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Motivation in Second Language Learning: A Small-Scale qualitative Study of Language Attitudes in a Macau English-medium Secondary School

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts in Applied English
at the University of Macau.

February, 2012

Abstract of thesis entitled

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Motivation is a major individual difference which affects second language learning. This paper uses a qualitative method to investigate the motivation orientation of students in second language (L2) learning. Four students from a girl's English-medium secondary school are invited to participate in this study. Semi-structured interviews are used to let the interviewees express their experience and expectation in L2 learning. The results are analyzed and coded. The participants express that personal goals and external pressure/incentives affect them in learning L2. For personal goals, getting a good job, communication and other goals affect their motivation in learning L2. For external pressure/incentives, parents' influence, teachers' influence, peers' influence and other pressures affect them. The results show that learners' motivational L2 self would differ even if the reasons for learning that language are the same. Through different learning experience, learners would have different motivational selves. Also, the motivational L2 self would change due to external factors. Finally, an "Ideal L2 Self" could be more obviously found in high proficiency students and some ideas are offered to help to enhance students' "Ideal L2 Self".

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