparison to the time he used to spend with his Saudi fellows. In addition, Badr was sometimes selective as he preferred to make contact with native English speakers for language practice and contact with native speakers who were Muslims in order to avoid difficulties concerning issues such as drinking alcohol. Not surprisingly, situations of ICC combined with studying hard and

support from the Self Access service helped Badr's English to progress but not to the level he was hoping for.

Similar to the other participants in this research, Badr highlighted the role of the social support from other Saudi students especially at critical moments when facing culture shock. Finally, Badr referred to the lack of institutional support at the level of the Language Centre.

#### **6.4 Conclusion**

This chapter looked at the findings generated from three rounds of interviews (November 2012, February 2013, and May 2013). The chapter firstly presented the findings in across-case section in an attempt to get an overview of the experiences of all the four participants. This identified three main themes which affected the experiences of the four participants during their first year in a pre-foundation course. The first theme summarised the nature of their ICC behaviour. The second referred to the nature of their L2 learning behaviour. The third focused on mediating factors that impacted on the participants' experiences. The study found that these three themes were likely to be interrelated as aspects of the L2 learning environment (e.g. exam pressure) as well as other cultural, social and personal factors affected the ICC activity of the participants. In addition, the differences among the participants and surrounding contexts (social and cultural) suggested that the extent of the relationship among these themes varied for different participants.

Therefore, a within-case analysis followed, in which each participant's story was presented separately in an attempt to get a better understanding of the complexity of their experiences. The stories included relevant aspects of their lives before their arrival at the UK, in an attempt to understand how some social, cultural, political, and



historical influences which they brought with them from their previous experiences might impact on their behaviour, decisions, and adjustment during their first year in the UK.

In Chapter 7, the issues relevant to the participants' intercultural experiences that have been raised in this chapter will be discussed in detail using relevant literature. This discussion will also integrate the findings of the qualitative data with the data generated from the quantitative data in order to address the research questions in detail.

## 7 CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION

### 7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the key findings from the quantitative and qualitative data that have been presented in the previous two chapters with findings from the relevant literature. The chapter will be structured in relation to the research questions, as reproduced below:

1. What is the relationship between prior levels of ICC and reported motivation to learn English among pre-foundation Saudi sojourners newly arrived in the UK?
  - a) What is their prior level of ICC?
  - b) How is ICC related to the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System?
  - c) What is the relationship between the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System and reported learning effort?
2. How do participants with distinct motivational profiles on arrival (as measured by the questionnaire) recognise and respond to opportunities for ICC and for L2 learning over the course of their first year of study in the UK?

Therefore, the chapter will be divided into two main sections. The initial section will address the first research question, which will be divided into three subsections; the first of these will look at the prior level of ICC of the sample of pre-foundation Saudi sojourners newly arrived in the UK. The second subsection will look at the relationship between ICC and the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System (Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, and Language Learning Attitudes). Finally, the third subsection will look at the relationship between the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System and the reported learning effort of the participants.

The second section focuses on the second research question by presenting findings related to the actual ICC behaviour and L2 learning behaviour of the four participants during their first year in the host environment (UK), exploring whether their prior motivational profiles would help to explain their ICC and L2 learning behaviour. The chapter will conclude by commenting on the relationship between the quantitative and the qualitative data obtained in this study.

## **7.2 RQ1 what is the relationship between prior levels of ICC and reported motivation to learn English among pre-foundation Saudi sojourners newly arrived in the UK?**

This section will look at the prior level of ICC of the sample. Then it will look at the relationship between their prior ICC and the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System. Finally, it will focus on the relationship between the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System and the reported learning effort among the study participants.

### **7.2.1 Prior level of ICC**

The descriptive statistics (i.e. mean and standard deviation) revealed that on average the new Saudi sojourners had a low level of ICC before they arrived in the UK. This low level of ICC was not surprising taking into account that most of the participants had not travelled outside Saudi Arabia and in some cases (as the interviews later revealed) they had never travelled outside their home city. Consequently, they had not had the chance to make contact with non-Arabic speakers outside their homeland and/or to use English. Moreover, when the participants had the chance to meet non-Arabic speakers in Saudi Arabia, Arabic was usually the medium of interaction and this contact was mainly for pragmatic reasons (e.g. ordering a meal). Therefore the chances of using English as a Lingua Franca to make inter-ethnic contact Allport (1954) with non-Arabic speakers

were very limited. Ironically, the interviewees complained about the lack of contact with local people from the host culture, an issue which appears to be a universal phenomenon. It has been reported in various contexts including the USA (Hechanova-Alampay *et al.* 2002), Australia (Kashima and Loh 2006), Egypt (Trentman 2013), and the UK (Wright and Schartner 2013, Brown 2009).

Despite the low level of ICC of the majority of the participants, their awareness of the importance of being involved in contact situations for their L2 learning and intercultural learning was high. The correlation analysis and regression analysis both revealed a relationship between the Perceived Importance of ICC and the reported L2 Learning Effort. This suggested that it is not only being involved in ICC situations that affects the L2 learning behaviour of L2 learners but also the attitudes attached to the importance of interacting with people from inter-ethnic groups.

## **7.2.2 The relationship between the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System and ICC**

This section will focus on two main findings related to the relationship between the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System and the ICC of the sample; the first finding is that their prior ICC is likely to promote their Ideal L2 Self. The second finding is that the participants' perception of the importance attached to the ICC is a stronger predictor of the Ideal L2 Self more than prior ICC.

### **7.2.2.1 Prior ICC promotes Ideal L2 Self**

The prior ICC variable correlated with two components of the three constructs that made up the L2 Motivational Self System, namely, Ideal L2 Self and Language Learning Attitudes. In addition, the regression analysis revealed that the prior ICC variable was a key predictor variable of the same two components of the L2

Motivational Self System. The relationship that this study found between ICC and reported motivation to learn English was in line with previous studies e.g. Aubrey and Nowlan (2013), Csizér and Kormos (2008b), Dörnyei *et al.* (2006) and Clément and Kruidenier (1985), all of which found a relationship between ICC experiences (direct or indirect) and learners' L2 motivation. In their study of Francophone learners of English in Canada, Clément and Kruidenier (1985) found that pleasant and frequent experiences of ICC enhanced the students' L2 motivation. Similarly, Dörnyei and Csizér (2005) suggest that greater ICC experience with L2 speakers is likely to increase learners' L2 motivation. This suggests that in a foreign language context like Saudi Arabia where ICC opportunities with L2 speakers are scarce, exposure to L2 artefacts is important as a means of raising the interest of L2 learners in the L2. Therefore, English teachers as well as the people around the L2 learners should help them to gain exposure to L2 cultural products, which have become easily accessible with the help of the communications and digital technology revolution (specifically, the internet).

The correlation between prior ICC and the Ideal L2 Self was stronger than the correlation between prior ICC and language learning attitudes (see section 5.3). In addition, the regression analysis also revealed that the prior ICC variable explained 24% of the variance in the Ideal L2 Self. At the same time, the prior ICC explained only 12% of the variance in the language learning attitudes. This suggests that the Ideal L2 Self had a stronger relationship with the prior ICC of the participants in comparison to the other two constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System (Ought to L2 Self and Language Learning Attitudes).

Based on the correlation and regression results, one might argue that prior ICC (and the chance to experience authentic communication in English) in the home environment (here Saudi Arabia) can help learners to generate a clearer Ideal L2 Self, which

encourages them to put more effort into L2 learning. This greater effort in turn gives them a sense of being a real English user in the future, and, as they begin to see their Ideal L2 Self, this might consequently boost their motivation for learning English. On the other hand, students who have had few ICC experiences are less likely to have an image of themselves as future international L2 users.

A number of recent studies have found substantial evidence asserting an association between the Ideal L2 Self and 'vision' (Dörnyei and Chan 2013, Kim and Kim 2011, Al-Shehri 2009). The clearer the vision that L2 learners have, the stronger Ideal L2 Self they will develop, and the more effort they will put into L2 learning. To sum up, the figures generated from correlation and regression analysis lead one to hypothesise that the Ideal L2 Self could play a mediating role between learners' prior ICC and the effort they put into L2 learning. Unfortunately, due to time constraints it was not able to conduct complete, in-depth statistical tests such as Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to test such a hypothesis. As Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p.226) note, SEM allows researchers to test cause-effect relationships based on correlational data.

#### **7.2.2.2 Perceived importance of ICC was a stronger predictor of the Ideal L2 Self more than prior ICC**

In order to interpret the contribution of the perceived importance of ICC towards the Ideal L2 Self and how it was a stronger predictor than the prior actual ICC, it is necessary to look at one scale in particular, namely, milieu. The study found that milieu played a significant role in the lives of the participants, which was expected to be based on the socio-cultural and religious norms of Saudi Arabia. In Saudi society, parents (especially the father given the male-dominated nature of the family there) and the other family members and relatives around these L2 learners constantly advise them regarding their academic choices and future career. The correlation analysis revealed a

relationship between the milieu construct and the three components of the L2 Motivational Self System (Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, and Language Learning Attitudes) in addition to the effort that the participants put into learning English. This suggests the crucial impact of milieu (parents and family members) on the participants' L2 learning motivation and has previously been pointed out by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), Macintyre *et al.* (2009b), Noels *et al.* (2000), Gardner (1985), and Deci and Ryan (1985), amongst others. In addition, the regression analysis showed that the milieu scale explained 11% of the variance of the Ideal L2 Self of the participants.

Both the correlation analysis and the regression analysis suggest that in addition to their own expectations and obligations, the Saudi L2 learners may have internalised those of their significant others and of society as a whole. This is similar to Papi's (2010) findings in the Iranian context, in terms of the tremendous pressure of family and society on the individual. Papi (2010, p.476) argued that the collective nature of "interpersonal relationships in collective societies gives minimal opportunities for Self-recognition". The conventions of Saudi society do not give much room for the younger generation to express their own views, especially those that challenge the views of the older generation who are regarded as being more experienced and having the wisdom that youth lack. The participants explained that this pressure from significant others was most salient in the qualitative phase since decisions such as applying for the scholarship, and choosing the discipline to study were heavily influenced by their father's opinion and they were sometimes compelled to accept his decisions.

The descriptive statistics showed that although almost half of the participants had not had the chance to experience ICC situations, the majority of them (both those who had experienced ICC situations as well as those who had not) were aware of the importance of these situations for their L2 learning as well as their intercultural learning. This might

mean that L2 learners do not necessarily have to be involved in ICC situations in order to realise their importance in relation to L2 and intercultural learning. The correlation analysis also revealed a correlation between the perceived importance of the ICC scale and the Milieu scale, which may indicate that the participants' significant others (e.g. parents) had recognised the importance of ICC situations for their offspring's L2 and intercultural learning. Therefore, it might be claimed that the awareness of the importance of ICC for the participants' L2 learning and their intercultural learning has been conveyed via their milieu (family members), especially in the case of those who did not have any personal experience of being involved in ICC situations.

This finding lends support to the view expressed by Csizér and Kormos (2008a, p. 177 ) who found in their study that perceived importance of ICC was directly affected by milieu and argued that perceived importance of ICC is 'entirely socially constructed'. This suggests that it is not necessarily the experience of ICC itself that helped to shape the participants' perception of the importance of being involved in ICC situations, but rather that it is the perception of the significant others in the students' milieu regarding the key role that engaging in ICC situations plays in language learning.

This awareness of the importance of ICC can be said to affect the effort that study participants put into their L2 learning. The correlation analysis showed a relationship between the perceived importance of ICC and the reported effort that participants put into their L2 learning, while the prior ICC scale did not reflect this relationship. The regression analysis also revealed that the perceived importance of ICC was an important predictor variable of the reported L2 learning efforts of participants as it explained 17% of the variance. These findings again coincide with the results found by Csizér and Kormos (2008a) as their model showed that perceived importance of contact situations directly affected the effort that the L2 learners put into learning. From the perspective of



the contact hypothesis Allport (1954), it was not only being involved in inter-ethnic contact (i.e. ICC) that affected the learning behaviour of these young Saudi L2 learners, but also “the attitudes attached to the importance of interacting with speakers of other ethnic groups” (Csizér and Kormos 2008a, p. 177 ).

The correlation analysis revealed a significant correlation between perceived importance of the ICC scale and the Ideal L2 Self scale while the correlation between the Ideal L2 Self and the prior ICC scale was moderate. Furthermore, regression analysis based on the Ideal L2 Self revealed that perceived importance of the ICC scale was a stronger predictor of the Ideal L2 Self scale than the prior ICC scale as it explained 33% of the variance in the Ideal L2 Self, while the latter explained only 24% of the variance. As the perceived importance of ICC is socially constructed i.e. affected by milieu Csizér and Kormos (2008a) and the Ideal L2 Self is likely to be endorsed by the milieu Papi (2010), it is perhaps not surprising that the perceived importance of ICC contributed towards the Ideal L2 Self of the participants more than their prior ICC, given that almost half of them had not had the chance of being involved in ICC situations prior to their UK arrival. This highlights the key role played by significant others (particularly parents) in establishing and maintaining the L2 motivation of these young Saudi L2 learners.

### **7.2.3 The relationship between the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System and the reported learning effort**

This section will focus on three main findings: the first being that Language Learning Attitudes was the best predictor of the reported learning effort. The second is that the Ought to L2 self was also strong predictor. The third finding is that the Ideal L2 Self was not a strong predictor.

### **7.2.3.1 Language learning attitudes was the best predictor of the intended L2 Learning Effort**

The three components of the L2 Motivational Self System (Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, and Language Learning Attitudes) are inter-related (see sections 5.3 and 5.4 for details). This relationship amongst these three constructs was not so strong that it raised doubts about whether they were measuring the same thing, but it was in line with recent studies such as those by Papi (2010) and Islam *et al.* (2013), thus lending more support to the view that the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System “are clearly different and independent motivational variables” (Csizér and Kormos 2009, p. 106).

This study found that all three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System were important predictive variables to the criterion measure. Language Learning Attitudes was the best predictor, accounting for some 42% of the variance in the reported effort that the participants put into their L2 learning, which reflects the conclusions of recent studies carried out in various contexts (e.g. Islam *et al.* 2013, Lamb 2012, Kormos *et al.* 2011, Papi 2010, and Taguchi *et al.* 2009). The importance of the language learning attitudes might indicate participant awareness of the fact that English will be important for their future, and this may have encouraged them to adopt positive attitudes towards the L2 learning process as this represents the gateway to their future.

The importance attached to English with respect to the future prospects of Saudi students is reflected in the Saudi educational system with this language being taught as a compulsory subject from sixth grade (age 12). In addition, in the Saudi labour market English is required in both private and public sectors, particularly in jobs relating to industry, the health sector and hotels. Furthermore, the participants probably acknowledged that they would study abroad after finishing secondary school, albeit the interviews revealed that participants’ decision to apply for scholarships to study abroad

had been greatly affected by their significant others (father), and perhaps they internalised this decision and made it their own. Studying abroad means that they must learn English to pursue their future L2 dream. Finally, the role of English teachers should not be underestimated in raising participants' awareness of the importance of English for their future prospects, especially in classrooms where the participants complained about issues like poor English curriculum and lack of classroom facilities. The teachers might have helped the L2 learners to convert their "positive attitudes toward English into actual learning effort" (Lamb 2012, p. 1014).

### **7.2.3.2 Ought to L2 Self was a strong predictor of the Intended L2 Learning Effort**

The relationship that the correlation analysis showed between Ought to L2 Self and Milieu (section 5.4) is in line with the findings of recent studies including those of (Kormos *et al.* 2011, Csizér and Kormos 2009, and Taguchi *et al.* 2009). This relationship suggests that the encouragement and advice of significant others makes participants aware of the negative consequences of failing to learn English, and so encourages them to work hard to meet the expectations of these significant others. The sense of responsibility that participants felt in relation to the expectations of their significant others was clearly expressed in the interviews as all the participants mentioned that they had initially put their efforts into learning English in order to please their fathers, albeit some of them mentioned that they had continued learning English due to their own interest. This view lends more support to the view of Csizér and Kormos (2009, p. 107) that "the Ought to L2 Self is entirely socially constructed" rather than being internally constructed and is "primarily shaped by significant others". The qualitative data revealed that the participants had striven to please their significant others even when this conflicted with their own desires, with one of them being

compelled to drop out of a Saudi university to show obedience to and respect for his father's wishes, even though he had already completed a whole year there.

Regression analysis revealed that Ought to L2 Self was a strong predictor of the reported effort the participants put into L2 learning (the criterion measure) with higher value than Ideal L2 Self; as Ought to L2 Self explained 19% of the variance of the reported effort while Ideal L2 Self explained 17%. Such results were not in line with previous studies as these found that Ideal L2 Self had a higher value than Ought to L2 Self (e.g. Islam *et al.* 2013, Lamb 2012, Kormos *et al.* 2011, Papi 2010, Csizér and Lukács 2010, and Taguchi *et al.* 2009). Some of these studies e.g. Lamb (2012), and Csizér and Lukács (2010) even failed to obtain a reliable measure of the Ought to L2 Self.

The fact that the Ought to L2 Self was a key predictor of the criterion measure does not necessarily contradict the literature that asserts that the Ideal L2 Self has stronger motivational capacity in comparison to the Ought to L2 Self e.g. Lamb (2012), Csizér and Kormos (2009), Ryan (2009b), Taguchi *et al.* (2009), and Yashima (2009), but may provide a better understanding of the functionality of the future L2 Selves. The results suggest that the L2 Motivational Self System needs to be interpreted in context, and that the relative importance of the various features may vary according to external contextual factors that cannot be predicted until investigated in detail. The learning context might be responsible for the results in this study, as the Ideal L2 Self might have a stronger motivational effect in communicative learning contexts that have less tangible and measurable outcomes, whereas in more traditional L2 learning contexts (such as Saudi Arabia) where L2 learners have formal, structured exams and need to obtain a specific score to pass, the Ought to L2 Self might be important.

In addition, the social context might contribute to the Ought to L2 Self making a stronger contribution towards the reported L2 Learning Effort than the Ideal L2 Self. Due to the collectivist nature of Saudi society, an externally imposed Self Image and a strong vision of feared self (e.g. a rejected or disinherited son) are likely to “play a role in shaping the learners’ motivational mindset” (Dörnyei and Chan 2013, p. 454). This also lends support to the views of scholars like Kormos *et al.* (2011), Taguchi *et al.* (2009), and Dörnyei *et al.* (2006) that Ought to L2 Self is particularly likely to affect L2 learners’ motivated behaviour in Arab and Asian contexts, “where family expectations are powerful motives” (Dörnyei *et al.* 2006, p. 93 ).

Finally, the fact that the Ought to L2 Self was a strong predictor of the reported effort might raise doubts about the views expressed by scholars such as Dörnyei (2009) who have voiced their scepticism concerning the role of Ought to L2 Self. According to Dörnyei (2009, p. 32 ):

Because the source of the second component of the system, the Ought to L2 Self, is external to the learner (as it concerns the duties and obligations imposed by friends, parents and other authoritative figures), this future Self guide does not lend itself to obvious motivational practices.

### **7.2.3.3 The Ideal L2 Self was not a strong predictor of the intended L2 learning effort**

Regression analysis revealed that the Ideal L2 Self only explained 17% of the variance of the intended L2 learning effort, which was low in comparison to Dörnyei and Ushioda’s (2011) findings that the Ideal L2 Self explains 40% of the variance in some studies, with the even higher figure of 50% being reported by (Kormos *et al.* 2011, and

Csizér and Lukács 2010). Nonetheless, the low figure found in results of this current quantitative study is consistent with findings from other collectivist societies like Iran (31%) (Taguchi *et al.* 2009), Japan (27%) (Taguchi *et al.* 2009), Indonesia (25%) (Lamb 2012), and Pakistan (20%) (Islam *et al.* 2013). The low value of the Ideal L2 Self that the regression analysis revealed might have been influenced by the sample since the population of the study was homogenous, focusing on Saudi students who had already obtained scholarships and arrived in the UK. This might have made the variance of the Ideal L2 Self relatively low and not necessarily the same as if the study had included the general Saudi population as the standard deviation was .5 (see section 5.1 table 5.3 for details).

It could be argued that the motivated behaviour of the sample is affected more by their positive attitudes towards L2 learning rather than their images of their future selves based on importance attached to L2 learning (see section 7.2.3.1). This does not mean the participants do not have vivid images of themselves as future English users (vision). However, due to their age (adult learners aged 18-21) their vision may be more concrete than the kind of fantasy that younger L2 learners may have e.g. Lamb's (2013) study focused on adolescent Indonesian English learners. The qualitative data supported this notion of concreteness in their vision of future L2 selves as the participants mentioned dream careers that were compatible with their discipline of study as well as being more generally plausible.

In addition, the interviewees showed that they had devised an action plan in order to work towards their Ideal L2 Selves which included attending IELTS classes, self-study preparation for IELTS, and an intention to interact with English native speakers in order to practise what they had learned (e.g. grammar rules). Such procedural plans to reduce the discrepancy between their existing selves and their future selves might indicate that

the participants of this study were highly motivated, since their “future self-guides come as part of a ‘package’, consisting of an imagery component and a repertoire of appropriate plans, scripts and self-regulatory strategies”, which are essential preconditions to achieve optimum motivational effectiveness (Oyserman et al., 2006 cited in Dörnyei 2009) .

The correlation analysis also found that the participants Ought to L2 Self and their Ideal L2 Self were related but not to such an extent as to raise doubts regarding multicollinearity (i.e. measuring the same thing). This coincides with the conclusions of previous studies, like those of Dörnyei (2009) and Oyserman *et al.* (2006), which suggest that Ideal L2 Self and Ought to L2 Self should be in harmony in order to have a maximum motivational impact. Therefore, Ideal L2 Self and Ought to L2 Self are not ‘either/or’ states as they each have a distinct impact on L2 learner behaviour and “the most effective condition for future self-guides is a balanced combination of pairs of countervailing selves” (Dörnyei 2009, p. 22).

### **7.3 RQ2 How do participants with distinct motivational profiles on arrival (as measured by the questionnaire) recognise and respond to opportunities for ICC and for L2 learning over the course of their first year of study in the UK?**

This section will look at the extent to which measurements of the participants’ prior motivational profiles (in Saudi Arabia) by means of the questionnaire would help in explaining the actual behaviour of the same individuals during their first year of L2 study in the UK. The section is divided into two main sub-sections; the first sub-section will consider the nature of the ICC behaviour of the participants, focusing on the issue

of lack of contact of the participants with their British counterparts (L2 speakers). The second sub-section will describe the nature of their L2 learning behaviour.

### **7.3.1 Similar ICC behaviour among individuals with distinct motivational profiles**

Analysis of the qualitative data might suggest that the participants' intercultural experiences were similar in many ways. The process of involvement in ICC situations did not go smoothly, even for those with high Ideal L2 Selves. In reality, there were other important factors that can be assumed to determine the ICC activity for both types of participants (high Ideal L2 Self and strong Ought to L2 Self). From the interview analysis a number of cultural, social, and personal factors have been identified that may have had a bigger impact than simply possessing high Ideal L2 Self or strong Ought to L2 Self, and these made the learners' intercultural experiences quite similar.

The qualitative data might suggest that religion had a significant impact on the ICC activity of the participants. The participants emphasised that some activities and behaviours forbidden on Islamic grounds limited their contact with the locals (British) as well as other non-Arabic speakers. Specific examples which they mentioned as problematic included going to particular venues frequented by young people such as nightclubs which include consumption of alcohol and dancing with the opposite gender, both considered *haram* (i.e. forbidden). The influence of their religious beliefs on the ICC activities of the Saudi students was to be expected. Islam shapes the life of the Saudi individual in all its aspects including behaviour and relationships. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that Saudi sojourners have strong religious convictions that they will not easily compromise. The significant influence of the Islamic convictions on the behaviour of the participants in this study is in line with what other studies have found



in relation to other Saudi sojourners in various areas of the world, for example in Australia (AlHazmi 2010, and Midgley 2009), and in the USA (Shaw 2009, and Al-Banyan 1980).

The influence of milieu can be assumed to transcend national borders as the participants arrived in the UK with negative stereotypes that had been conveyed through their significant others (mainly, their fathers). After arrival, the participants stayed connected to their Saudi milieu (old social networks) with the help of modern technology (e.g. Skype and WhatsApp), which possibly diminished their incentive to take up some of the abundant ICC opportunities as they may not have felt a need to create new social networks with unfamiliar people. Keeping up contact with their old social networks might have given them the feeling that they are just strangers passing through or as (Dervin 2007, p. 4 ) put it “liquid strangers” as “they know when they arrived and usually have a departure date”. The impact of modern communications technology on international students’ exploitation of ICC activities in the international environment has also been found in other recent studies, for instance Kormos *et al.* (2014), and Kinginger (2008).

Analysis of qualitative data might suggest that the participants came to the UK with a number of personal issues which were perhaps partly a result of their previous experiences (e.g. the subordinate role of young people in Saudi Arabia and the limited range of social contact situations that they might have experienced there). Self-confidence might have played a vital role in their ICC activities. Two of the four participants lacked self-confidence so they sought the help of other fellow Saudis either to speak for them or accompany them when going outside the residence or attending events. Although they were good English users (based on their IELTS scores of 6.5 and 7 respectively), they were reluctant to contact and/or create relationships with non-

Arabic speakers. The negative impact of lack of self-confidence on the participants' contact activity coincides with insights from other studies that lack of self-confidence can negatively influence "L2 learner's readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2" (MacIntyre *et al.* 1998, p. 547). Other examples include Jackson (2008), Csizér and Dörnyei (2005), and Dörnyei (2005).

In addition to a lack of self-confidence one of the participants mentioned that he also felt he lacked the necessary social skills for making contact with non-Arabic speakers and/or forming relationships. This likely deterred him from exploiting the abundant opportunities for active ICC with non-Arabic speakers that could have enhanced his cultural and language learning. The impact of the lack of adequate social skills (i.e. those which were compatible with the situation) on the sojourners' ability to exploit ICC opportunities in the host environment was also found in other studies such as those conducted by Jackson (2008), and Pellegrino (2005).

As previously highlighted, the participants arrived with stereotypes that had been conveyed by their significant others (mainly fathers), who they viewed as representing wisdom and experience that young people usually lack. Therefore, when an authority figure voices judgemental views such as stereotypes, they would be taken as fact by the younger generation. The participants arrived with mostly negative stereotypes about the British, for example 'The British are introverted' and 'The British do not like contact with people from other countries'. These negative stereotypes probably arise from the different approaches to interpersonal relationships in Saudi and British cultures which can "lead to misperceptions, negative stereotypes, and intergroup friction" (Ward *et al.* 2001, p. 51 ); see also Torbiörn (1994).

After participants had spent some time in the host environment, they started to refute some of these stereotypes as they were not compatible with the reality they were experiencing. Refuting these stereotypes made the participants lose some faith in the opinions expressed by their significant others, which might be seen by the latter as challenge, rebellion, and disrespect. For some participants change of this kind was experienced as a somewhat disturbing experience with the potential to put them in unwanted situations (e.g. finding themselves a rejected or disinherited son).

Another issue which adds to the complexity of ICC experience is what Kormos et al. (2014) refer to as ‘significant events’ that participants encounter due to their lack of intercultural competence (Jackson 2010, Block 2007, Jandt 2007, Chen and Starosta 2006). Sometimes the participants applied L1 cultural norms in L2 situations (e.g. Mido offering to help an old man to close his rucksack see section 6.3.1.4) or felt they lacked adequate social and communication skills (e.g. Sufi’s mimicking of his flatmate see section 6.3.2.3). These incidents led to misunderstandings that caused unpleasant experiences for the participants. Kormos *et al.* (2014, p.163) found that these significant events usually take place “in initial stages of students’ socialisation in the international study environment where learners’ intercultural attitude and self-perceptions are vulnerable” and can have a detrimental effect on students’ level of self-esteem, causing them to avoid contact with members of the L2 group and to remain within their own L1 group. The participants who experienced significant events (Mido and Sufi) became temporarily less interested in interacting with L2 speakers and exploring the L2 community outside the classroom. Instead they spent most of their time in the Self Access Centre or in their room preparing for IELTS. This meant that in some cases that they did not assert themselves and let their fellow Saudi make decisions for them. As a

result, they “took less advantage of cultural affordances in the host environment and experienced less personal growth” (Jackson 2010, p. 182).

On the other hand, the other two participants (Zizo and Badr) who did not encounter such negative significant events had the chance to get involved in contact situations which can be assumed to give them the chance to develop “a personality strength (with a strong sense of self and are socially relaxed), communication skills (verbal and nonverbal), psychological adjustment (ability to adapt to new situations), and cultural awareness (understanding of how people of different cultures think and act)” (Jandt 2007, p. 48). These qualities and skills are the kind which might help them to be good intercultural communicators in the future.

One of the cultural issues that might also have affected the participants’ intercultural behaviour is ‘culture shock’, a process that frequently affects cross-cultural travellers (Furnham and Bochner 1986). All the interviewees experienced some symptoms of culture shock to varying degrees, including feeling homesick or lonely, missing elements of their own cultural environment such as food, and suffering from health-related problems (Ward *et al.* 2001). For some participants, the symptoms were severe enough to make them seriously consider cancelling their scholarships and returning to Saudi Arabia. These interviewees asserted that they had been lucky to find more experienced Saudi students around them who provided advice and support that alleviated such critical moments. The solidarity of these Saudi students reflects other research findings that demonstrated that the quality and quantity of social support offered by co-nationals helps to enhance levels of psychological satisfaction and well-being in sojourners (Hannigan 1997, Tanaka *et al.* 1997, Yang and Clum 1995). Other scholars have noted the usefulness of encouraging “friendships between students from the same language and ethnic background as they help international students’ social and

cultural adjustment in the host society” (Gu 2011, p. 226); see also Kormos *et al.* (2014).

During their first year (pre-foundation) in the UK, all the interviewees had the chance to be involved in contact situations with non-Arabic speakers, to a varying degree. They all perceived this ICC as being beneficial for their L2 learning, to a greater or lesser extent. For example, they viewed all interaction with English native speakers to be beneficial as it would involve situations in which they could use newly acquired grammar rules or vocabulary, which might help them to practise new linguistic knowledge. However, their interaction with other international students (non-native speakers) was regarded as less beneficial in terms of English practice, though they admitted that was a good way of learning more about other cultures. Therefore, it was not surprising that one of the participants described another Saudi student as “extremely lucky” because he lived in a flat with British students, which meant endless opportunities for English practice. Interviewees thus made a clear distinction between interaction with English native speakers (for the sake of English practice) and interaction with non-native speakers of English (to find about the interlocutor’s culture). Kormos *et al.* (2014) also reported similar findings in their study of ICC experiences of international students in the UK.

Interviewees explained that contact with the British native speakers was very limited as they had their own cliques and were rarely open to contact. This phenomenon of lack of contact between international students and members of the host society has been reported in various contexts including the USA (Hechanova-Alampay *et al.* 2002), Australia (Kashima and Loh 2006), Egypt (Trentman 2013), and the UK (Wright and Schartner 2013, Brown 2009). Instead, the participants established contact with other international students, and sometimes this went beyond casual contact and created

meaningful relationships. One of the interviewees even paid a visit to some Italian friends who had returned to their home country.

This can be assumed to highlight the prominent role of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) in the lives of the Saudi student participants. As Jenkins (2009, pp. 202-203) explains, ELF usually refers to English which is “learnt for intercultural communication –where native English speakers may be, but often are not, present in the interaction”. This use by interviewees of ELF to integrate with other international students who were mainly non-native English speakers, rather than attempting to integrate with native speakers of English (British), also might suggest a challenge to the notion of ‘integrativeness’ reported by Gardner and Lambert (1972) who suggest that L2 learners are motivated to learn English in order to integrate with English native speakers.

Integrating with other international students and forming social networks with them, creating what Montgomery and McDowell (2009) call ‘the community of practice of international students’, might have helped the interviewees to construct new ‘social capital’ Bourdieu (1991) for themselves, compensating for the loss of ‘social capital’ that they had experienced as a result of their transition to the UK. Being a member of the social networks of international students might have provided the new Saudi arrivals with the academic, social, and emotional support that they needed during this transition. Montgomery and McDowell (2009, p. 465 ) argue that a lack of interaction between international students and their British counterparts “should not be seen as deficit against the background of the gains from an international students’ group”. Indeed from one perspective, the British students “who live and study in a parallel community” may be seen to miss out on the opportunity “to develop an international perspective through more profound social contact with the international student group”.

There were other external issues that might also have contributed to the lack of contact between the Saudi participants and their British counterparts. As previously noted in the Literature Review, in his Contact Theory, Allport (1954) identified states four basic conditions which need to be fulfilled for successful contact to take place between different ethnic groups, i.e. ICC which helps to change the attitudes and behaviour of individuals and groups towards one another and which may influence further contact. These four conditions are: “equal group status within the situation, common goals, intergroup cooperation rather than competition, and the support or encouragement of higher authorities” (Pettigrew 1998, p. 66). The four Saudi interviewees studied English at Language Centres where all their classmates were international students. There were no British students with whom equal status or common goals could be achieved and with whom they could cooperate. Nonetheless, the participants were optimistic that the following year (when they entered Foundation Level) they would have the chance to study with British students and the conditions of ‘equal status’, ‘common goals’, and ‘cooperation’ might be met if they were to work together in an academic context.

The interviewees also indicated the lack of institutional support from the Language Centres which did not organise events (e.g. football tournaments) that might have created opportunities for the participants to get involved in ICC with their British counterparts. The only event that the participants mentioned which might have provided contact opportunities with other non-Arabic speaking students (mostly international) was the Global Café which was organised by the University Students’ Union and not the Language Centre. In addition, in the university residences, most of the Saudi students were housed together by the accommodation service in the same flats and sometimes with other international students, which limited opportunities for interaction between the Saudi students and their British counterparts.

In Allport's (1954) terms, then, the necessary conditions were not met which would have allowed the study participants to become involved in meaningful ICC situations with British students. Consequently, given the prevailing conditions, any positive change in attitudes and behaviour towards one another in either of the two groups of students (Saudi and British) was unlikely to happen.

During terms one and two, the participants were frequently involved in contact situations with non-Arabic speakers but in term three, this interaction activity decreased dramatically for all four participants. This decline is in line with findings reported by other studies regarding international students in the UK e.g. Kormos *et al.* (2014), and Wright and Schartner (2013). The former suggest that L2 learners devote themselves to exams towards the end of their official language learning period, which inevitably means less time for making contact with other students who are also busy with their exams. This might have been true for my participants who were initially busy preparing for IELTS and then needed to obtain acceptances for their foundation level study the following year.

Another possible explanation, which the interviewees mentioned, was that at the end of term two most of their international classmates had finished their studies and travelled back to their home countries. In addition to their preparations for their foundation level studies, the participants did not have the time and maybe the desire to make contact with new unfamiliar international students.

A further explanation relevant in the case of the Saudi interviewees is that towards the end of term three, which follows the Easter Holidays, the British weather generally becomes milder after long cold and rainy seasons and the days grow longer again. The participants, now more familiar with their environment and with limited spare time after obtaining the prerequisite IELTS score and securing their University places, might have



opted to make the most of the opportunity to travel within the UK before returning to Saudi Arabia for the summer holidays.

To sum up, researchers in ICC, stakeholders in universities with an international student presence, and policymakers for study abroad programmes should pay greater attention to the previously mentioned issues; for example, religion, cultural shock, and stereotypes, in order to gain a better understanding of the international experience of the Saudi sojourners and help them to make the most of it.

### **7.3.2 Similar L2 learning behaviour among individuals with distinct motivational profiles**

It was not possible to distinguish the L2 learning behaviour of the interviewees in terms of the relative strength of their Ideal L2 Self or Ought to Self. All the four participants used to do their homework, spending hours every week in the Self Access area of the Language Centre (where they used extra materials and references to support their L2 learning), and studying at the library, and it was not possible for me to determine the relative intensity of their out-of-class studying.

In their accounts, the participants' L2 learning behaviour (their attitudes toward the L2 learning environment (the Language Centre) and their perception of L2 progress) fluctuated over the course of the academic year. When they arrived, the participants had feelings of excitement and unrealistic expectations of the progress they would make in the L2. In term two when the pressure of IELTS preparations greatly increased, the participants' attitudes towards L2 environment changed as they complained about various aspects of the language centre. Similarly, their expectations of progress gave way to feelings that they were not so successful. This high pressure likely raised the participants' awareness of the implications of failing, which in turn likely affected their

attitudes towards the L2 learning environment and perception of progress. Towards the end of the language learning period the pressure of IELTS relaxed when the participants passed the IELTS and secured their places at the foundation level the following year. The participants' attitudes towards the L2 environment became positive. They also expressed the belief that their English had progressed.

In the Saudi educational context, the success or failure rate of L2 learners in a classroom affect the annual evaluation report of the English teachers, which is written by their educational inspector (Al-Mohanna 2010). This makes both teachers and students exam-oriented (Al-Mohanna 2010, AlAhmadi 2007). Therefore, it should not be a surprise that the change in the participants' attitudes towards L2 environment and their perception of L2 progress throughout their first academic year was heavily influenced by their experience of formal assessment (see sections 2.1.5, 2.1.6, and 2.1.7).

#### **7.4 Concluding comments**

The internal validity of the L2 Motivational Self System was tested with the help of a statistical reliability test. This lends more support to the validity of the L2 Motivational Self System in general and the tripartite construct of the model. The L2 Motivational Self System was applied to a sample of Saudi students to show that their L2 motivation was likely to be different in nature from that of other students in various contexts worldwide. This study found that the Language Learning Attitudes was the best predictor of the reported L2 Learning Effort of the participants among the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System. This may be due to the awareness of the participants that English represents the gateway to their future career (see section 7.2.2.1).

The study also found that the Ought to L2 Self was a stronger predictor of the reported L2 Learning Effort than the Ideal L2 Self. It is likely that this reflects the major impact that Saudi parents have on the lives of their offspring, a finding which confirms the views expressed by scholars such as Kormos *et al.* (2011), and Dörnyei *et al.* (2006) see section 7.2.2.2. Therefore, the study suggested that the Ought to L2 Self might have as strong motivational impact as the Ideal L2 Self, if not more, in contexts where less communicative learning methods are employed, and tangible and measurable outcomes are tested, as is the case for the Saudi context.

In addition, the model also proved helpful in detecting the relationship between prior ICC and the three constructs of the L2 motivational Self System when applied to a sample of newly arrived pre-foundation Saudi sojourners in their first year of studying English in the UK.

This study then proceeded to explore whether distinct motivational profiles would help in explaining the future behaviour of a sample of participants over the course of a year of L2 study, and it can be assumed that they did not help to do so. It can be argued that this was to be expected for the following reasons. Firstly, the participants were young Saudi men who just like any other young men at their age were navigating the complex transformation from adolescence to adulthood, which is an unpredictable stage of growth and development in an individual's life. The study followed the lives of these young men as they moved from the familiar and stable context of Saudi Arabia where they had spent the whole of their lives to date, to settle in a new and utterly unfamiliar context, which was to prove challenging on a cultural, social and educational level. Therefore, it should not be a surprise that the reactions of the four individuals undergoing such a huge transformation was largely unpredictable.

Furthermore, the incompatibility between the etically derived quantitative model (L2 Motivational Self System) and the emically derived qualitative phase which followed it could perhaps have been predicted given their different perspectives, regarding the “nature of reality, epistemology, and logic” (Turner 2001, p. 99 ). Ushioda (2009, p. 216 ) asserted that when we start looking at L2 learners as “people who are necessarily located in a particular cultural and historical contexts” things look different. This means that attempting to integrate “the notions of self and contexts” presents “a challenge to motivational research” (Turner 2001, p. 85 ).

Turner *et al.* (1998) conducted a mixed methods study in an attempt to answer the following research question: “Which instructional practices are related to students’ involvement in mathematics instruction?” (Turner 2001, p. 92 ). Their work was informed by perspective of ‘flow theory’ Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura (1989), which maintains that “students will experience involvement when there is an optimal balance between the challenges of a learning situation and the skills that students bring to the situation” (Turner 2001, p. 92). Turner et al.’s (1998) study measured student involvement by using an Experience Sampling Form (ESF) Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1987) and at the same time they observed all the maths lessons and tape-recorded all teacher discourse. The study results contradicted the expected motivated behaviour of students based on two motivational dispositions ‘flow’ and ‘mastery’. The students prioritised cooperative and harmonious relations with teacher and peers rather than appreciating challenging tasks in a relaxed classroom culture that is likely to generate flow experiences.

In another study, Bempechat and Boulay (2001) came to the conclusion that none of the survey and experimental research about the influence of beliefs and attitudes on students’ learning motivation could explain the baffling behaviour of a ten-year-old

student called Alex. Although he was ‘a well behaved student who enjoys learning maths’, he only completed his maths homework “about 50% of the time” (Bempechat and Boulay 2001, p. 22 ). They asserted that when researchers classify individuals into pre-defined groups, they “rob [themselves] of the opportunity to understand any differences that might exist between [these individuals] who are classified in the same way” (Bempechat and Boulay 2001, p. 24 ). Therefore, a qualitative approach could be employed in order to get a better understanding of individual meaning making. At the same time, it is useful to note Turner’s (2001, p.100) opinion that “quantitative and qualitative, as well as deductive and inductive, methods are complementary in the sense that the strengths of one offset the weaknesses of the other”.

## **8 CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION**

### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter will start by outlining the limitations of the study before highlighting the contributions that it has made. This will be followed by a series of recommendations aimed at the policymakers responsible for the Saudi study abroad programmes and for stakeholders in UK universities. After that, a number of suggestions for future research will be presented. The chapter will conclude with a personal reflection on my own PhD experience.

### **8.2 Limitations of the study**

First of all, it must be acknowledged that there is a bias in the chosen study population as it included the Saudi students who had already arrived in the UK in order to pursue their undergraduate studies. They knew that they needed to learn English and presumably had the desire to do so, which may have affected the results. To give one example, the importance of the Ideal L2 Self and its relationship to the reported Learning Effort may have been lessened because the participants in this particular sample would be expected to have relatively high levels of both Ideal L2 Self and Ought to L2 Self. If the study had been conducted in Saudi Arabia, a stronger link between the Ideal L2 Self and the effort put into learning English might have been found, but this link needs to be empirically investigated.

Another issue regarding the sampling is the representative nature of the study. In the quantitative phase, female participants represented only 14% of the whole sample, while in the qualitative phase no females volunteered to participate. The fact that Saudi females opted to refrain from participating in a study conducted by a male co-national researcher was understandable given the deeply rooted nature of gender segregation in

Saudi culture, so there was little that could be done about this taking into account that participation was voluntary based. If the study had succeeded in recruiting a sufficient number of female participants for both phases of the study (quantitative and qualitative), new insights might have been revealed. For example, comparing the findings among the two types of population in the quantitative strand, the study found some differences in motivational factors such as the Ideal L2 Self, Perceived Importance of ICC, and Milieu, albeit these results were based on a limited number of female participants.

In addition, the figures generated from correlation and regression analysis suggest that the Ideal L2 Self could have played a mediating role between the ICC that L2 learners might have and the effort they put into L2 learning. Nevertheless, due to time constraints it was not possible to conduct further statistical tests like Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to test such a hypothesis.

Regarding the qualitative sample, for practical reasons (e.g. time and data management, risk and cost of travelling to distant areas of the UK) four male participants ( $n = 4$ ) were selected, all of whom were living in Leeds (see sections 4.3.2 and 4.4.2 for more details). This runs the risk that the experience of other Saudi students in other regions might be different from the Leeds-based interview sample. However, based on extensive conversations with Saudi students at other universities and on my reading of the literature on international students in the UK, there does not appear to be any reason to believe that the Leeds University experience is significantly different from that in other northern English universities.

### **8.3 Contribution of the study**

#### **8.3.1 Mixed Methods Approach**

Generally speaking, “mixed methods research is a new phenomenon on the research palette” (Dörnyei 2007, p. 174 ). In L2 motivation research, the mixed methods approach is mainly used to “achieve an elaborate and comprehensive understanding of [...] issues that are embedded in complex educational and social contexts” (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011, pp. 240-241 ). It is only comparatively recently that a small number of L2 motivation studies have emerged which adopt a mixed method approach; for example, Lamb (2004) used questionnaires, follow-up semi-structured interviews, and also observations to investigate the motivational changes in Indonesian junior high school students over the course of two years. Another study was conducted by Ryan (2009a) who used questionnaires followed by interviews to investigate the motivation of Japanese L2 learners with an emphasis on their attitudes towards the L2 learning process. A more recent study, which is similar to this present one, was conducted by Kormos *et al.* (2014), and employed questionnaires and interviews to investigate the ICC attitudes towards L2 learning (direct and indirect), and the effort that international students put into L2 learning during their foundation programme in a British university. This present study is situated in this emerging mixed methods L2 motivation research.

The quantitative strand was important as it helped to investigate the relationships between ICC and the reported motivation to learn English of the newly arrived Saudi students. Using appropriate statistical tests (e.g. descriptive statistics, correlation and regression), the quantitative approach made it possible to measure the intensity of ICC; to investigate the relationship between ICC and the three constructs of the L2 Motivational Self System (Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, and Language Learning



Attitudes); and to investigate the relationship between the three constructs of the L2 motivational Self System and the motivated behaviour. Using these statistical tests allowed some inferences to be made regarding the nature of the L2 motivation of the Saudi sojourners and its relationship with ICC. It enabled predictions to be made concerning students with Ideal L2 Self who had experienced ICC (direct and indirect) and were likely to see themselves as ICC communicators and to hypothesise that they might be involved in more ICC with L2 speakers than students who had not had the same ICC opportunities and were probably learning English because they were obliged to do so. The quantitative findings indicated that there was potential for further interesting findings if a number of participants were followed based on their distinct motivational profiles in order to see whether their L2 learning behaviour would be different.

The qualitative strand was also important as it meant that a more granular approach could be adopted, one that sees the participants not simply as L2 learners who are representatives of differentiated types (Ideal L2 Self or Ought to L2 Self), but as “people who are necessarily located in a particular cultural and historical contexts” (Ushioda 2009, p. 216 ). Using this approach permitted a closer look to be taken at the complexity of the experience that these young men went through during their pre-foundation year in the UK and this proved much more revealing than merely focusing on the quantitative level.

To sum up, both the quantitative and the qualitative approach were equally important for this study, providing a better insight into the phenomenon under investigation, which could not have been obtained with just one single method. This study contributes to the emerging mixed methods research in the field of L2 motivation.

### 8.3.2 L2 Motivation

The study suggests that the L2 Motivational Self System is a valuable tool for characterising the motivation of large populations such as Saudi students, which is one of the less researched contexts (see section 3.1.1). It adds to the body of knowledge concerning the L2 Motivational Self System and the uses to which it can be put as a contemporary means of assessment for English learners' motivation in different contexts (including Hungary, Japan, China, Iran, Indonesia, and Pakistan).

The L2 Motivational Self System revealed that the L2 motivation of the Saudi students was likely to be different in nature from that of L2 learners in some other global contexts. The Language Learning Attitudes made the best predictor of their reported L2 Learning Effort, followed by the Ought to L2 Self, then the Ideal L2 Self. The study suggests that the context in which the research takes place should be considered when interpreting the L2 Motivational Self System. Thus, findings of this study reveal that the Ought to L2 Self is an important construct of the L2 Motivational Self System that might have sufficient motivational impact in contexts which have a collectivist nature (such as Saudi Arabia) where the social pressure of family members and the social milieu is more strongly felt, and in contexts where passing exams with measurable and tangible outcomes is more highly valued than communicative competence.

The study also revealed the important effect of Language Learning Attitudes on learner's motivated behaviour. The study used a questionnaire that was adapted from previous studies for instance, Csizér and Kormos (2009), Ryan (2009b), Taguchi *et al.* (2009), Yashima (2009), Csizér and Kormos (2008b), Szaszko (2007), and Dörnyei *et al.* (2006). Based on these studies which draw on Dörnyei's (2005) theorisation of the L2 Learning Experience, the questionnaire used had four items representing this construct. Dörnyei (2005) describes how the construct includes different aspects of the

learners' experience with learning conditions (e.g. the L2 teacher, the peer group, the curriculum, and the experience of success).

The findings of the qualitative data of the study suggest that the important learning experiences take place not only inside the classroom (Language Centre) but also outside it. Therefore, the study suggests that the scope of this construct needs to be broadened by adding more items regarding issues both inside and outside the classroom; for example, the role of the teacher, interaction with the teacher, and interaction with peers inside and outside the classroom. Lamb (2012) has already broadened the scope of the construct to include 'Learning Experience in School' and 'Learning Experience out of School'.

The study adds to the body of work for instance, Ryan (2009b), Dörnyei *et al.* (2006), Lamb (2004), and Yashima (2002) which questions the applicability of the 'integrativeness' notion in EFL contexts where integration with the target community is unattainable. The findings of this study suggest that even for the participants who were based in an Anglophone country, the use of English as a Lingua Franca predominated since the interviewees acknowledged that they mainly interacted with other international students who were non-native English speakers. It appears, then, that identification with English-speakers and their culture was largely irrelevant to their motivation to learn and use the language. The participants were willing to communicate with the locals (L2 speakers) for the sake of practising their L2 and learning about the L2 culture but not to the extent of identifying with them.

### **8.3.3 Milieu**

The study suggests that milieu has a significant impact on learners' L2 motivation as well as their ICC activity in the sojourn environment. The study showed that there was a

relationship between milieu (significant others, particularly in the form of parents) and the Ideal L2 Self and Ought to L2 Self, which highlighted the encouragement and support that the significant others had provided to the Saudi L2 learners. In other words, these significant others had an impact on their offspring's future obligations and personal dreams.

In addition, Milieu was the main provider of stereotypes that negatively affected the ICC activity of the participants during the first year of their sojourn. Therefore, Milieu is likely to be an important factor that should be considered in L2 motivation studies, as was previously pointed out by L2 motivation scholars like Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), Macintyre *et al.* (2009b), Noels *et al.* (2000), Deci and Ryan (1985), and Gardner (1985).

#### **8.3.4 ICC**

The quantitative findings underscore the significant impact that ICC opportunities play in helping the L2 learners to experience being English users, which might in turn help them to create their future image as L2 speakers (i.e. Ideal L2 Self). In addition, the study findings suggest that the importance that L2 learners attached to being involved in contact situations contributed towards the effort that they put into L2 learning. This adds more support to previous studies which have asserted that there is a relationship between ICC experiences (direct or indirect) and learners' L2 motivation; for example, Csizér and Kormos (2008b), Dörnyei *et al.* (2006), and Clément (1980).

The findings of the qualitative data highlight a number of social, cultural, and personal issues that influenced the ICC activity of the participants; for example, the participants experienced symptoms of 'culture shock' during their early days in the host environment. This study adds to the body of evidence that such a psychological state is

common for cross-cultural travellers e.g. Ward *et al.* (2001), and Furnham and Bochner (1986). Therefore, policymakers at the Saudi study abroad programmes should pay more attention to crucial psychological state which may play a decisive role in sojourners' experience and attempt to address it with an appropriate strategy (see section 8.4).

The findings of the qualitative data highlight the multi-dimensional impact of self-confidence (linguistic and social) on various cultural and social issues; for example, it affected the participants' ability to cope with day-to-day life without their families, with cultural differences and with personal decision-making. It also impacted on their involvement in ICC with other international students and locals, which in turn may have affected their intercultural competence and possibly their L2 competence. Therefore, this study confirms the findings of scholars such as Dörnyei and Csizér (2005), Clément *et al.* (1994), Clément and Kruidenier (1985), and Clément (1980) who assert that self-confidence is a significant construct that needs to be considered in L2 motivation and ICC studies.

#### **8.4 Recommendations of the study**

The findings of this study have implications for policymakers in the Saudi study abroad programmes, and for stakeholders in UK universities

##### **8.4.1 Policymakers in the Saudi study abroad programmes**

The first set of recommendations concerns the policymakers responsible for the Saudi study abroad programmes. In line with findings from previous studies, for instance Kormos *et al.* (2014), Wright and Schartner (2013), Kinginger (2008), and Jackson (2008), it is recommended that adequate programmes should be provided to prepare sojourners for this demanding experience, and to support them during their time abroad.

The Saudi Ministry of Higher Education (2011) currently offers potential sojourners a three-day forum at which they attend lectures concerning such topics as the scholarship system (rights and obligations) and useful information about the host country, including the legal system, social customs, the Higher Education system, the healthcare system, and housing (see section 2.1.8.3). The duration of the preparation programme as well as the superficial nature of the information included (which could easily be obtained from the internet) demonstrates the inadequate nature of these preparation programmes. Hence, these need to be improved with the aim of helping students to develop their linguistic abilities as well as their intercultural communication strategies and skills (Kormos *et al.* 2014, Kinginger 2008). As a means of developing their linguistic abilities, potential sojourners should attend courses and literacy seminars for an academic term before their sojourn. To help sojourners develop their intercultural communication strategies and skills, issues such as the host environment (e.g. the host culture), culture shock, and intercultural adjustment should also form part of the preparation programmes.

Previous Saudi sojourners should be invited to these programmes to share their own intercultural experiences with potential sojourners, explaining how they survived such an intimidating experience. In this respect they can act as ‘near peer role models’. The experience of these peers “who are close to [their] social, professional and/or age level who for some reason [they] may respect and admire” Murphey (1998, p. 201) is likely to motivate them to be involved in ICC situations. In addition, interacting with near peer role models who have first-hand experience may help to counterbalance negative stereotypes that future sojourners might have received from their Milieu. Furthermore, former students might offer advice to the future sojourners on how to deal with culture shock, different cultural norms, and how to seek help when necessary e.g. in case of

illness, using public transport, or opening a bank account. The internet might be exploited by using Facebook/Skype to facilitate virtual contact between these groups. The internet is likely to facilitate gathering and disseminating university/city-specific information so that some of the basic information can be passed on from one cohort to the next. Former students should be encouraged to prepare a guide for the students following them which contained all the useful day-to-day survival tips, which should be updated as necessary.

UK-based employees of the Saudi study abroad programme should provide new sojourners with ‘on-going constructive support’, encouraging them to exploit ICC opportunities Wright and Schartner (2013) by informing them about the social dimension of university life such as clubs and societies, which focus on specific interests, and also voluntary organizations which tend to work in the local community. UK-based employees of the Saudi study abroad programme should also be aware that ‘culture shock’ is a natural process that affects ‘cross-cultural travellers’ (Furnham and Bochner 1986). Realising that would help the stakeholders to provide the necessary social support (Hannigan 1997, Tanaka *et al.* 1997, Yang and Clum 1995), and encourage friendship with other more experienced Saudi sojourners in order to help the new arrivals’ “social and cultural adjustment in the host society” (Gu 2011, p. 226); see also Kormos *et al.* (2014). This will be likely to enhance the psychological well-being of the newly arrived Saudi sojourners, which in turn may help them to adjust more easily to their new environment and become more open to contact with non-Arabic speakers (Ward *et al.* 2001). A final comment is that the Saudi Students’ Club are doing a tremendous job by voluntarily providing necessary social and academic support for the new Saudi sojourners at their own UK-region; nonetheless these clubs need further

support from the UK-based employees of the Saudi study abroad programme in order to enhance their services.

#### **8.4.2 Stakeholders at UK universities**

The stakeholders at UK universities (Language Centres and student accommodation offices) should pay attention to their role in the ICC experience by attempting to facilitate the ICC of the international students at their campus with their local student counterparts. As mentioned earlier (see section 3.2), Allport (1954) identifies four essential conditions for successful contact to take place between different ethnic groups, which can help to change the negative attitudes and behaviour of individuals and groups towards one another (here Saudi and British) and which may positively influence any further contact. One of the four conditions is “the support or encouragement of higher authorities”, which in this instance would refer to the host university Language Centre and student accommodation office. The participants indicated that the institutional support offered by both these entities was poor and therefore the recommendations aimed at UK university stakeholders will be focused on these two areas.

At the Language Centre, Saudi students study English with other international students, meaning that they do not have contact with local British students in the classroom. Before applying to take the IELTS exam which they need to pass before moving onto the next stage of their University studies (i.e. foundation year), students attend English courses on weekdays between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. This means that the atmosphere is reminiscent of attending secondary school in Saudi Arabia, where English is simply a subject to be passed before moving to the next grade. In the UK, however, English will also serve as the means of communication that the Saudi students will use to survive in their new environment as sojourners. The Language Centres need to prioritize this issue,



perhaps by overturning expectations on arrival by conducting classes in rooms without chairs or outside the institution (e.g. a public park), or employing unconventional teaching techniques like songs and games. In addition, they could organise social events to help students make contact with host students outside the classroom such as sports tournaments e.g. football (which most Saudi youth enjoy). Social events such as excursions are organised, but usually take place only once a term and are aimed at the students of the Language Centre. Another way in which the school-like atmosphere of the Language Centre could be changed would be to break the routine by offering evening classes or encouraging students to organise their own social events (e.g. international exhibitions) at which Language Centre students from various countries could present their culture (e.g. customs and food) and with the help of the University Students Union such events might be publicized so students from all over the university especially local students could attend.

The student accommodation office also forms part of the institutional support. Two out of the four interviewees were allocated flat shares with other Saudi students. This policy restricts the opportunities of the Saudi students to make ICC with other students (British and international). It is recommended that the student accommodation office places Saudi students together in flats with British and international students in order to help the students to become familiar with each other's culture and lifestyle instead of depending on stereotypes.

Other scholars like Kormos *et al.* (2014), and Pellegrino (2005) believe that the institutional support also needs to be aimed at host students, to prepare them to interact with international students. The hosts should also do their part by attempting to understand the sojourners' feelings, attitudes, and forms of behaviour.

To conclude, institutional support from entities such as the Language Centre and the student accommodation office is a crucial issue in the ICC process concerning pre-foundation Saudi students and needs to be given careful consideration. It would be of help to international students in general and Saudi students in particular to have the chance to meet local British students in an institutionally supported friendly atmosphere that satisfies the conditions that help to change the attitudes and behaviour of the international students and their local counterparts towards one another.

#### **8.4.3 L2 motivation researchers**

Using a mixed methods approach in my study helped me to gain a deeper understanding of a complex and multidimensional phenomenon like L2 motivation, which would not have been possible using a single method. This type of mixed methods research is a new phenomenon emerging in L2 motivation research, and is therefore unfamiliar to many L2 motivation researchers, which is not surprising in a field in which quantitative research has traditionally predominated (Ushioda 2009). Nonetheless, as this research has shown, the mixed methods approach is worth mastering and exploiting as it provides L2 motivation researchers with insightful views, enriching the field of L2 motivation research by offering a better understanding of this phenomenon since it considers both at the macro level (group-based methodology) and the micro level (individual-centred social approach).

#### **8.5 Future research**

ICC continues throughout the whole of the sojourner's stay and the length of time that this study focused on (nine months) only offered a view of the initial stages of the interviewees' UK stay. A follow-up study of the same interviewees at the end of their sojourn, four years on, would be likely to reveal some interesting outcomes of and

insights into possible changes/progress in their ICC. Interviewing students at the end of their undergraduate studies and asking them to reflect retrospectively on the whole of their ICC experience and compare it with their first year ICC experience would be a useful means of evaluating their ICC activity, exploring whether it had developed/changed and what possible factors were associated with these changes/developments, if there were any. The participants might suggest issues that they believed had enhanced their ICC, and this information may prove useful to future Saudi sojourners, policymakers at the Saudi study abroad programmes, and stakeholders of British Universities.

Another possible research topic, which is a response to the bias of this sample, might be to conduct a similar study to investigate reported motivation to learn English among a similar age level of Saudi students during their first year of tertiary level education in Saudi Arabia and to test empirically whether this is different to the L2 motivation of the participants in this study. This can be done by conducting a study similar to that conducted by Aubrey and Nowlan (2013) at an ordinary diverse Japanese context (an international Japanese university vs a non-international Japanese university) for details see section 3.4. Investigating L2 motivation in an ordinary diverse Saudi context might reveal a more accurate picture of the nature of the Saudi students' L2 motivation, and particularly of the motivational power of the Ideal L2 Self and its relationship with ICC.

Another possible future study, which is a response to one of the study's limitations, would be to use Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to investigate the possible mediating role of the Ideal L2 Self between the ICC that L2 learners might have and the effort they put into L2 learning. Although SEM is "a relatively recent procedure" Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p. 226 ) that many researchers are not familiar with, it has been used in a number of recent studies that investigated L2 motivation and ICC for

instance (Kormos and Csizér 2014, Kormos *et al.* 2011, Papi 2010, Taguchi *et al.* 2009, and Csizér and Kormos 2008a). These studies produced insightful results that can broaden our understanding of the interaction of relevant constructs e.g. ICC, motivation, and attitudes.

Finally, since the mixed method approach proved useful in researching a multidimensional and complex issue such as ICC and L2 motivation and gaining a deeper understanding of these issues, adoption of a mixed method approach would be considered for use in my future L2 motivation research.

## **8.6 Personal reflection**

As previously mentioned (chapter 1), this research originated from a personal interest (having been a Saudi sojourner myself in the UK) and it was decided to investigate the relationship between the ICC and the reported motivation to learn English of the Saudi sojourners during their first year at the UK to explore whether the motivational profiles (high Ideal L2 Self and strong Ought to L2 Self) would help explaining their behaviour (ICC and L2 learning). From a professional perspective as a teacher of English, I was also interested in exploring how English, the language that they will spend their first year learning, is used as the main medium of contact in the ICC of these Saudi sojourners with non-Arabic speakers. Finally, from an academic researcher perspective, as a valid and contemporary model of L2 motivation research, the L2 Motivational Self System offered me an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of such complex and multidimensional issues as ICC and L2 motivation.

With the help, guidance and support of my supervisors, I have learned a tremendous amount from conducting this study. It has helped me to develop my research skills, grasp relevant concepts, and re-consider the simplistic view I used to have about various

phenomena, including the subject of this study. Using the mixed methods approach in this study taught me how to master research skills and balance two distinct research paradigms within one single study, which was extremely challenging. Reviewing the literature in this field helped me to develop my reading skills and learn how to do mind mapping, whilst being presented with the diverse views of other researchers developed my critical thinking. Writing this thesis gave me the opportunity to learn and develop the conventions of academic writing e.g. structuring an argument, finding supporting evidence, and critiquing different views. For the quantitative analysis I learnt how to carry out statistical tests (e.g. correlation and regression) as well as thematic analysis for the qualitative strand of the study, and was greatly assisted by finding out about SPSS and NVivo software, which I had not encountered before conducting this study.

The journey to this PhD has not always been an easy one and it has involved endless ups and downs, but overall it has helped to teach me how to become resilient, determined and self-motivated in order to reach my final destination.

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## Appendix A: Intercultural Contact and Motivation to Learn English Questionnaire

Dear participant:

I would like to ask you for your help by answering the following questions concerning your intercultural contact experience and English language motivation. Your participation is voluntary and I appreciate your participation. Please note this is not a test so there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. Your personal opinion is my top priority.

Your response will be used in the study on an anonymous basis. It will not be possible for you to be identified personally. The information you give will be used only for research purpose. Therefore, I request you to answer the following questions frankly and honestly because only this can guarantee the success of this research. Thank you very much for your help.

**Ali AlQahtani** ([almadhah@gmail.com](mailto:almadhah@gmail.com))

University of Leeds, Leeds, UK

**The questionnaire concerns your life in Saudi Arabia before coming to the UK**

**Please circle the number from 1-5 that best expresses how often you do what is stated:**

How often do you eat <i>Kabsa</i> ?	Never	Occasionally 1-2 times a month	Sometimes 3-5 times a month	Often 6-10 times a month	Very often Almost every day
	1	2	3	4	5

**Previous quantity and type of contact (before coming to the UK)**

1	How often were you in places where there are non-Arabic speakers (e.g. streets, and restaurants)?	1	2	3	4	5
2	How often did you use English to communicate with non-Arabic speakers (e.g. in a hospital, and shops)?	1	2	3	4	5
10	How often did you see English-language films?	1	2	3	4	5
9	How often did you watch English TV programmes (e.g. news, and talk shows)?	1	2	3	4	5

6	How often did you listen to English Language music?	1	2	3	4	5
7	How often did you read English magazines/newspapers?	1	2	3	4	5

**Please circle the number from 1-5 that best expresses how often you do what is stated:**

How often have you performed <i>Hajj</i> ?	Never	Occasionally 1-2 times in my life	Sometimes 3-4 times in my life	Often 5-6 times in my life	Very often Almost every year
	1	2	3	4	5

3	How often have you travelled to non-Arabic speaking countries?	1	2	3	4	5
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**Please circle the number from 1-5 that best expresses how often you do what is stated:**

How often did you use Twitter?	Never	Occasionally 1-5 times a month	Sometimes 6-10 times a month	Often 11-15 times a month	Very often Almost every time I used the internet
	1	2	3	4	5

8	How often did you browse English websites?	1	2	3	4	5
4	How often did you use social networks (e.g. Facebook) to communicate with non-Arabic speakers?	1	2	3	4	5
5	How often did you send emails in English?	1	2	3	4	5

**Please circle the number from 1 to 5 that best expresses how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

For example

I like football very much	1	2	3	④	5
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**Please select one (and only one) item in each box and do not leave any out. Thanks.**

**Milieu (the community (family members and friends) who were around you in Saudi Arabia before coming to the UK)**

11	I was often told by most people around me (e.g. my family members and friends) that English is important for my future.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Most of the people who were around me in Saudi Arabia encouraged me to study English.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Most people who were around me in Saudi Arabia encouraged me to practise my English as much as possible	1	2	3	4	5
24	Most people who were around me in Saudi Arabia tended to think that learning English is a waste of time.	1	2	3	4	5
39	Hardly anybody really cared whether I learn English or not.	1	2	3	4	5
40	Most people who were around me in Saudi Arabia did not consider English to be an important school subject.	1	2	3	4	5
46	Most people who were around me in Saudi Arabia encouraged me to make contact with people from other countries.	1	2	3	4	5
47	Most people who were around me in Saudi Arabia warned me about getting involved in relationships with people from other countries	1	2	3	4	5

**Perceived importance of Intercultural Contact:**

13	Having friends who are English speakers will help me understand foreign cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
14	More contact with others using English will make me want to learn English.	1	2	3	4	5
25	More contact with others using English means it will encourage me to practise my English.	1	2	3	4	5
26	More contact with others using English will make me more confident when using English in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
33	More contact with others using English will make it easier for me to live in the UK.	1	2	3	4	5
41	Having plenty of contact with non-Arabic speakers is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5

**Ideal L2 Self:**

15	Whenever I thought of my future career, I imagined myself being able to use English.	1	2	3	4	5
16	I could imagine speaking English with international friends/foreigners	1	2	3	4	5
27	When I thought about my future, it was important that I use English.	1	2	3	4	5
28	I often imagined myself as someone who was able to speak English.	1	2	3	4	5
34	I could imagine myself living abroad and using English effectively for communicating with the locals.	1	2	3	4	5
35	I could imagine myself writing English e-mails fluently.	1	2	3	4	5
42	I could imagine myself understanding an English film without the help of Arabic subtitles.	1	2	3	4	5
43	I could imagine myself using English effectively to make friends with non-Arabic speakers using social networks.	1	2	3	4	5

**Ought to L2 Self:**

17	I studied English because close friends of mine thought it was important.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I believed that learning English was necessary to me because people surrounding me expected me to do so.	1	2	3	4	5
29	I considered learning English important because the people I respect thought that I should do it.	1	2	3	4	5
30	I believed studying English was important because it earned the approval of my family	1	2	3	4	5
36	I believed studying English was important to me because other people would respect me more if I had knowledge of English.	1	2	3	4	5
44	If I failed to learn English, I let other people down.	1	2	3	4	5

**Language learning attitudes (students' attitudes towards learning English)**

19	I was really enjoying learning English.	1	2	3	4	5
20	I was always looking forward to my English classes.	1	2	3	4	5
31	I found learning English really interesting.	1	2	3	4	5
37	I liked learning English.	1	2	3	4	5

**Intended Learning Effort (criterion measure)**

21	I was working hard at learning English.	1	2	3	4	5
22	It was extremely important for me to learn English.	1	2	3	4	5
32	If a voluntary English course was offered in the future, I would like to take it.	1	2	3	4	5



38	Compared to my classmates, I think I studied English relatively hard.	1	2	3	4	5
45	I was prepared to expend a lot of effort in learning English.	1	2	3	4	5

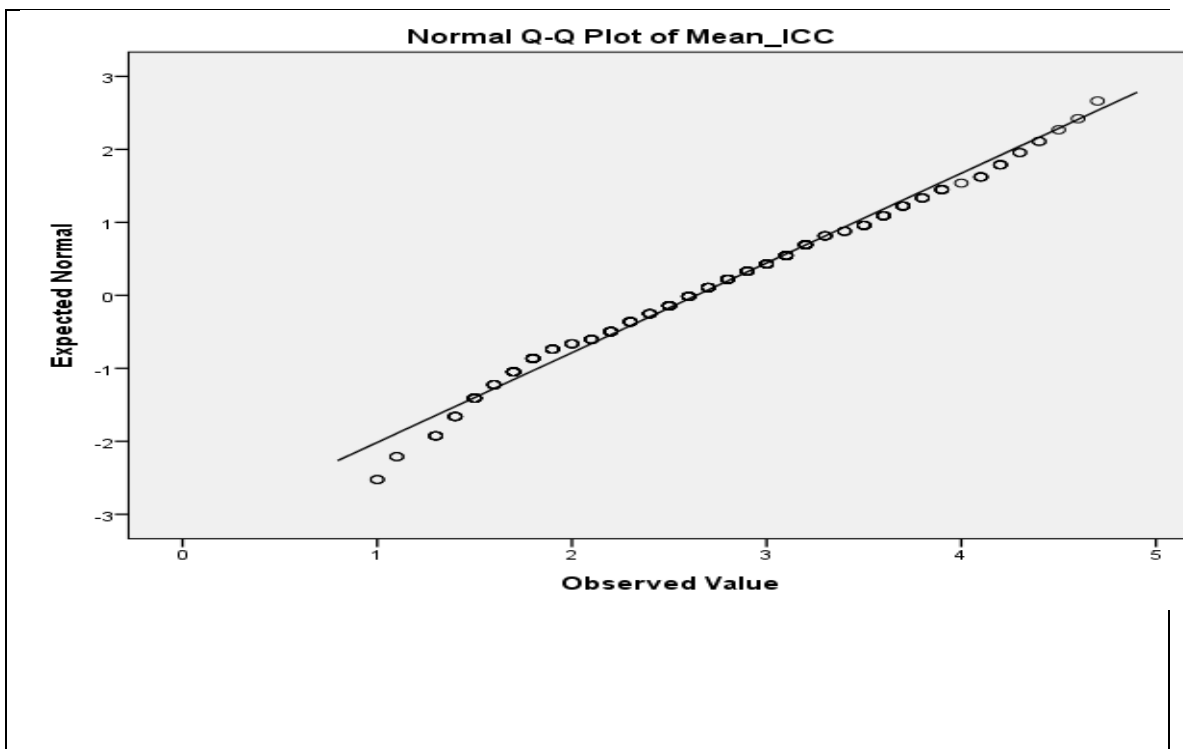
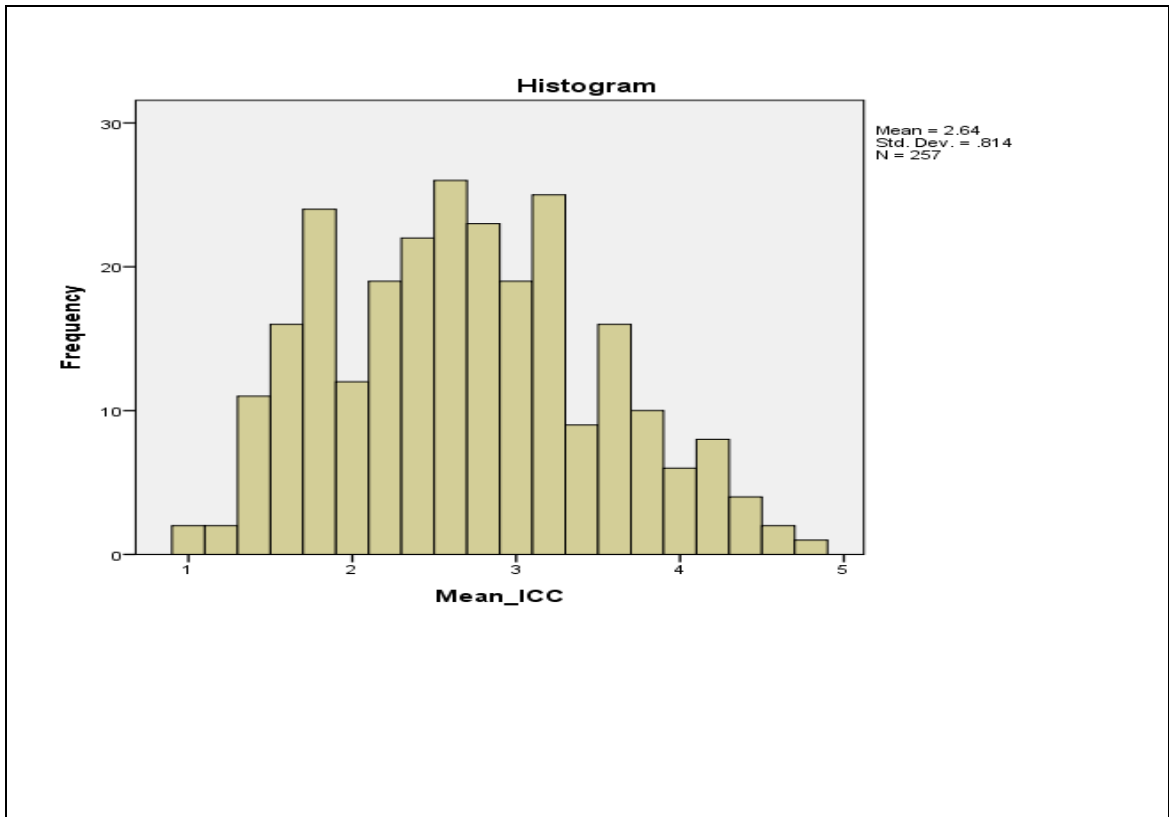
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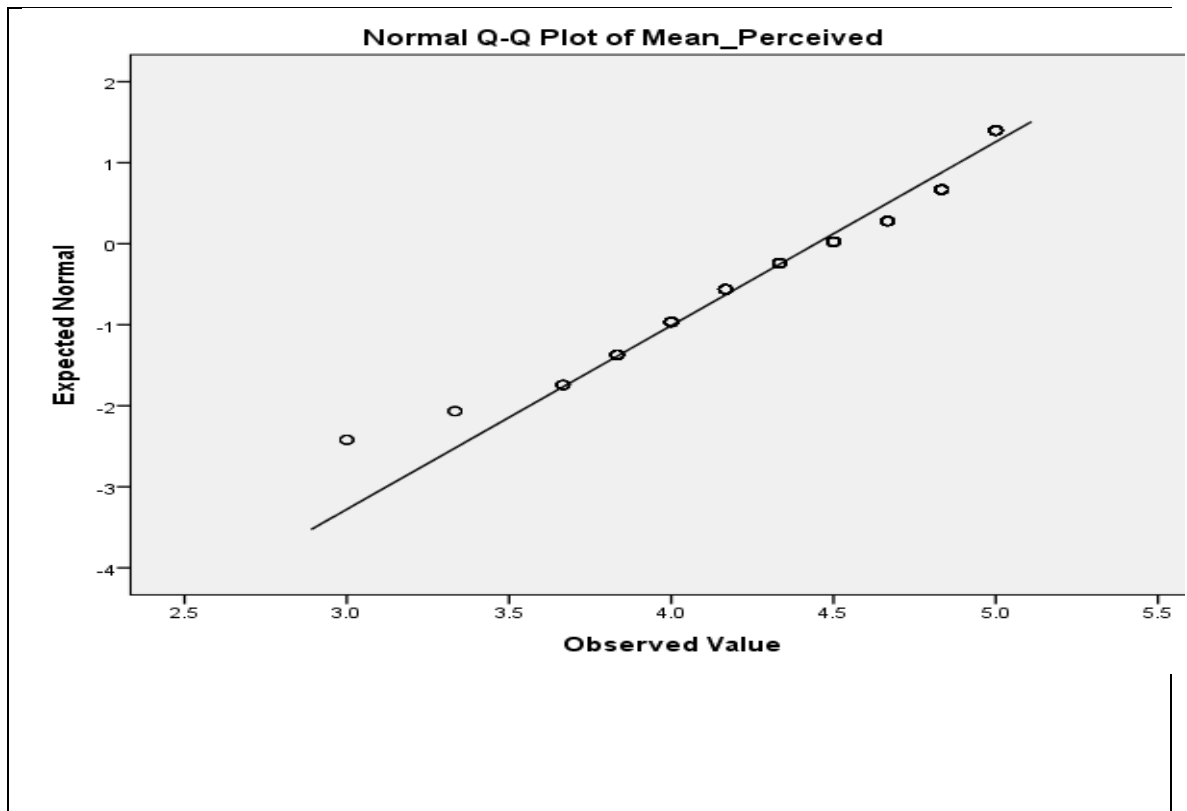
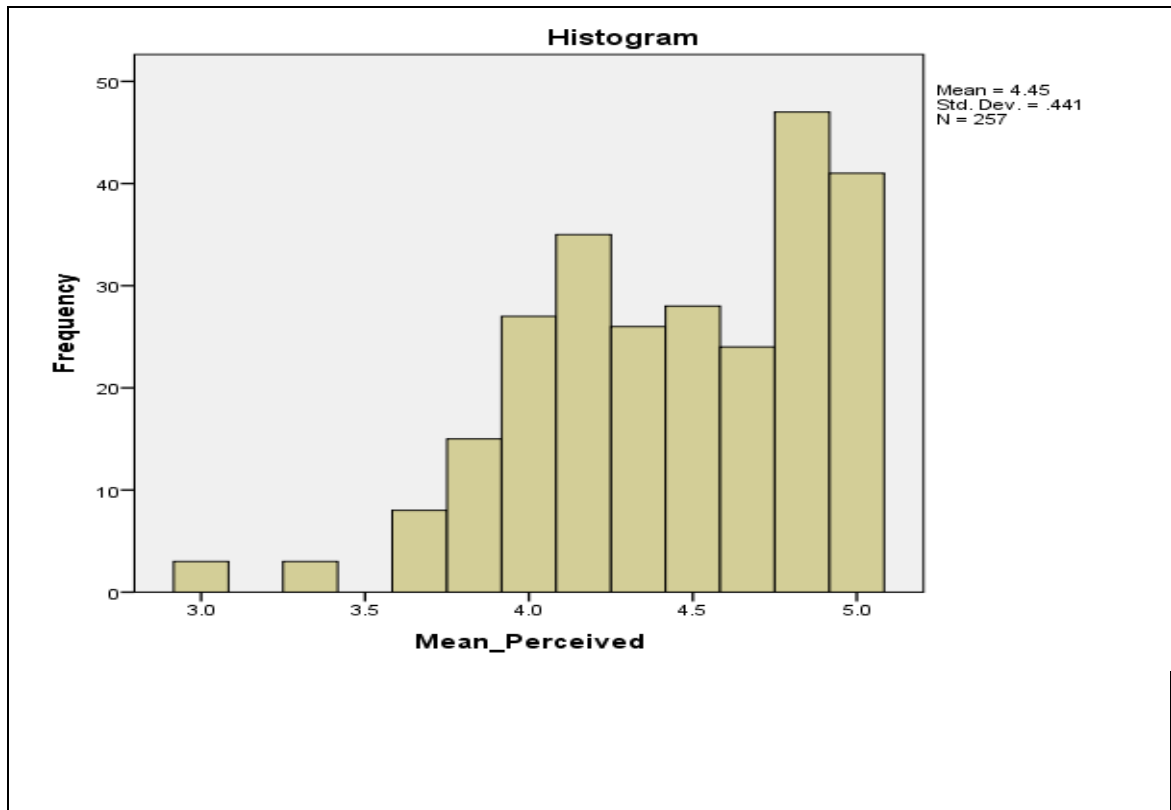
Would you be willing to participate in a second phase of this research involving three short interviews about your learning of English and contact with non-Arabic speaking people?

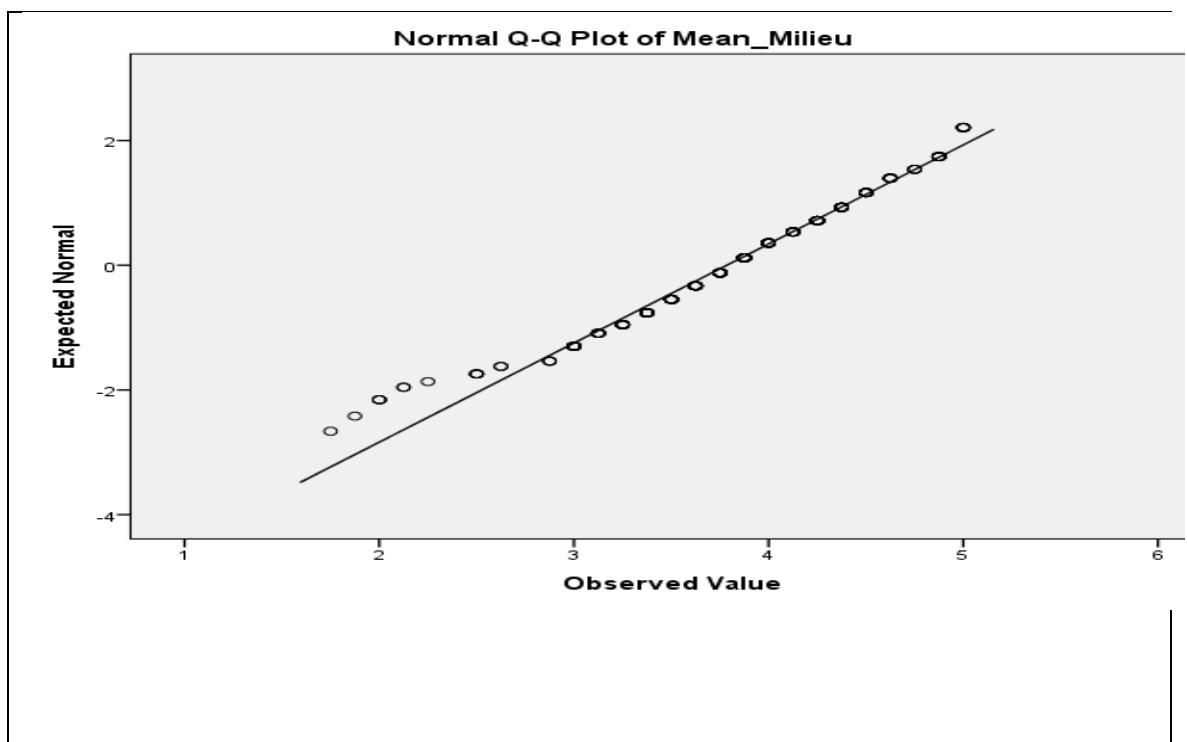
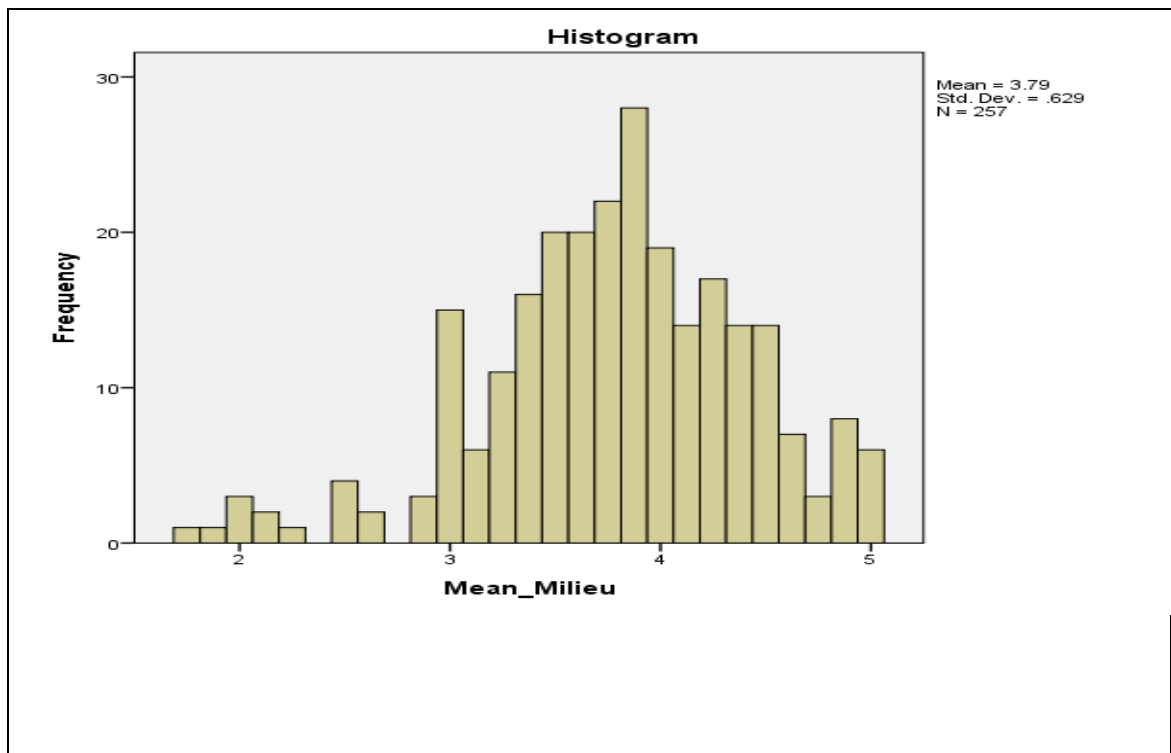
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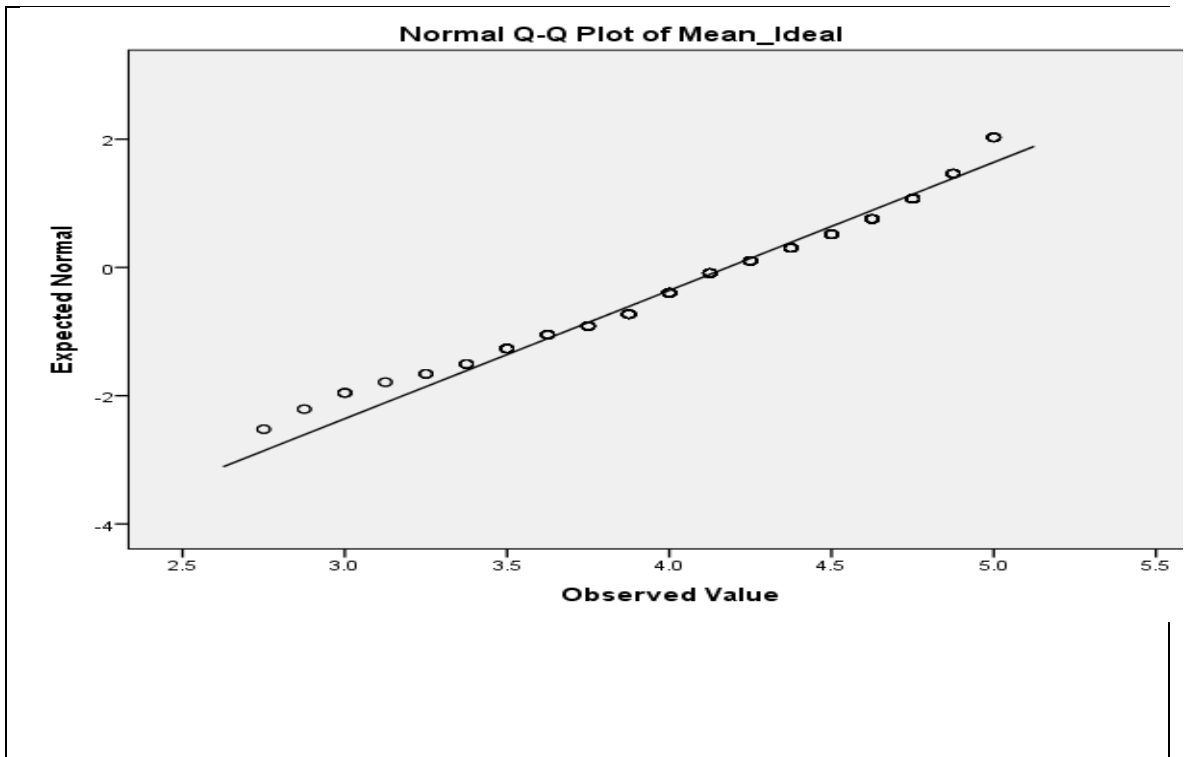
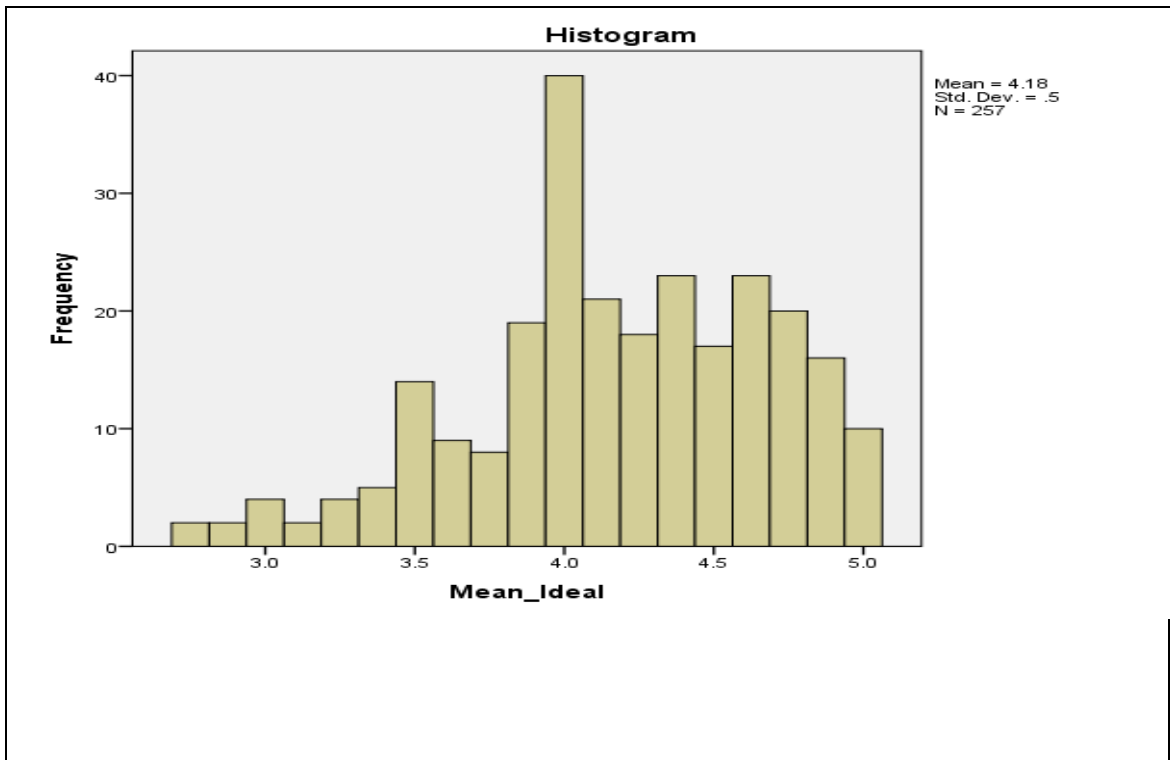
If 'Yes', please write your email address here: \_\_\_\_\_

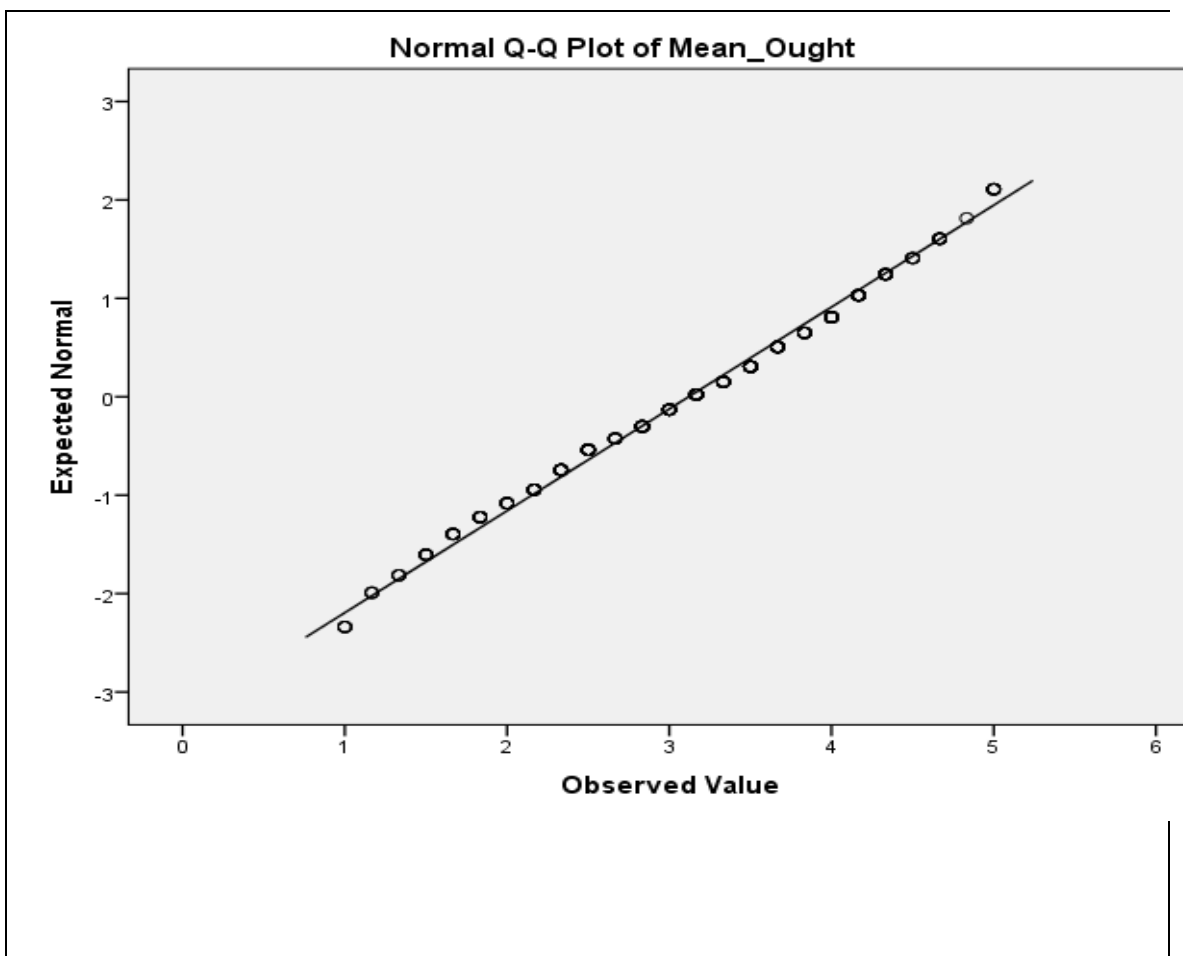
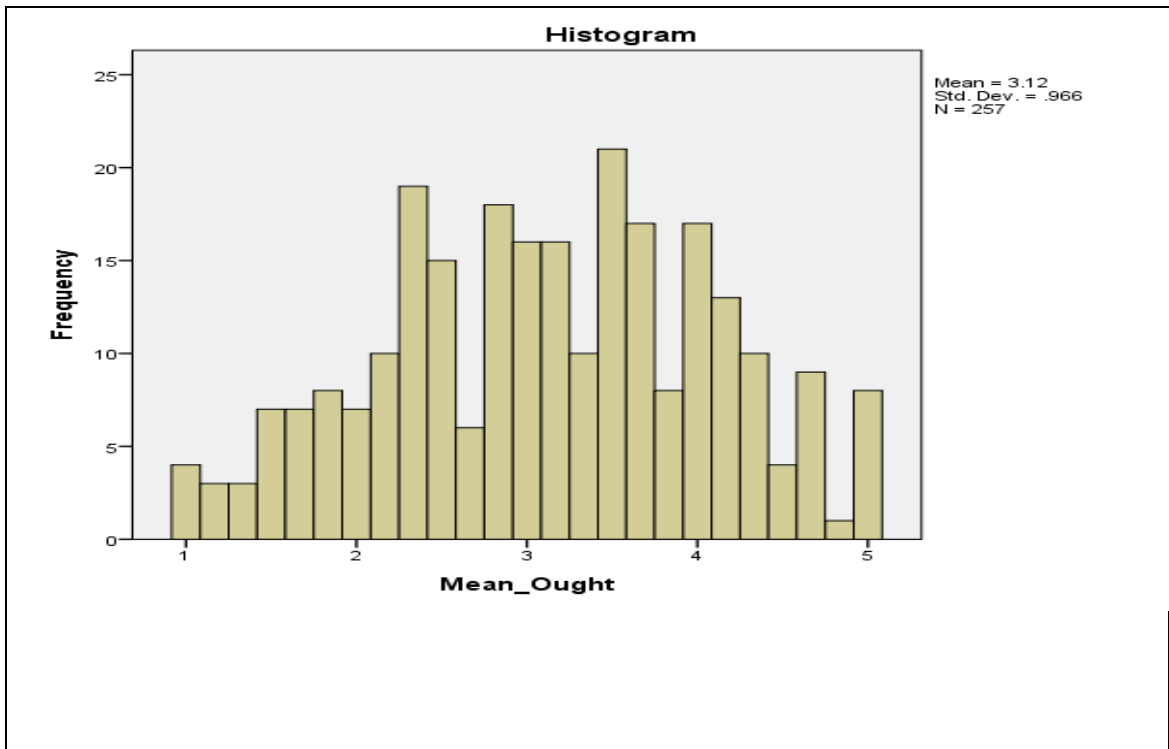
Thank you for your cooperation.

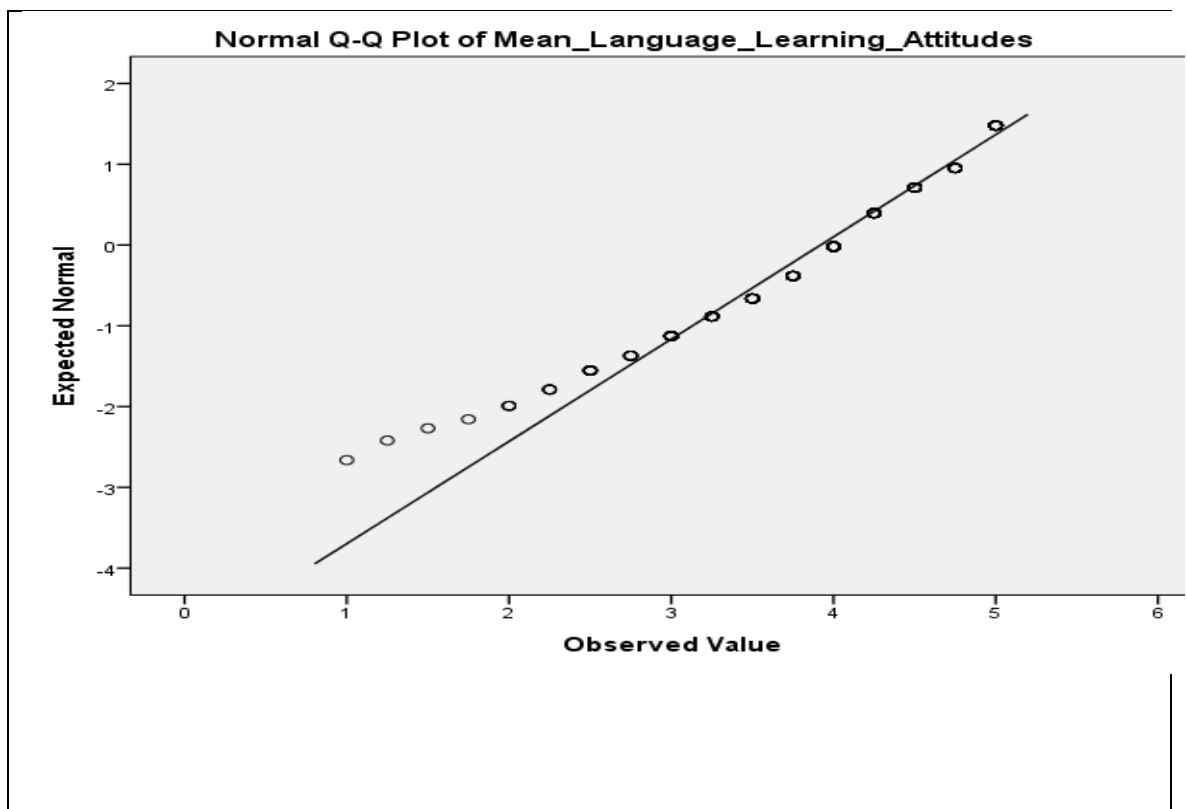
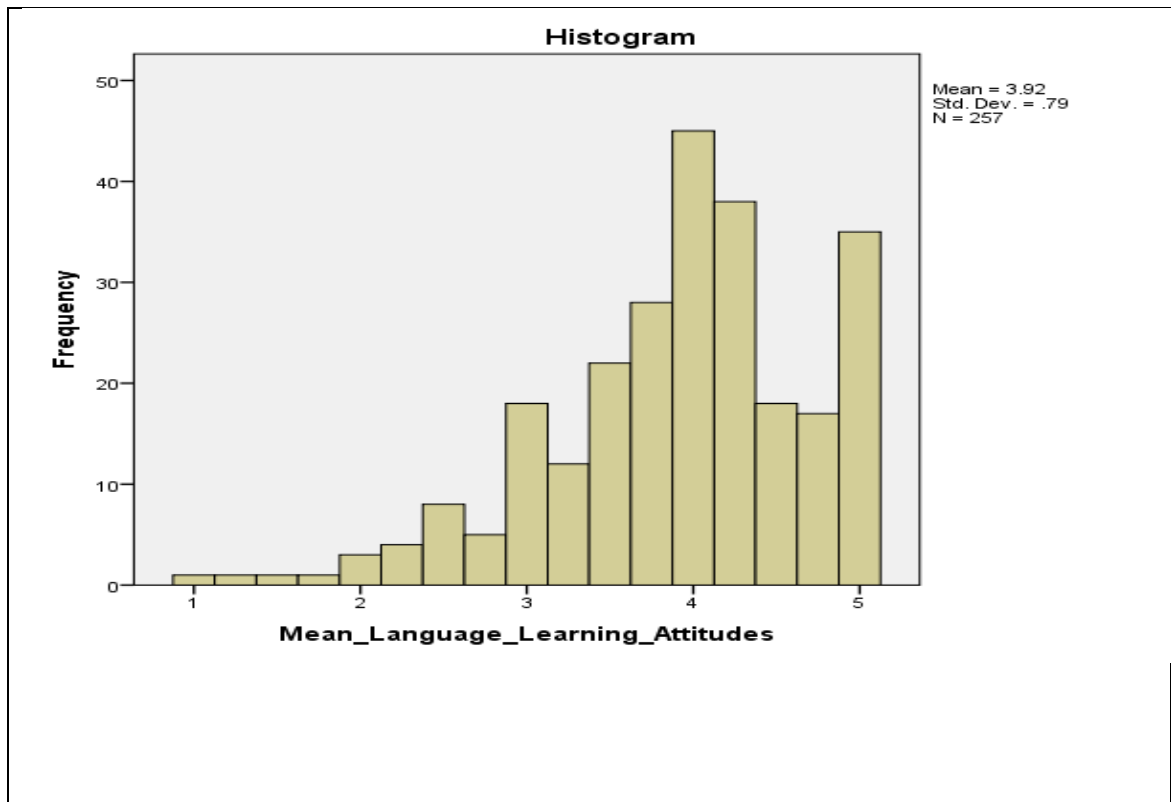
**Appendix B: Histograms and Normal Probability Plots of the variables****ICC**

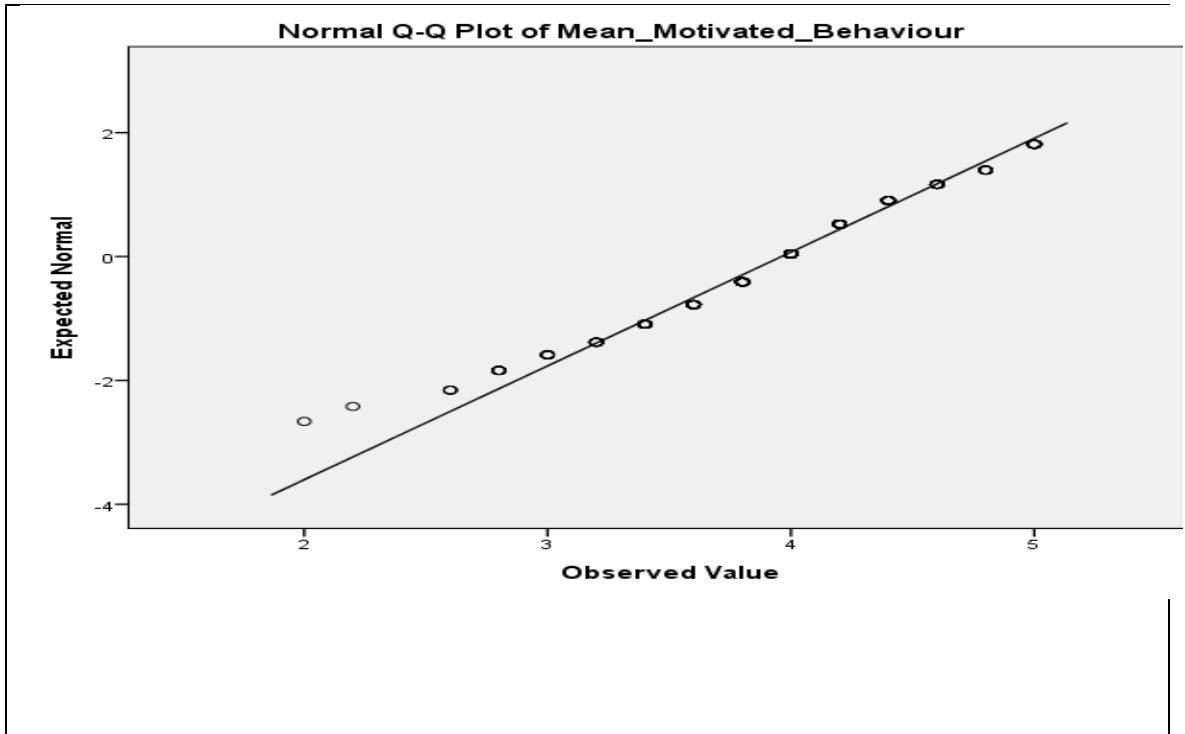
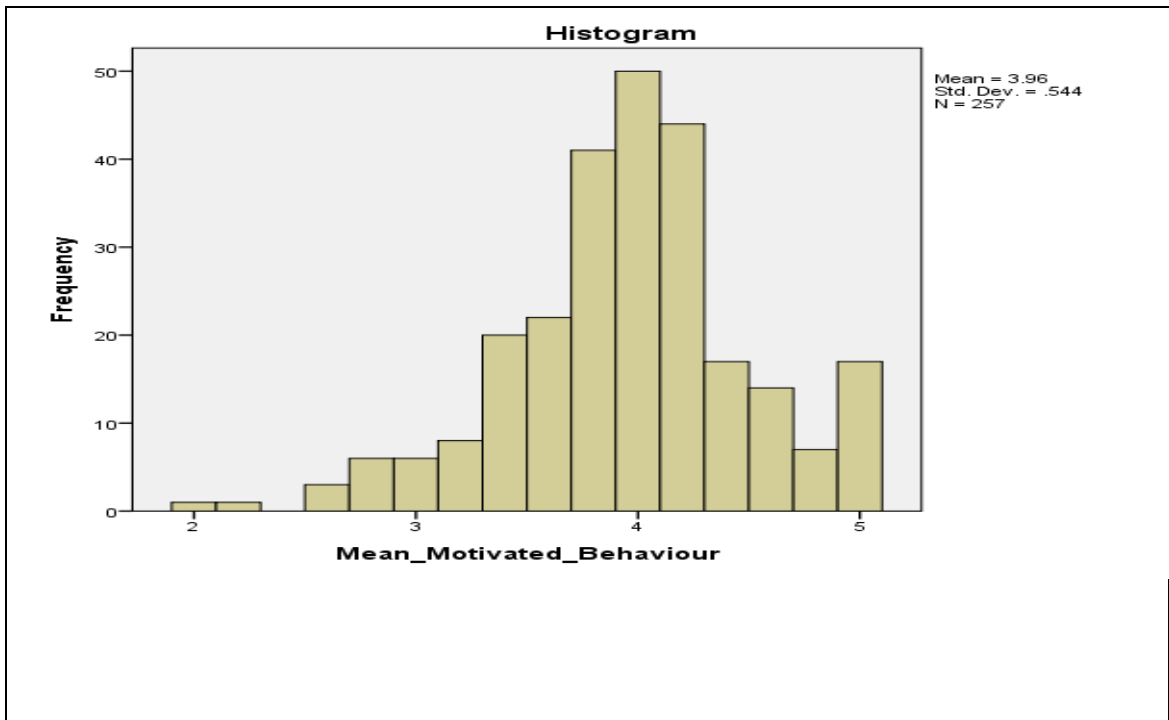
**Perceived Importance of ICC**

**Milieu**

**Ideal L2 Self**

**Ought to L2 Self**

**Language learning attitudes**

**Intended Learning Effort**



### Appendix C: A sample interview

#### Mido: first interview 06/11/2012

Interviewer: We'll start with the questionnaire that you filled in; I noticed that you had had little contact with non-Arabic speakers ... um ... why was that? For example, you didn't manage to find any ... or ... you didn't want to?

Mido: You know that in Saudi Arabia it is difficult to find anybody who speaks English.

I: In Saudi Arabia in general or in your area?

M: Well ... in the area where I lived, there were no English speakers ... um ... but in Dhahran, where Aramco is, you will find plenty of people who can speak English ... um ... but generally, the contact with non-Arabic speakers was limited ... um ... sometimes in a restaurant for example ... but after I joined the University I could have contact with tutors ... um ... they were from Canada, USA ... um ... so I contacted them in English which helped me to improve my English language competence before I came to the UK. ...um... I completed the foundation year ....um..... But when my father got the scholarship and the whole family will move to the UK ...um... my father told me to drop out and join the family.

I: Did you manage to contact the tutors outside the university?

M: No, only inside the classroom. ... um ... Three years before I joined the university, I came to the UK ... um ... at that time I made some friendships with other students from Spain, Portugal, etc ...um ... I added them to my friends' list on Facebook and I have contacted them since. For example, from time to time one of them would have a birthday or something ... um ... so I received notifications ... um ... in response, I had some chats with them regarding these events .... And similar stuff.

I: When did you come to the UK?

M: 2009

I: How long did you stay?

M: I stayed for one month and two weeks in a summer boarding school ... um ... and in 2010 I travelled to New Zealand ... um ... two months in a 'home stay' [his own words]

I: During these two journeys did you make many friendships?

M: Well, in the UK I made more friends because it was a boarding school and there were many pupils ... um ... but the most beneficial in terms of the language competence, my journey to New Zealand was more useful because I stayed with a host family ... um ... there I went to my bedroom to sleep only ... um .... I stayed most of my time in the lounge ... chatting all the time ... The family was originally from the UK but they had immigrated to New Zealand ... We used to spend all the day together ... um ... played with the Play Station ...um ... watched football matches altogether ... um ... so the contact was extremely high for a whole two months.

I: Which of these two experiences did you like more?

M: In the UK there were seven or eight Saudis in the school ...um ... out of 200 pupils... you know as we came from the same country we tended to chat with each other ... however we spent most of our time chatting with non-Arabic speaking pupils ... but in New Zealand the contact was much more as I spent most of my time with the family ... I used to go to a Language Centre every day where I avoided contacting Saudis or Arabs ... In the Language Centre I made friends with a guy from Hong Kong ... um ... after school we went out together ... um ... to a restaurant, cinema ... um ... then I went back to the host family's house ... he went to his host family's house, too ... then when I arrived the host family's house I used to stay in the lounge till 10pm when I went to bed ... the family and I chatted, cooked, played Monopoly ... um ... the contact was extremely good.

I: Were there any Arabic speakers in the Language Centre in New Zealand?

M: There were two Saudis but we hadn't had any contact or whatsoever.

I: Didn't you meet them in class?

M: Actually one of them was with me in the same class but we rarely had contact with each other apart from saying hello ... for several reasons, first of all, he was 5 years older than me ... um ... secondly, after my experience in the UK I hadn't got much benefit from that summer course because of the contact with other Saudis ... um... so when I arrived at the airport I decided not to contact other Saudis in order to improve my English language competence ... um ... apart from my uncles of course who met me at the airport ... um ... I stayed with them for a week then they took me to 'home stay' [his own words].

I: From your answers on the questionnaire, you use Facebook and the internet on an average basis.

M: I started using Facebook when I arrived in the UK ... um ... I saw all the pupils there contacted each other using Facebooks o I created an account ... um ... now I have 120 friends on my Facebook page ... um ... eight of them I met when I came to the UK back in 2009 ... um ... as I said I contacted them only if they had an event like a birthday or they added photos then I added comments or had a chat with them ... yeah.

I: How often do you use Facebook? Daily, weekly ...etc.

M: Every day ... um ... social media like Facebook and Twitter I use them on a daily basis.

I: You mentioned that you rarely have contact with non-Arabic speakers in Saudi Arabia? I mean face to face.

M: Only my tutors and restaurant waiters

I: What about using Facebook?

M: Well not much contact ... um ... little contact so to speak .... Just adding comments on photos or a little chat. That's it.

I: Do you think that the contact you had using the social media helped you to improve your language competence?

M: No not really! ... um ... I don't think that it added much.

I: I noticed from your answers that you see films a lot. Do you remember since when you started seeing films?

M: Five or six years ago ... even before I came to the UK ... I used to watch two films a week ... and after coming here [to the UK] the cinema encourages me see more films ... um ... while in Saudi Arabia, I used to see films on CDs.

I: Do you find difference between seeing films in Saudi Arabia and here? Like the subtitles for example.

M: Here you don't have a choice about subtitle ... but in Saudi Arabia as one of my tutors said: we hadn't seen films but we had read films ... um ... as we used to read the subtitles ... um ... since I arrived I have seen approximately five films. Although there were many words that I haven't known their meanings but from the context like the

gestures you can grasp the meaning, which is good ... um ... this helps in terms of 'the accent' [his own words] and other meanings of the words that I don't know.

I: When you came to the UK for the first time back in 2009; did you watch films?

M: In the school between classes they used to show cartoon films.

I: Did you find that useful?

M: Not really! Because that time my language was so weak.

I: In New Zealand, did you watch films?

M: I used to see films with the host family ... um ... the family had a subscription with SKY and we used to see a film every Sunday night ... um ... and sometimes when I came from the Language Centre and the parents were not at home I found their son watching adult cartoons ... um ... I don't remember their name but they are so popular worldwide.

I: *Family Guy*, *Simpsons*, ..

M: Yeah! Yeah! *Family Guy*... um ... we watched them together ... and sometimes he recorded them and would wait for me to come back to watch them together. ...um... sometimes they said words I didn't understand so I asked him what they meant then he pressed the pause button and told me the meaning then pressed the play button again ... um ... the host family's son helped me tremendously because unlike his mature parents he didn't feel shy to correct me ... even sometimes when I played Xbox with him and I said a word which wasn't correct he pressed the start button and would correct me then we continued playing ... um ... he didn't feel shy about correcting me.

I: What about you? Did you feel embarrassed when he corrected you?

M: No! not at all.

I: Did you prefer contact with the parents or their son?

M: Well I didn't mind ... um ... sometimes I made up something just to start a conversation ... for example, sometimes I brought a map and pointed at Saudi Arabia and said this is my country ... um ... then they also pointed at the UK and said this was our country .... Um .... And this town is where we were born ... and similar stuff just to create a conversation. The host family had a small library in their house so I used to

pick up a story to read frequently ... um ... the father rarely left the house because he was working from home ... um ... the mother worked two days a week .... So we used to be together all the time ... um ... I remember once we cooked *Kabsa* (Saudi traditional food) ... um ... the mother asked about the ingredients and how to make it ... yeah.

I: Now we move onto another question; from the questionnaire it can be seen that you normally listen to English songs, how long have you been listening to such songs?

M: When I came to the UK for the first time, the school used to play music every Friday. ...um... after I went back to Saudi Arabia I used to listen to this music in the radio while driving the car.

I: Do you like the music or the lyrics?

M: Neither! [Laughter] ... um ... I just listen to these songs to break the silence while driving in the car alone .... Um ... but I knew that could be useful as I might pick a up word or something ... um ... but I didn't pay attention.

I: You mentioned that when you were in New Zealand, you and the host family used to watch TV frequently; did you normally watch talk shows, series, or only films?

M: We mainly saw films but sometimes they watched programmes like *The Oprah Winfrey Show* ... um ... I wasn't interested in such programmes but I sat there with the family.

I: Which of the following you think is the most useful for the improvement of your language competence; watching films, listening to songs, watching TV programmes, or using the social media like Facebook?

M: I think films are the most useful for language learning ... um ... especially when the actors speak ... um ... when they say an expression they use gestures, intonation, and body language that deliver the meaning even if you don't know the words' meaning ... um ... this is very important to your language learning ... um ... English speakers use 'body language' [his own words] to show whether they are 'serious' [his own words] or not ... um... in this way films were really useful for me especially in the pronunciation of words.

I: Now we move to another question; when did you start learning English?

M: I studied in a private school, so I started learning English from year 1.

I: Were the people who were around concerned about your learning?

M: My parents were very keen that I should be successful in my educational life in general and in English learning in particular. My father is always saying “English is the basis for all aspects of your life. Without English you can’t do any thing”. Therefore, I studied in a private school where I studied English from year 1. In addition, every summer I used to study in English Language Centres. My father also paid for private English tutors to come to our house and teach me. ... um ... and when I finished first year of secondary school (i.e. aged 16) my father sent me to study in the UK in a summer boarding school.

I: What was the opinion of other people who were around you like friends, relatives, and peers?

M: There were people around me who called themselves friends but they weren’t. They were always trying to discourage me from studying English. They say things like “Why do you waste your time studying English? Look at us! We’re all weak in English and we didn’t lose a thing” and similar stuff. But to be fair, there were other people who encouraged me to study English. They said things like “good for you, English is important for everyone”.

I: Do you think that contact with other non-Arabic speakers is important?

M: Yes it is important ... um ... because without ‘practice’ [his own word] language can’t be improved.

I: So contact with non-Arabic speakers is really just about practice? I mean when you contact non-Arabic speakers you are not interested in their culture or the way they live?

M: No, of course you will know about their culture ... um ... for example, when I were in the UK (back in 2009) there were a number of pupils from Spain ... um ... they told us about how they live ... um ... their food ... um ... sometimes the way they dance ... um ... we also told them about our culture as well ... um ... this was an example of culture exchange ...

I: In this case, were you concerned about contact?

M: Yes indeed! ... um .... First, I wanted to improve my language competence ... um ... second, I knew about other cultures that I hadn't had any idea about ... um ... for example, I discovered strange things they used to do

I: When you say strange; do you mean you criticized them?

M: not at all....um.... we have a number of Spanish students at the language centre .....um.... I discovered interesting issues about their culture like their food and clothes. ....um....They have strange customs in Spain like when they release some bulls onto the streets.....um..... If I hadn't interacted with them, I wouldn't have known that. ...um ... this is strange [laughter]

I: After contacting with people from other cultures did that change your view regarding some cultures?

M: No!

I: Do you remember a situation in which you had a special experience, either good or bad?

M: I remember when I came to the UK for the first time ... um ... it was my first day in the UK ... um ... my language was so appalling ... um ... at that time one of my uncles was in the UK, he took me from the airport directly to the boarding school and left me there and the next time I met him six weeks later ... um ... when I arrived at the school I was the first Arab pupil in the school as I was among the newly arrived pupils at the school ... um ... I entered my room then the supervisor on the school knocked at the door of my room ... um ... of course at that time I didn't have any English word ever.

I: Despite that you had been studying English from your first year in the primary school!

M: That wasn't called study ... um ... we started studying the alphabet till year 6 ... um ... then from year 6 we studied the national curriculum which started again with the alphabet ... um ... so what we studied was rubbish ...um ... when the supervisor entered the room he said "it's lunch time" ... um ... I couldn't grasp what he was saying ... um ... he repeated that again and again and again ... um ... eventually, he used signs (put his hand towards his mouth) ... um ... I was embarrassed at that moment. I felt how stupid I was [laughter] ... um ... so after that incident I was so keen to learn English. ... um ... another thing that sometimes when I heard my relatives, my uncles for instance, speak English fluently I thought about myself saying 'what is the difference between us?' 'They were people from my blood; just like me and can speak English like that; so I could do the same.' ... um ... now I can see myself in the future as a good English user who can speak English fluently and with a good accent.

I: You mentioned that you studied English for nine years at private schools and studied English during summer holidays before coming to the UK for the first time in 2009 ... um ... tell me what did you do outside the English classroom? Things like seeing a film, reading a story or things like that.

M: Never! ... at that time I had a decent repertoire of vocabulary ... um ... for example, when I saw an ad on the street ... um ... you know, half of the ad was written in English and the other half is written in Arabic ... um ... I used to compare between what was written in Arabic and what was written in English ... I was curious about the meaning of the words and the different forms of the words ... um ... but I didn't try to practise the language that I studied outside the classroom.

I: Who do you think was responsible for the lack of success in your English language learning?

M: Well actually I think that the school and myself were responsible for the failure of my English language learning ... um ... because my parents didn't know English ... um ... the role of my father was just to encourage me to study as that was what he could do ... um ... at school the pupils' concern was just to pass the test not to learn ... um ... at secondary school the English teacher used to give us a few sentences to memorize and use in the composition test ... so our only concern was to pass the test ... um ... at that time I was young and I didn't realise I would need English in my life!

I: When did you start realising the importance of English to you?

M: After coming to the UK (in 2009); especially at that time there were a number of Saudi pupils who were able to speak English better than me ... um ... my journey to the UK changed my perspective about English ... um ... after I went back to Saudi Arabia, I started to use English in my daily life; for example, when someone knocked at the door I said 'who?' [in English] and when I went to a restaurant I used English to communicate with the waiters ... um ... whenever I met a non-Arabic speaker, I exploited the opportunity to practise the language. .. um ... I used that frequently until the next year 2010 ... um ... at that time I didn't know that I would travel to New Zealand ... um ... two days before the trip my father handed me the ticket ... um ... that was a pleasant surprise ... um ... especially because I stayed with a host family not like the UK a boarding school.

I: After your journey to New Zealand, did you find any difference in your English learning?

N: I felt the progress in my English after I returned to my school... um ... My perspective of just passing the English test changed to learning English ... um .... In the



class I participated a lot.... um .... I was one of the best students in the class. Even the teacher was really pleased about my level of English.... Um .... He kept saying that my English level was exceptional. I used to know most of the words that were written on the board.

I: Now we move to your current life in the UK; tell me how do you find your daily life e.g. accommodation, transportation, food and the weather?

M: I arrived with my family here so in terms of accommodation and food I don't feel that difference ... um ... regarding using public transport, I used the bus before when I came for the first time in 2009; so I remembered what I did before.

I: Do you normally read newspapers?

M: Yes every day when I ride the bus I read *Metro*... um ... but I'm still not 'perfect' [his own words] as there are many words I don't understand.

I: What have you done since you arrived in the UK regarding contact with non-Arabic speakers?

M: I use the bus every day where there are plenty of contact opportunities... um ..... Contacting with others will help me to gain more self-confidence but the problem is that I am a shy person.... Um ..... If I had more courage I would exploit such opportunities. I always ask my friends to speak for me ... um ..... I don't want to suffer the consequences if someone ignores me.

I: During your bus journey, have you tried to approach British people?

M: The British people are introverted .... Um ..... They don't like to interact with international people. ... um .... I don't want to put myself in an embarrassing situation so I haven't approached British people as they may ignore me .... Um .... I wait for them to make contact, as soon as they start chatting to me I will keep the conversation alive .... Um ..... Sometimes I make some contact with bus drivers like 'where is this bus going', or 'can I have a full day ticket?' .... Um ..... I spend my time in the bus reading the *Metro*.

I: Are there non-Arabic speakers in your language institute?

M: There are only four students in 'my class' [his own words] a student from Iran, a student from Tunisia and another student from Saudi Arabia. ... um ... the language that we use to communicate in the class is English

I: Do you have contact with any non-Arabic speakers outside the language institute?

M: In the Language Centre I made contact with my tutors and my classmates... um .... At the end of the day I go back home. Outside the classroom I only hang around with Saudi guys. ...um ... but recently I have made a friendship with a number of non-Arabic speakers, but not British, on Facebook and Twitter ... um .... I added them to my BlackBerry ... um ... we contact each other on a daily basis ... um ... we discuss issues like sport and stuff ... I think this will be useful for my language competence.

I: Have you met them yet?

M: No ... they live in Spain, Portugal and USA

I: Which type of contact do you prefer; face to face or using social media?

M: Face to face of course.

I: How do you see yourself as an English user in the future?

M: Apart from my studies, I hope that in the future I will be an excellent user of English who speaks English very fluently and who has a rich repertoire of vocabulary ... um ... and who understands anything that's said in the media, films, etc

I: So you don't only learn English for the purposes of your studies?

M: Indeed! You know it is important for my career ... um ... but I learn English for personal reasons like you know the person who can speak languages will be considered differently from others. ... um ... I am trying my best to create friendships with non-Arabic speakers but I failed.

I: You mentioned that you have some contact with non-Arabic speakers from Spain, Portugal and USA.

M: Yeah but I contact them via social media, I prefer to have face to face contact.

I: Do you feel pressure to learn English?

M: At the moment I don't feel that pressure as my level is equal to the prerequisite level that I will need in the foundation course ... um ... but in the future I think I will need to learn more as in engineering I will meet new terms and stuff.

I: The next meeting will be in three months time in February; what do you wish to do in terms of English language learning and contact with non-Arabic speakers?

M: I will try my best to contact more people .... Um ... another problem is that I don't study hard enough ... um ... so I will try to find useful websites that will help me in enhancing my English language learning

I: Thank you very much for your time.

M: Thank you.

## Appendix D: Example of initial coding: from Zizo interview on February, 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013:

Q Anything has changed since we last met. Have interesting things happened?

In terms of making friends with other international students, I wasn't successful. I couldn't do it properly. I mean I spent most of my time with the Saudi fellows. Approximately 90% of my time spent with other Saudi fellows. For us the Saudis, the non-Muslim groups don't suit us

Q Why?

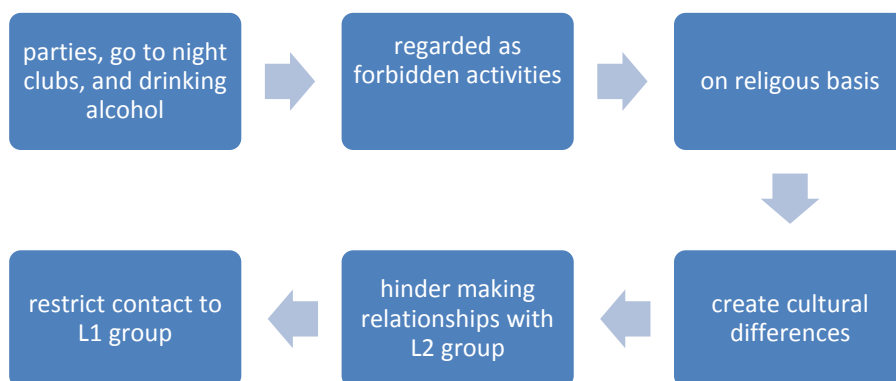
As Muslims our perspective is different from theirs. For example, at the weekends they [non-Muslims] have parties, go to night clubs, drink alcohol, etc. You know these are forbidden activities. We cannot do that. Their life style is different from ours.

Q So do you find such issues hinder making relationships?

Indeed! They go every weekend. We [Saudi students] tried to persuade them to play football with us on a weekend and don't go for party and they didn't accept that. We usually stay with other Saudi students and play PlayStation, cards, or football.

### Coded as:

**Figure 8.1: How the example was coded**



**Figure 8.2: From code to theme**

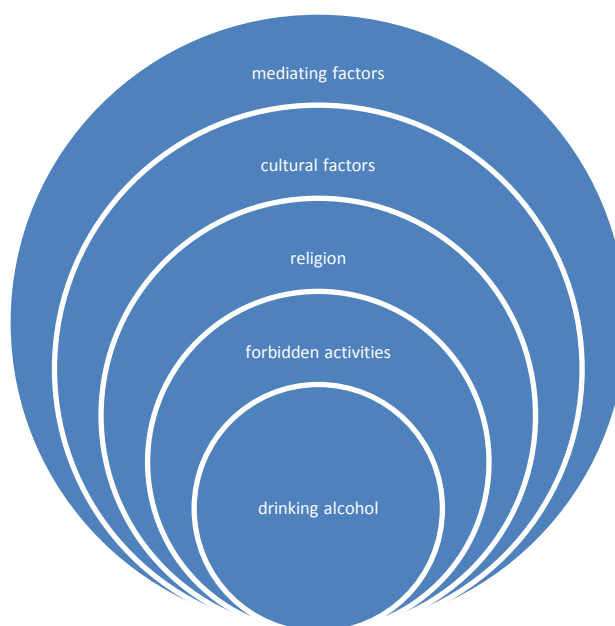


Figure 8.3: NVivo screenshot shows coding process

The screenshot displays the NVivo software interface during a coding process. The main window shows a text document with two questions and their answers. The 'Nodes' list on the left contains various categories such as 'NATURE OF L2 LEARNING BEHAVIOUR', 'PERCEPTION OF PROGRESS', 'ATTITUDES TOWARDS L2 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT', 'NATURE OF ICC BEHAVIOUR', 'TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP WITH NON-ARABIC SPEAKERS', 'RESPOND TO ICC OPPORTUNITIES', 'RECOGNITION OF ICC OPPORTUNITIES', 'PURPOSE OF CONTACT', 'ATTITUDES TOWARDS NON-ARABIC SPEAKERS', 'MEDIATING FACTORS', 'SOCIAL FACTORS', 'PERSONAL FACTORS', 'CULTURAL FACTORS', 'STEREOTYPES', 'RELIGION', 'FORBIDDEN ACTIVITIES', 'CULTURE SHOCK', and 'CULTURAL COMPETENCE'. The 'Nodes' table on the right provides a summary of the coding process, including the number of sources, the user who created the nodes, and their classification.

Name	Sources	Created By	Description	Classification
NATURE OF L2 LEARNING BEHAVIOUR	4	A		
PERCEPTION OF PROGRESS	4	A		
ATTITUDES TOWARDS L2 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	4	A		
NATURE OF ICC BEHAVIOUR	4	A		
TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP WITH NON-ARABIC SPEAKERS	4	A		
RESPOND TO ICC OPPORTUNITIES	4	A		
RECOGNITION OF ICC OPPORTUNITIES	4	A		
PURPOSE OF CONTACT	4	A		
ATTITUDES TOWARDS NON-ARABIC SPEAKERS	4	A		
MEDIATING FACTORS	4	A		
SOCIAL FACTORS	4	A		
PERSONAL FACTORS	4	A		
CULTURAL FACTORS	4	A		
STEREOTYPES	4	A		
RELIGION	4	A		
FORBIDDEN ACTIVITIES	4	A		
CULTURE SHOCK	4	A		
CULTURAL COMPETENCE	4	A		

**Q4 Why?**  
 For us the Saudis, the non-Muslim groups don't suit us

As Muslims our perspective is different from theirs ... um ... for example, at the weekends they have parties, go to night clubs, drink alcohol, etc. ... um you know these are forbidden activities. We cannot do that. Their life style is different from ours.

**Q5 So do you find such issues hinder making friendships?**  
 Indeed! They go every weekend ... um ... we tried to persuade them to play football with us on a weekend and don't go for party and they didn't accept that ... Um ... we usually stay with other Saudi students and play PlayStation, cards, or football.

The 'Nodes' table at the bottom right shows the following data:

Node	Sources	Created By	Description	Classification
FORBIDDEN ACTIVITIES	4	A		
CULTURE SHOCK	4	A		
CULTURAL COMPETENCE	4	A		

### Appendix E: Interviewee consent form

**Research Title:**

“Relationships between Intercultural Contact and L2 Motivation for a Group of Undergraduate Saudi Students during their First Year in the UK”

**Researcher Name:** Ali AlQahtani

1. I have read the Information Sheet for this study and have had details of the study explained to me.
2. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.
3. I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study.
4. I agree to provide information to the researchers under the conditions of confidentiality set out on the information sheet.
5. I wish to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.
6. I consent to the information collected for the purposes of this research study to be used for any other research purposes.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Participant’s Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant’s Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** //

**Contact details:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher’s Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher’s Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix F: Interviewee information letter**

Dear participant,

I would like to thank you for completing the survey.

I would now like to invite you to participate in the second phase of the study in which you will be interviewed three times during the whole academic year as follows:

- First interview will be in November 2012.
- Second interview will be in February 2013.
- Third interview will be in May 2013.

Please spend a few minutes reading this explanation in order to understand the reason for conducting this research that may help you to make a decision about taking part in this phase of the research.

This research is entitled:

“Relationships between Intercultural Contact and L2 Motivation for a Group of Undergraduate Saudi Students during their First Year in the UK”

This research aims to investigate whether experience of Intercultural Contact of new arrival Saudi students has an impact on their motivation to learn English during their first year in the UK.

If you decided to participate in this phase of the study, I would like to inform you that:

- The researcher is not assessing your performance rather being interested in your actual behaviour.
- Your participation is entirely voluntary. The interviews are unlikely to take more than one hour.
- You have the right to withdraw from this research at any stage.
- You do not have to give a reason for your withdrawal.
- If you decided to withdraw, the data you give prior to the withdrawal will be removed from the study.
- The researcher will protect your identity.
- The information you will give will be confidential.
- With your permission, the interviews will be audio recorded
- The audio recordings of your interviews made during this research will be used only for analysis and for illustration during conference presentations and lectures.
- All of the information will be utilized only for the benefit of this research.
- No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one, apart from the researcher, will be allowed access to the original recordings.
- Interviews will be conducted in a place of your choice that you are familiar with (e.g. your University/Institution, your house, or my house).

If you require any further information or explanation, please email me on the following address: [almadhah@gmail.com](mailto:almadhah@gmail.com)

Yours sincerely,

Ali AlQahtani

### **Appendix G: Saudi students' clubs' officials' Consent Form**

**Research Title:**

‘Relationships between Intercultural Contact and L2 Motivation for a Group of Undergraduate Saudi Students during their First Year in the UK’

**Researcher Name:** Ali AlQahtani

1. I have read the Information Sheet for this study and have had details of the study explained to me.
2. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.
3. I also understand that I am free to decline to participate in the study.
4. I agree to provide information to the researchers under the conditions of confidentiality set out on the information sheet.
5. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

---

**Participant's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** //

**Contact details:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix H: Saudi students' clubs officials' Information Sheet**

I ask for your help in my doctoral research project. The research is entitled:

‘Relationships between Intercultural Contact and L2 Motivation for a Group of Undergraduate Saudi Students during their First Year in the UK’

- This research aims to investigate whether experience of Intercultural Contact of newly arrived Saudi students has an impact on their motivation to learn English during their first year in the UK.
- I would like you, if possible, to distribute an electronic version of the survey questionnaire to newly arrived undergraduate Saudi students in your region.
- You can do this by emailing the survey link to students who are registered in your club.
- As explained in the introduction to the survey:
  - Students' participation is entirely voluntary.
  - Their responses are anonymous.
  - The information participants will give will be confidential and only be used for the purpose of the research.
- If you require any further information or explanation, please email me on the following address: [almadhah@gmail.com](mailto:almadhah@gmail.com)

Ali AlQahtani



## Appendix I: AREA Faculty Research Ethics Committee University of Leeds

Performance, Governance and Operations  
 Research & Innovation Service  
 Charles Thackrah Building  
 101 Clarendon Road  
 Leeds LS2 9LJ Tel: 0113 343 4873  
 Email: [j.m.blaikie@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:j.m.blaikie@leeds.ac.uk)



**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

Ali Alqahtani  
 School of Education  
 University of Leeds  
 Leeds, LS2 9JT

### AREA Faculty Research Ethics Committee University of Leeds

29 March 2012

Dear Ali

**Title of study:** Relationships between Intercultural Contact and L2  
 Motivation for a Group of undergraduate Saudi Students  
 during their First Year in the UK

**Ethics reference:** AREA 11-124

I am pleased to inform you that the above research application has been reviewed by the ESSL, Environment and LUBS (AREA) Faculty Research Ethics Committee and following receipt of your response to the Committee's initial comments, I can confirm a favourable ethical opinion as of the date of this letter. The following documentation was considered:

Document	Version	Date
AREA 11-124 response to Ethical Committee comments 13 March.docx	1	16/03/12
AREA 11-124 I Information letter.docx	1	16/03/12
AREA 11-124 Lamb's com REV Ethical_Review_Form_V3.doc	2	16/03/12
AREA 11-124 R. Wedell com officials information sheet.doc	2	16/03/12
AREA 11-124 R.Wedell com Information sheet.doc	1	23/02/12
AREA 11-124 R. Wedell com officials consent form.doc	1	23/02/12

AREA 11-124 I Consent Form.docx	1	23/02/12
AREA 11-124 R. Wedell com revised questionnaire.doc	2	16/03/12

Committee members made the following comments:

- The Committee felt you had made a good attempt to address all the issues.
- However they still felt that the survey introduction needed to be developed as this is the first communication about the research that the potential participants encounter and it will be via the club official even though it is for a PHD study. This could be confusing and misunderstood and the distinction between the club role as distributor (anonymously) and the research needs to be made very clearly.
- Also the risk assessment box needs changing to 'yes' for the reason such as 'lone worker visiting homes' - a risk assessment needs to be undertaken for this.

Please notify the committee if you intend to make any amendments to the original research as submitted at date of this approval, including changes to recruitment methodology. All changes must receive ethical approval prior to implementation. The amendment form is available at [www.leeds.ac.uk](http://www.leeds.ac.uk).

Please note: You are expected to keep a record of all your approved documentation, as well as documents such as sample consent forms, and other documents relating to the study. This should be kept in your study file, which should be readily available for audit purposes. You will be given a two week notice period if your project is to be audited.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Blaikie

Senior Research Ethics Administrator  
Research & Innovation Service

On behalf of Dr Anthea Hucklesby

Chair, [AREA Faculty Research Ethics Committee](#)

CC: Student's supervisor(s)