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Junior Secondary School Students' Motivation for Learning Multiple Foreign Languages in Burundi: A Cross-sectional Study

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Abstract

This study investigated the motivation of Burundi junior secondary school students learning simultaneously three foreign languages: French, English, and Kiswahili. A 65-item questionnaire was employed to sample the views of 348 (grade 7 through 9) learners from state schools. Using Dörnyei's (2009) L2 motivational self-system as the main theoretical framework, this study specifically explored temporal changes in L2 motivation of the participants over the three-year period across the three target languages. In doing so, the present study adopted a quantitative research design with a cross-sectional approach and the obtained data were analysed by means of descriptive and inferential statistics namely a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and stepwise multiple regression analyses. Statistical analyses were computed using SPSS - version 22. The results indicated that there were significant differences in most of the measured motivational scales across the three languages with ninth grade students scoring significantly lower than their peers from lower school grades. Moreover, the results revealed that L2 learning experience and ideal L2 self were the two variables that respectively predicted most the students' intended effort to learn each language. One school grade-related difference was that international posture appeared as a significant factor among seventh grade students in relation to French learning and among ninth grade pupils regarding English learning. Another finding, which was unexpected, was that English (L3) appeared to be the most popular foreign language among these students. In the light of the results, pedagogical implications are discussed based on the socio-educational context of Burundi.

Keywords: L2 motivation, L2 motivational self-system, school grade, simultaneous multiple language learning

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1. Introduction

Over the past six decades, there has been an extensive body of research acknowledging motivation to be one of the key factors contributing to success in second (L2) or foreign language (FL) learning (Dörnyei, 2019; Gardner & Lambert, 1959). Of all the factors involved in L2 learning achievement such as learner aptitude, learning strategies, appropriate curricula, etc., Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) recognize the primacy of motivation and argue that all the other factors presuppose it to varying degrees. Since the late 1950s with the pioneering studies by Gardner and his associates, the study of L2 motivation has, thus, been very dynamic as it has undergone an important transition from Gardner's (1985) conceptualisation of L2 motivation into integrative and instrumental orientations to Dörnyei's (2009) socio-dynamic L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) theory.

This shift in interest concerning the main theoretical framework when investigating L2 motivation reflects an evolving applied linguistic research landscape, one where Gardner's (1985) influential notion of integrative motivation was found irrelevant in many foreign language learning contexts (Dörnyei, Csizér, & Németh, 2006; Lamb, 2004; Yashima, 2000) and where language globalisation has brought more questions as to which native language community or culture learners of such languages should identify with (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). This has resulted in the creation of the L2MSS theory, a framework that can be applicable to situations where opportunities for integration are absent or where there is no desire for identification with the L2 community (Dörnyei et al., 2006).

Based on contemporary personality psychological theories of self, the theory lays greater emphasis on the students' future self-guides, that is, how the images they have of themselves as language learners affect the learning process itself. According to this L2MSS model, there are three main sources of L2/FL learning motivation: (a) the learner's internal image of the ideal L2 user they would like to become, (b) external pressures coming from the learner's L2 learning environment to master the language, and (c) the actual L2 learning process in which the learner is engaged (Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017). The model has proved very popular as several studies exploring L2 learning motivation have been conducted to test and validate it in various L2/FL learning environments (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009).

In spite of this large volume of L2 motivation research, there continue to be nonetheless certain research areas that have been overlooked. For instance, research on motivation to learn more than one L2 is scant (Henry, 2017; Siridetkoon & Dewaele, 2017). This is a very significant gap as multilingual education is today a norm rather than an exception in many countries and societies around the world (De Angelis, 2007). In Burundi for instance, as a consequence to the country's formal integration into the East African Community (EAC) in 2007 where both English and Kiswahili are the community's official languages, four languages, i.e., Kirundi (L1), French (L2), English, and Swahili (L3s) are simultaneously taught since then in the country's public educational system from the very first grade of the primary education although the country is not traditionally multilingual (Mazunya & Habonimana, 2010). Moreover, third language (L3) acquisition is said to be more complex (Herdina & Jessner, 2000) and a process significantly different from L2 acquisition (Cenoz, 2000). Thus, it is unlikely that L2 motivation research in contexts where individuals are engaged in learning exclusively a single L2 will be entirely applicable in situations where students are learning an L3 or multiple foreign languages.

Another important trend in L2 motivation research has been the realisation, since the late 1990s, that students' motivation to learn a language does not stay constant but rather exhibits a degree of fluctuation over time (Dörnyei, 2005). As L2 or FL learning often takes a long period of time to accomplish, the dynamic or temporal dimension of motivation should also be examined. In institutionalised compulsory L2 learning contexts, sustaining the necessary effort and motivation during and across various school grades seems to play a prominent role in the students' success in mastering the language. Several longitudinal and cross-sectional studies have, since then, investigated L2 motivational processes over time (e.g., Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002; Henry, 2009; Kormos & Csizér, 2008; Lamb, 2007; Papi & Teimouri, 2012; Steiner, 2021; Taylor, 2022; Wang & Liu, 2017). However, with the exception of a few studies (e.g., Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002; Dörnyei et al., 2006; Williams, Burden, & Lanvers, 2002) in which the participants were multiple language learners, most of these studies examined motivation to learn one single L2 or FL.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Although over the past six decades there has been a very large body of research acknowledging motivation to be a substantial psychological construct contributing to success in L2 or FL learning (Dörnyei, 2019), L3 or multiple language learning motivation is however a research area that has been overlooked (Siridetkoon & Dewaele, 2017). Moreover, even most of the previous studies that touched upon the topic have been conducted in contexts where English was an L2 (Henry, 2011). This study intends then to fill that gap in the under-researched context of Burundi where not only multiple foreign languages are on offer, namely French, English, and Kiswahili, but also where English is the students' L3.

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Previous studies on motivation to learn multiple languages (e.g., Busse, 2017; Dörnyei et al., 2006; Henry, 2010, 2011; Huang, Hsu, & Chen, 2015; Lasagabaster, 2015) repeatedly revealed that learners were less motivated to learn languages other than English (LOTEs) when the individuals were also simultaneously learning English. As Burundi is a French-speaking country which is also geopolitically located between the Francophone Central Africa and the Anglophone East Africa, whether English which is an L3 in the country will have a negative impact on motivation to learn other languages seems to be a significant research gap. Although the scant available literature in the context of Burundi (e.g., Bigirimana, 2018; Irakoze, 2015) indicated that the participants also had more positive attitudes towards L3 English to the detriment of both L2 French and L3 Kiswahili, none of these studies used nonetheless the L2MSS, the dominant theory in the field of L2 motivation (Boo, Dörnyei, & Ryan, 2015), as the theoretical framework. Moreover, as Djigunović and Nikolov (2019) noticed, there is still a scarcity of studies on young learners' L2 motivation (primary and junior secondary school learners) in comparison to those on older and more mature students. To fill this gap, this study was, therefore, carried out on Burundi junior secondary school students who had been simultaneously learning multiple FLs throughout their formal education.

1.2 The Present Study

Using the L2 motivational self-system as a theoretical framework, the present study examines the motivational characteristics of Burundi junior secondary school students (grades 7, 8, and 9) from public schools who had been simultaneously learning three foreign languages throughout their formal education. More specifically, the study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. Are there any differences in terms of motivation across languages among Burundi junior secondary school students simultaneously learning multiple foreign languages?
2. Are there any significant differences between the participating school grades in terms of their motivation to learn each foreign language?
3. What are the sources of differences between the participating school grades in terms of the motivational variables predicting the students' intended efforts to learn each foreign language?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Changes in L2 Motivation over Time

Although the origin of L2 motivation research dates back to the 1950s with seminal studies by Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972) and their associates working in the bilingual Canadian context, it was not until the late 1990s that the dynamic aspect of L2 motivation started to be considered. During that last decade of the 20th century, researchers realized that, when examined in situated contexts, L2 motivation was not a static construct but rather a dynamic attribute that displays a certain degree of fluctuation over time and even in a single language class (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). This has then resulted in a new era where the study of the continuous changes of L2 motivation over time required to adopt a process-oriented paradigm (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). The interest in viewing L2 motivation as construct that ebbs and flows over time became more popular among L2 motivation researchers particularly after the publication of three works that paved a way for a process-oriented approach to L2 motivation: (a) Williams and Burden (1997), (b) Ushioda (1996), and (c) Dörnyei and Ottó (1998). All of them focused on 'the temporal organization' of L2 motivation as L2/FL learning success or achievement was perceived to be involving a "sustained learning process" that usually takes a long period to accomplish (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p.60).

This conceptualization of motivation as a process has sparked an interest of motivation in researchers and has resulted in several longitudinal and cross-sectional studies investigating motivational processes over time thereafter. With school-age pupils during compulsory education, international research in L2 motivation has shown that learners start learning an FL with enthusiasm, but as they advance in upper classes and get older, their motivation declines and becomes increasingly less positive (e.g., Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002; Henry & Apelgren, 2008; Lamb, 2007; Steiner, 2021; Williams et al., 2002). For example, Williams et al. (2002) conducted a comparative study with 228 British secondary school students in grades 7 through 9 learning French and German. Although the participants had higher motivation to learn German than French, the same results indicated that the students' motivation to learn the two foreign languages diminished as they got older.

In their repeated cross-sectional study, Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) explored Hungarian learners' attitudes and language learning motivation across five foreign languages namely English, German, French, Russian, and Italian. Survey data were collected from thousands of 13/14 year-old school pupils on two occasions (1993 and 1999). Analyses indicated that, English being an exception, pupils' L2 motivation between the two phases showed a significant decline in all the

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other foreign languages. In Sweden, results from a longitudinal study also revealed a marked decline in motivation to learn English among school male students (Henry, 2009). These findings accord well with studies investigated in Indonesia (Lamb, 2007), Iran (Papi & Teimouri, 2012), China (Wang & Liu, 2017) and Switzerland (Steiner, 2021). As most of these studies investigated motivation of students who were involved in learning one single L2 or FL, with the exception of a few studies (e.g., Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002; Dörnyei et al., 2006; Williams et al., 2002), little is however known about whether Burundi learners' motivation about multiple foreign language learning will observe the general trend of temporal decline and whether this will take place in all the three FLs as the participants have been simultaneously learning them from the very first grade of their formal schooling.

2.2 L2 Motivational Self System

Up until the introduction of the L2 motivational self-system (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009) in the field of L2 motivation, L2 motivation theories and research lived in the shadow of Gardner's (1985) socio-educational motivation theory of integrative and instrumental orientations. Being grounded in the unique and complex inter-ethnic, multicultural, and bilingual Canadian context, Gardner's theory, particularly the integrative aspect of the model, failed to satisfy the growing concerns voiced by SLA scholars and researchers not working in Canada-like language learning contexts (Crooks & Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002; Lamb, 2004; Yashima, 2000) and was consequently refuted. Given the limitations of the framework, Dörnyei (2005, 2009) proposed, therefore, the 'L2 Motivational Self System', an innovative and comprehensive model not contradicting the relevant large body of empirical data accumulated over the different previous phases of L2 motivation conceptualization and research (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015).

Drawing on two personality psychological theories namely Markus and Nurius's (1986) *possible selves* and Higgins's (1987) *self-discrepancy theory*, the L2MSS framework deals with ones' imagined future conceptions of themselves and is made up of three facets each representing one main source of L2/FL learning motivation: (a) the *ideal L2 self*, which refers to the ideal L2 competence a person wishes to possess, (b) the *ought-to L2 self*, which refers to attributes in terms of duties, responsibilities, or obligations that a person believes one ought to have to satisfy the expectations of others (e.g., parents, siblings, friends,…) or to avoid possible future negative L2 learning outcomes, and (c) the *L2 learning experience*, which concerns motives related to the immediate L2 learning environment including learner experiences. As Thompson (2019) argues, the model is a two-part theory that has been conceptualized at two different levels: the first two components (ideal and ought-to) synthesize the concept of self (Higgins, 1987; Markus & Nurius, 1986) while the last component, the L2 Learning Experience, focuses on the learner's situated learning context. The model has proved very popular as several studies exploring L2 learning motivation have been conducted to specifically test the theory in various L2/FL learning environments (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009) and all have confirmed the validity of such a framework.

In addition to those studies that were particularly conducted for validity purposes, the popularity of the L2MSS has been increasing in the field of L2 motivation. As a matter of fact, just one decade after its proposal, Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) remarked "an exceptional wave of interest with literally hundreds of studies appearing worldwide" (p.91) even allowing Al-Hoorie (2018) to conduct the first meta-analysis. Besides, in their literature survey of 416 book chapters and journal articles published between 2005 and 2014, the L2MSS stood out to be the dominant theoretical framework used for examining language learner motivation (Boo et al., 2015).

2.3 Multiple Language Learning and Motivation

Despite a large volume and its quite long history, L2 motivation research has had a "longstanding monolingual bias" (Henry & Thorsen, 2017, p.1), that is, the study of L2 motivation has largely been concerned with situations where learners are engaged in learning a single L2/FL (Henry, 2010) with studies in which English was the L2 receiving the lion's share (Henry & Apelgren, 2008). This is unfortunate since multilingual acquisition is a common practice rather than an exception in the current global context (De Angelis, 2007). Nonetheless, motivation to learn multiple foreign languages has recently begun to attract the attention of motivation researchers with the findings of studies exploring individuals' future self-guides conducted so far often pointing to the existence of competing motivational identities (Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017). For example, findings of several studies from Europe, Asia, and America (Csizér & Lukács, 2010; Dewaele, 2005; Dörnyei et al., 2006; Henry, 2010, 2011; Huang & Feng, 2019; Lasagabaster, 2015) on motivation in situations where multiple foreign languages were on offer repeatedly revealed that learners were less motivated to learn languages other than English (LOTEs) when the individuals were also learning English. This was attributed to the fact that, in the presence of global English, the desire to learn LOTEs, considered to be of lower-profile, can be impeded as the different target languages compete for the learners' fixed amount of motivational and cognitive resources (Dörnyei et al., 2006; Henry & Apelgren, 2008).

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According to Nakamura (2015), however, the lower levels of motivation associated with learning LOTEs might not be a result of the presence of a powerful L2 English but rather a failure to link the other FLs that the learners are learning to specific domains of language use in their current or future life. Nakamura associates L2 learning motivation with particular domains such as education and career and highlights that there is a positive correlation between learners' future self-images and the domains where the target languages are considered relevant. He also believes that, instead of competition and negative interference, there can be a harmonious coexistence among the different self-concepts related to the languages involved only if each language is firmly associated with a specific domain (e.g., career, education, interpersonal) in a learner's future self-image.

This theory, according to which there is a positive relationship between language learning motivation and specific domains of learner's current or future language use (Nakamura, 2015), finds some support particularly in studies where the participants were learning multiple languages out of their own volition (Siridetkoon & Dewaele, 2017; Zaragoza, 2011). For example, in Zaragoza's (2011) study in which 33 Mexican tertiary students who were simultaneously learning multiple foreign languages participated, the students were found to have different motives about the languages being learned; each language was linked to a specific domain of life such as career, education, or pleasure. From the leaners' discussions about their motivation to learn LOTES, it was found that the motives given were related to both their current identity and their possible future selves as students and workers as well. Thus, these findings reveal that learners learning multiple languages often have dynamic and very complex motivational selves; the global status of English instead of threatening leaners' motivation to learn LOTEs might rather encourage them to study other FLs (Dörnyei, MacIntyre, & Henry, 2015; Siridetkoon & Dewaele, 2017).

In the context of Burundi, there has been no research on motivation to learn multiple foreign languages. The scant available literature (e.g., Bigirimana, 2018; Irakoze, 2015) has dealt with the topic of attitudes towards language learning and was influenced by Gardner's (1985) socio-educational theory of SLA. In brief, the participants in these studies reported to have more positive attitudes towards English (L3) to the detriment of both French (L2) and Kiswahili (L3). None of these studies, however, used L2MSS, the more recent and popular theoretical framework. Besides, though L2 motivation research shows that multiple language learners are less motivated to learn LOTEs in the presence of English, little is however known about learners' motivation in situations where English is the L3. As Burundi is a French-speaking country which is also geopolitically located between the Francophone Central Africa and the Anglophone East Africa, whether the participants will be more motivated to learn L3 English than LOTEs seems to be a significant research gap.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

To find answers to the research questions that guided this research study, a quantitative research design with a cross-sectional approach was adopted. As this study intended to examine the motivation of junior high school students from three consecutive school grades (grade 7 through 9) learning simultaneously three foreign languages at school through the lens of Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System, using the quantitative design with a cross-sectional approach deemed appropriate so as to find general trends and patterns across the three school grades of the target population. It was also expected that there would be some patterns of temporal decline in the students' motivation to learn the three FLs over the period of three years of junior high school education level as the students advanced in upper classes in their studies, a common trend found in the literature.

3.2 Participants

In Burundi, most of the population has Kirundi as their native language, with the exception of a tiny minority of people from the inhabitants living in major urban cities like Bujumbura Municipality whose native language can be either Kiswahili or French (Mazunya & Habonimana, 2010). Thus, four public schools, that is, two rural secondary schools and two urban schools with a junior secondary education level (grades 7-9), were selected in order to represent the students' various social backgrounds. The selected four public secondary schools are located in Ntahangwa District (from the urban province of Bujumbura Municipality, the economic capital and largest city of the country) and Matongo District (of the rural province of Kayanza). In selecting both the districts and schools, judgement sampling method was used. As all the students had been learning Kirundi and three FLs simultaneously throughout the learners' formal education, no data were collected from learners whose native language was not Kirundi. Students from three consecutive junior secondary school grades, namely 7, 8, and 9 were chosen as three different populations in our sample. As classes were extremely large, a stratified random sampling technique (Dörnyei, 2007) was utilized to include an acceptable number of participants from each school grade. In total, 348 secondary school students participated in the study. Although this seems not to be very large, there were three sets of scores of data to be

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processed. The descriptive statistics of the sample are presented in Table 1. As seen, the average age for grade 7 students is 13.7 (SD = 1.43), 15.15 (SD = 1.49) for grade 8 students, and 15.68 (SD = 1.59) for the students in grade 9. In each school grade, the number of female participants was a little bit larger.

Table 1. A description of the sub-samples of the participants in the study

	Grade 7 students	Grade 8 students	Grade 9 students	Total
Number	131	117	100	348
Gender (*M/F*)	55/76	51/66	42/58	148/200
Age (mean/*SD*)	13.75/1.43	15.15/1.49	15.68/1.59	14.78/1.70
Age range	11-18	12 – 19	12-20	11-20

Note. M and *F* refer respectively to male and female students; *SD* refers to standard deviation.

3.3 Instrument

A questionnaire was the instrument developed to collect the data. It had two main sections, the first eliciting the demographic information of the respondents while the second section targeted the students' multiple foreign language learning motivation. As the junior secondary school students were still young (age average = 14.7 years) and many were unfamiliar with questionnaires, the number of items had been deliberately limited so that whole instrument could be completed within 30 minutes (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010) in order to prevent them from feeling fatigue.

In the first section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to give aspects of their background information which can be hypothesized to affect their L2 motivation such as their gender, grade level, age, and name of their urban or rural school. The second section consisted of 65 items in a form of statements adapted from the questionnaires of previous research studies that investigated L2 motivation in various L2 or FL contexts (Calafato & Tang, 2019; Lamb, 2012; Taguchi et al., 2009). However, keeping in mind the Burundi foreign language learning context, some minor changes were made in the composition of individual items of the questionnaire.

The 65 Likert-scale items were grouped into six motivational factors: (a) Ideal L2/L3 Self (e.g., *I see myself as a person who in the future is good at speaking French / English / Kiswahili*), (b) Ought-to L2/L3 Self (e.g., *I have to learn French / English / Kiswahili because my family expects me to*), (c) L2/L3 Learning Experience (e.g., *I really enjoy learning French / English / Kiswahili*), (d) Motivation to be Multilingual (i.e., a desire to achieve multilingual competence) (e.g., *I want to be able to speak several different languages*), (e) International posture (i.e., a desire to relate to an international community through L2/L3 proficiency) (e.g., *I think that French / English / Kiswahili will help me meet more people from other countries*), and (f) Criterion measure of Intended learning effort (e.g., *I put a lot of time and energy into studying French / English / Kiswahili*) (see Appendix). As the questionnaire was focusing on three target languages, French, English, and Kiswahili, the participants had to answer the same set of 20 items for each language. For each statement, the students had to indicate the extent of their agreement on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Before its administration, it was translated into Kirundi, the native language of the respondents. Table 2 shows, for each language and for each school grade, the number of items and internal reliability for each motivational factor.

3.4 Procedures for Data Collection

Before the administration of the questionnaire, the first author established contacts through personal visits with the Education Directors in the two districts sampled to request permission to carry out the research. After the permission was granted, the first author approached the sampled schools and contacted the school principals asking for their cooperation. Each school designated one school teacher as a contact person to help the researcher in the process of the questionnaire administration. Data collection took place in March 2022. Printed copies of the questionnaire (in Kirundi) were filled in during class time in the students' ordinary classrooms during day lessons; the first author was always present at the administration, providing the introduction and overseeing the procedure. Prior to any administration, students were informed about the purpose of the study and that the information they give would be treated confidentially. The students took approximately between 25 and 30 minutes to complete the paper questionnaires and the respondents were always thanked for their cooperation.

3.5 Data Analysis

The collected data were submitted to IBM-SPSS - version 22 - for statistical analyses. To capture the overall picture of the sample's characteristics, descriptive statistics of the motivational scales used in the questionnaire are presented first. Following these preliminary analyses, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with *Scheffé* post hoc tests and

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multiple regression analyses were run in order to achieve the main objectives of the study. The ANOVA was run to identify the differences among the three school grades in terms of the three constituents of the L2 motivational self-system as well as the remaining motivational constructs including the criterion measure of intended learning efforts. Besides, stepwise multiple regression analyses were run to find answers to the third research question regarding the way the respondents' intended learning effort for each FL are predicted by the three components of the L2MSS and the other variables namely motivation to be multilingual, and international posture.

4. Results

4.1 Scale Reliability

In order to confirm the reliability of the questionnaire, the items were grouped into six multi-item scales and Cronbach alpha reliability was computed for each school grade separately (see Table 2).

Table 2. *Reliability coefficient in the three subsamples for all the measured scales*

Scales	Language	Inter-item correlation	Whole sample	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
Motivation to be multilingual (*5 items*)	_____	.20	.55	.63	.51	.52
Ideal L2 Self (*5 items*)	French	.26	.65	.72	.62	.52
	English	.38	.76	.78	.63	.78
	Kiswahili	.45	.80	.81	.81	.79
Ought-to L2 Self (*4 items*)	French	.27	.60	.70	.51	.52
	English	.30	.63	.61	.56	.53
	Kiswahili	.39	.72	.77	.71	.61
L2 Learning Experience (*3 items*)	French	.35	.61	.56	.65	.60
	English	.41	.67	.68	.64	.67
	Kiswahili	.51	.71	.77	.77	.69
Intended Learning Effort (*4 items*)	French	.33	.66	.67	.66	.65
	English	.39	.72	.62	.72	.77
	Kiswahili	.42	.75	.76	.71	.75
International Posture (*4 items*)	French	.44	.75	.74	.74	.74
	English	.33	.64	.61	.69	.60
	Kiswahili	.50	.79	.78	.78	.80

As can be seen in Table 2, most of the scales have alpha value of 0.60 or more. Although in social sciences a minimum internal consistency coefficient should ideally be .70 or more (Pallant, 2011), these obtained results can be regarded as quite good. In fact, in the field of L2 motivation research, especially when scales contain a few items, lower Cronbach's alpha scores are often judged as acceptable (Dörnyei & Csizer, 2002). Moreover, Pallant acknowledged that with short scales (containing less than 10 items) it is common to obtain lower Cronbach coefficients (e.g., .50). With such scales, he recommended then to report the mean inter-item correlation value for the items together with the reliability coefficients. As the results presented in Table 2, the mean inter-item values for the different scales range from .20 to .51. Based on Briggs and Cheek's (1986, p.97) interpretation according to which the mean inter-item correlations falling between .20 and .40 are highly acceptable, the questionnaire used in the present study was, therefore, reliable.

4.2 Comparative Analysis of the Multi-item Scales across the Target Languages

Table 3 presents the means of language-related motivational scales obtained. The results show that, although the students have been simultaneously learning three foreign languages, the participants' motivational dispositions are generally higher for English. With the exception of 'ideal L2 self' on which French obtained the highest score, English got the top means on the remaining motivational scales. With regard to Kiswahili, it consistently obtained the bottom

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scores across all the scales. These figures indicate, indeed, that English is the most popular foreign language among the Burundi junior secondary school students. With respect to French, the dominant foreign language in Burundi, it was rated lower than English. However, regardless of the language, the students' mean values surpass the three-point mark on all the scales indicating that the participants are motivated to learn all the three foreign languages.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics and comparison of the language-related motivational scales

Scales	Language	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*
Ideal L2 self	French	348	4.06	.76
	English	348	4.05	.83
	Kiswahili	347	3.56	1.00
Ought-to L2 self	French	348	3.44	.97
	English	348	3.47	.97
	Kiswahili	347	3.15	1.05
Language learning experience	French	348	4.02	.83
	English	348	4.18	.84
	Kiswahili	347	3.95	1.02
International posture	French	348	3.99	.91
	English	348	4.35	.69
	Kiswahili	347	3.70	1.00
Intended learning effort	French	348	3.97	.77
	English	348	4.11	.79
	Kiswahili	347	3.82	.95

Note: N refers to the total number of valid responses.

4.3 ANOVA Results

Table 4 presents a comparison of mean scores on the different motivational scales across the three target languages for each school grade. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to identify significant differences among the three groups.

Table 4. Analysis of variance for multi-item scales across three school grades

Scales	Language	7th grade	8th grade	9th grade	*F*	*p*	Sequence[b]	Effect size (partial eta^2)
Ideal L2 self	French	M=4.03 (SD=.84)	M=4.23 (SD=.71)	M=3.92 (SD=.69)	4.886	.008**	2 > 1 ns 3	.03
	English	4.10 (.83)	4.24 (.69)	3.76 (.91)	10.017	.000***	3 < 1 ns 2	.05
	Kiswahili	3.60 (1.01)	3.68 (.99)	3.37 (.96)	2.814	.061	____	____
Ought-to L2 self	French	3.59 (1.01)	3.54 (.91)	3.13 (.91)	7.724	.001**	3 < 1 ns 2	.04
	English	3.68 (.94)	3.72 (.87)	2.90 (.90)	27.174	.000***	3 < 1 ns 2	.14
	Kiswahili	3.32 (1.10)	3.29 (1.05)	2.85 (.94)	5.690	.004**	3 < 1 ns 2	.03
L2 Learning Experience	French	4.08 (.82)	3.95 (.87)	4.01 (.78)	.672	.511	___	___
	English	4.24 (.85)	4.31 (.76)	3.95 (.88)	5.548	.004**	3 < 1 ns 2	.03
	Kiswahili	3.99 (1.05)	4.03 (1.03)	3.80 (.95)	1.563	.211	___	___

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International posture	French	3.84 (.98)	4.15 (.82)	4.00 (.89)	3.449	.033*	3 ns 1 < 2	.01
	English	4.26 (.72)	4.56 (.62)	4.24 (.69)	7.966	.000***	1 ns 3 < 2	.04
	Kiswahili	3.70 (.99)	3.93 (.93)	3.41 (1.04)	7.305	.001**	3 ns 1 < 2	.04
Intended learning effort	French	4.04 (.78)	4.00 (.76)	3.86 (.75)	1.675	.189	___	___
	English	4.13 (.76)	4.30 (.68)	3.85 (.90)	8.908	.000***	3 < 1 ns 2	.04
	Kiswahili	3.92 (.95)	3.91 (.92)	3.57 (.94)	4.716	.010*	3 < 2 ns 1	.02

Note: [b]*Post hoc* Scheffé comparison. *M* refers to mean; 1 = 7th grade, 2 = 8th grade, 3 = 9th grade; "< " indicates significant difference, '*ns*' denotes non-significant differences between two mean values; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

As shown in the last three columns of Table 4 where ANOVA statistics comparing the three subgroups are presented, most of the F scores were significant. This reveals changes in motivation across school grades over time in most of the motivational scales. With the level of significance set at $p < .05$, the sequence markings based on *Scheffé* post hoc comparisons indicate where the actual changes took place. Overall, motivation to learn the FLs increases in grade 8 in some scales and drops down with 9th grade learners regardless of the FL while it keeps decreasing in other scales over the 3 years corresponding to the junior secondary school education period. However, as measured by partial eta squared, the effect size for these differences for most of the motivational factors was small. A significant difference with a large effect size was only found for ought-to English self.

4.4 Relationship between the Motivational Scales and the Criterion Measure

In this phase of our data analysis, stepwise multiple regression analyses were run to find out which of the five main variables of the study - ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, L2 learning experience, international posture, and motivation to be multilingual - contributed most to the effort the participants reported investing in learning each foreign language. Prior to conducting these analyses, however, the assumptions regarding normality, linearity, homogeneity of variances, multicollinearity, and absence of outliers were checked and no serious violations were noted. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of the regression analysis of the Motivational scales with intended learning effort as the criterion variable for grade 7, grade 8, and grade 9 students

Language	Variable	Grade 7 students			Grade 8 students			Grade 9 students		
		B	*SE B*	*Beta*	*B*	*SE B*	*beta*	*B*	*SE B*	*beta*
French	L2 learning experience	.66	.06	.68***	.55	.06	.63***	.59	.07	.61***
	Ideal L2 self	.32	.06	.34***	.39	.08	.35***	.41	.08	.38***
	International posture	.16	.07	.20*	-	-	-	-	-	-
	R square		.57			.50			.50	
English	L2 learning experience	.65	.05	.74***	.59	.06	.65***	.71	.08	.67***
	Ideal L2 self	.31	.05	.34***	.26	.07	.26***	-	-	-
	International posture	-	-	-	-	-	-	.46	.11	.35***
	R square		.62			.48			.54	
Kiswahili	L2 learning experience	.70	.05	.77***	.68	.04	.79***	.76	.06	.75***
	Ideal L2 self	.39	.06	.41***	.38	.06	.42***	.39	.08	.40***

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R square	.68	.72	.65

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

The results of stepwise multiple regression analyses regarding the strength of the measured variables in predicting the criterion measure of intended learning effort for each school grade are presented in Table 5. As seen in the table 5 above, in all school grades and across all the three target languages, results show that it is the variable of L2 learning experience which is the first highest contributor to the students' intended learning effort. For both French and Kiswahili and in all the three age groups, ideal L2 self emerged as the second strongest predictor of the students' intended learning efforts. In addition to the two constituent variables of the L2MSS, i.e. L2 learning experience and ideal L2 self, international posture was the third variable that significantly contributed to the students' willingness to invest effort in learning both French and English each in only one specific school grade. International posture predicts intended effort to learn French only for seventh grade students while for English learning, it is only for the ninth grade learner group where the variable was found to significantly contribute to their intended language learning effort. Another school grade-related difference in the results was that, although ideal L2 self turned out to be the second strongest contributor to the students' efforts to learn each foreign language, the variable failed to play the same role for the ninth grade students in their English learning process.

Overall, the L2 learning experience and Ideal L2 self together with international posture (for the lowest school grade) explained the remarkable amounts of 57 %, 50%, and 50% of the variance, respectively, in the 7th grade, 8th grade, and 9th grade students' intended effort to learn French. For English, L2 learning experience, ideal L2 self (for the two lower school grades), and international posture (for the ninth grade students) respectively explained 62%, 48%, and 54% in the students' efforts to learn the language. For Kiswahili, L2 learning experience and ideal L2 self accounted for the amount of 68%, 72%, and 65% of the variance in the criterion measure respectively for the three consecutive secondary school grades. However, the ought-to L2 self, the third constituent variable of Dörnyei's (2009) L2MSS theory, and the variable of motivation to be multilingual did not emerge as significant predictors of the students' intended effort to learn any of the three foreign languages in any of the three sub-sample groups.

5. Discussion

The present study used Dörnyei's (2009) L2 motivational self-system to examine the motivation of Burundi junior secondary school students learning simultaneously three foreign languages at school. The objective of the study was threefold: (a) to compare the students' motivational dispositions to learn the three target languages, (b) to evaluate any significant differences between the three consecutive school grade learners in terms of their motivation to learn each foreign language, and (c) to identify the sources of differences between the participating grades in terms of the motivational variables significantly contributing to the students' effort they are willing to invest in learning each foreign language. To achieve the study research aims, we draw upon descriptive statistics, ANOVA and stepwise multiple regression results.

RQ1: Are there any differences in terms of motivation across languages among Burundi junior secondary school students simultaneously learning multiple foreign languages?

According to the results in Table 3, although the students have been simultaneously learning three foreign languages throughout their formal education, the participants' motivational dispositions are generally higher for English. Out of the five language-related motivational scales, English received the top scores on four of the scales and Kiswahili consistently obtained the bottom means across all the scales. These figures indicate, thus, that English is the most popular foreign language among Burundi junior secondary school students. Given the younger age of the participants, this result is nonetheless surprising in the country where French is the first foreign language (L2). French is the dominant language, a language of administration, a medium of instruction, and a language of the media. These findings are however in line with results of other studies conducted in contexts where English enjoys a prominent status (e.g., Calafato & Tang, 2019; Henry, 2010, 2011; Huang & Feng, 2019; Lasagabaster, 2015) and even in learning situations such as Hungary (Dörnyei et al., 2006) and Belgium (Dewaele, 2005) where English was not the L2. This finding is also consistent with the results of other language attitudes-related studies conducted in Burundi in which both French-medium university students from a private university (Irakoze, 2015) and senior secondary school students (Bigirimana, 2018) reported to have more positive attitudes towards English than towards French and Kiswahili. Although still young, the participants in the present study seem to be more motivated to learn English, a language that has become a global language and the modern world lingua franca (Crystal, 2003). As the simultaneous foreign language learning is compulsory for these Burundi adolescents, investing effort into learning French and Kiswahili might likely be impeded, as it has been observed elsewhere (Dörnyei et al., 2006; Henry & Apelgren, 2008), since the three target languages compete for the learners' fixed amount of motivational and cognitive resources.

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RQ2: Are there any significant differences between the participating school grades in terms of their motivation to learn each foreign language?

For this research question, ANOVA with *Scheffé* post hoc tests were run in order to identify the differences among the students from the three school grades in terms of their motivation to learn each foreign language. Using the results in Table 4, a statistically significant difference was found in most of the scales across the three target languages. Overall, with ninth grade students scoring consistently lower than one or both lower school grades on all the scales, these findings indicate that, though it increases in grade 8 in some scales (e.g., international posture), the motivation to learn the FLs nonetheless drops down in grade 9 regardless of the foreign language. Though the students started learning the three target languages from grade one of their formal education, these results reveal that 7th grade students are generally more enthusiastic to learn foreign languages than their older comrades. This corroborates the results of other L2 motivation studies (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002; Dörnyei et al., 2006; Henry & Apelgren, 2008; Lamb, 2007; Williams et al., 2002) in which it was consistently found that school-age students involved in compulsory education start learning an L2 or FL with enthusiasm, but as they advance in upper classes, their motivation diminishes significantly and becomes increasingly less positive.

RQ3: What are the sources of differences between the participating school grades in terms of the motivational variables predicting the students' intended effort to learn each foreign language?

To find results for this last research question, stepwise multiple regression analyses were run in order to identify which variables among the measured motivational scales predicted most the students' intended effort to learn each foreign language (see results as presented in Table 5). Results presented in Table 5 show the main sources of differences among the three sub-samples in terms of which motivational factors emerged as the best predictors of the students' intended effort to learn each language. For French, L2 learning experience and ideal L2 self, which are components of Dörnyei's (2009) tripartite model of L2 motivation, are the best predictors of the effort the students from each of the three school grades are willing to invest in learning the language. For grade 7 students, in addition to the two variables, international posture is the other variable that significantly contributes to the students' French learning effort.

Regarding English, it is L2 learning experience which appears to have the most effect on the students' motivation for all the school grades. The second highest predictor is ideal L2 self for both 7 and 8 grade students while for grade 9 learners it is international posture that emerges as the second strongest contributor. In learning Kiswahili, the third foreign language, for all the school grade students, ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience are the variables that significantly contribute with the latter being the first strongest contributor. International posture significantly contributes to learn French with 7 grade students and to learn English in the grade 9 sub-sample. This suggests that, in the context of Burundi, French is seen by students in lower grades as the language they will use to relate to the international community. As the students advance in upper classes and get older, however, that role shifts to global English.

Concerning the contribution of ought-to L2 self to the students' intended effort to learn each foreign language, this third component of the L2MSS never emerged as a significant predictor in any of the three age groups. This finding is corroborated in other L2 motivation studies (Csizer & Lukacs, 2010; Kormos & Csizer, 2008; Lamb, 2012; Lasagabaster, 2015) and this indicates that, although the participants are still young, the expectation of their significant others and fear of negative outcomes have no effect on the students' language learning motivation.

Overall, regardless of the sub-sample, it is the L2 learning experience which appears to have the most importance in motivating these simultaneous multiple language students to learn each language. The ideal L2 self is often the second highest contributor to the learning process. This means that, although these young Burundians seem to believe in the importance and utility of each foreign language for their future (instrumentality), have a strong desire to see themselves as future competent L2/L3 users (Ideal L2 self), believe French (grade 7 students) or English (grade 9 learners) is the language that will help them most in relating to the international community, what makes them more likely to invest effort in learning each foreign language is whether they feel positive about the process of learning. This suggests that the role of the teacher, the impact of the curriculum or of the learner peer group, and the learner experience of success are potentially the most important factors triggering and sustaining the actual language learning effort. In this respect, Burundi is similar to other L2 or FL learning contexts such as Indonesia (Lamb, 2012), Iran (Azarnoosh & Birjandi, 2012; Papi, 2010), Japan (Taguchi et al., 2009), and Pakistan (Rasool & Winke, 2019) where L2 learning experience has been shown to be the component of the L2MSS that contributes most to the students' intended language learning effort.

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Although the Ideal L2 self was found to contribute significantly in motivating the students from all the three school grades to learn both French and Kiswahili, its importance in motivating the participants in learning English was only partially supported in this study. The variable did not contribute to the English learning effort in the sub-sample of ninth grade students and was replaced by international posture as the second greatest contributor. One possible reason for this might be the realisation by more mature and advanced learners that English plays a more important role in the current global context. Another possible explanation behind the ideal L2 self contributing lesser than the L2 learning experience might relate to the subjects' younger age and to the compulsory nature of the learning process. These results accord well with findings of studies that involved secondary school students as participants (Azarnoosh & Birjandi, 2012; Lamb, 2012; Papi, 2010). They are, however, in contradiction with results of studies in which the participants were university students or adult language learners (e.g., Altalib, 2019; Far, Rajab, & Etemadzadeh, 2012; Lasagabaster, 2015) in which ideal L2 self was the most influential component of the L2 motivational self-system. This may suggest that, in compulsory learning contexts, ideal selves of younger students are less realistic than their older counterparts.'

Overall, no clear school grade-related differences were identified in terms of the motivational variables influencing most the students' intended effort to learn the three foreign languages. L2 learning experience and Ideal L2 self were respectively and consistently the first and the second strongest contributors to the participants' intended learning effort with the exception of grade 9 students learning English where the ideal L2 self did not significantly contribute to the learning. One major difference is observed, nevertheless, between grade 7 and 9 students in relation to their motivation to learn both French and English. With younger learners (grade 7), international posture is the third variable that significantly contributes to learning French while for grade 9 students, international posture together with L2 learning experience are the two variables significantly contributing to the learners' intended English learning effort. This suggests, thus, French is the language of much benefit when relating to the international community for seventh grade students while, with more mature and advanced students, it is global English to play that role. The belief of grade 7 students according to which French is more important when relating to the international community seems normal in the context where it is the dominant foreign language and a language of education. With grade 9 students, to have been schooled much longer might have made them become more open toward the world at large and increasingly develop a sense of having interest in world affairs. Therefore, this has made them realise that English is an international language and the world lingua franca.

6. Conclusion

The present study was an attempt to explore the motivational characteristics of Burundi junior secondary school students enrolled in state-owned schools. This work mainly focused on the temporal evolution of L2 motivation among simultaneous multilingual learners from three consecutive school grades (grade 7 through 9) using Dornyei's (2009) L2 motivational self-system as the main theoretical framework. This investigation yielded three main results. First, although the students have been simultaneously learning three foreign languages (French, English, and Kiswahili) throughout their formal education, English appeared to be the most popular language among the participants as the language got the top means on most of the motivational scales measured in the study. Second, over the three-year period investigated, although results suggest that all the three sub-samples are motivated to learn the three target languages, motivation to learn each of the three FLs was, nonetheless, found to decrease over time. Students in lower school grades (grade 7) showed more positive motivation in learning each of the three foreign languages than their older friends studying in upper classes.

The last finding was about which motivational factors predicted most the students' intended effort to learn each foreign language. Overall, no clear school grade-related differences were identified in terms of the motivational variables influencing most the students' intended effort to learn the three foreign languages. Generally, ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience, two constituent variables of Dörnyei's (2009) tripartite theory of L2 motivation, contributed most to the students' motivated behaviour with the latter and the former being respectively the first and the second highest predictors in learning each of the three foreign languages. Nevertheless, one major difference was observed between grade 7 and 9 students in relation to their motivation for learning both French and English. For both languages, international posture emerged to be another variable significantly influencing the students' criterion measure of intended learning effort. With younger learners (grade 7), international posture was the third variable that significantly contributes to learning French while for grade 9 students, international posture replaced ideal L2 self to be the second highest contributor to the learners' intended English learning effort. This suggests that, in the context of Burundi, French is seen by students in lower grades as the language they will use to relate to the international community. However, with more mature and advanced students, it is global English to play that role.

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All in all, the findings of this study are in line with the results of other studies in which English was found to be the most popular language among multiple language learners (Dörnyei et al., 2006; Dewaele, 2005; Henry, 2010) regardless of whether it was being learnt as an L2 or L3. They equally corroborate other studies' findings in which L2 motivation was found to decline over time among school-age students (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002; Henry & Apelgren, 2008; Lamb, 2007; Williams et al., 2002). Since the dimension of Ought-to L2 self never emerged as a significant predictor in any of the three age groups, Dornyei's (2009) L2MSS theory only gained partial support in the context of Burundi. The insights of the present study can have a number of pedagogical implications. Our findings indicate that the effort that Burundi multiple language students are willing to invest in learning each of the three target language is mainly determined by two important motivational variables: L2 learning experience and ideal L2 self. It is evident that the role of the teacher, curriculum, materials, and activities are instrumental in shaping the students' positive language learning experience. Therefore, it is extremely important for language teachers at that level to provide a positive and motivating classroom through employing a variety of motivational strategies (Dörnyei, 2008).

The significant role of the students' ideal language-related selves should also be taken into account in the process of foreign language teaching. Teachers can discuss with their students about the images they have of themselves as future language users and should specifically talk about the important roles that each language plays in their current situation as school students or in today's world at large. Such a technique can have a positive impact on the learners' ideal L2 self and probably help in improving or sustaining the students' language learning motivations. Moreover, as English (L3) was found to be the most popular foreign language among the participants, discussing in class about the role of each language and, as Nakamura (2015) argues, linking each target language to a specific domain (e.g., career, education, interpersonal) of language use in the learners' current or future life might lead to not neglecting one FL over others when learning them. Although this study revealed important findings, it has, however, some limitations. Its main limitation is that this investigation is solely quantitative. Qualitative data might help us understand why English is the most popular foreign language among these Burundi students. Another possible extension of our study could be the examination of language learning motivation among junior secondary school learners studying in private schools to see whether they are similar to these findings or diverge.

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Appendix

The English version of the administered questionnaire

A. *Ideal L2 self items*

- I see myself as a person who in the future is good at speaking French/English/Kiswahili.
- If my dreams come true, I'll one day use French/English/Kiswahili effectively.
- Studying French/English/Kiswahili can be important to me because I think it will someday be useful in getting a good job.
- The things I want to do in the future require me to use French/English/Kiswahili.
- Learning French/English/Kiswahili well can help me get into a good school when I finish grade 9 (e.g., Excellence school, boarding school).

B. *Ought-to L2 self items*

- I should learn French/English/Kiswahili because all my classmates are learning it.
- I have to learn French/English/Kiswahili because my family expects me to.
- I have to learn French/English/Kiswahili because without passing the French course I cannot get the Basic School certificate.
- Studying French/English/Kiswahili is important to me because, if I don't have knowledge of French/English/Kiswahili, I'll be considered a weak learner.

C. *L2 learning experience items*

- I really enjoy learning French/English/Kiswahili.
- I always look forward to French/English/Kiswahili classes.
- I would you like to have more French/English/Kiswahili lessons at school

D. *Intended learning effort items*

- I can honestly say that I am really doing my best to learn French/English/Kiswahili.
- I put a lot of time and energy into studying French/English/Kiswahili.
- If my teacher would give the class an optional assignment, I would certainly volunteer to do it.
- I put much effort into learning French/English/Kiswahili outside school.

E. *International posture items*

- I think that French/English/Kiswahili will help me meet more people from other countries.
- Learning French/English/Kiswahili is important to me because with French I will enjoy travelling abroad.
- Learning French/English/Kiswahili is necessary because it is an international language.
- French/English/Kiswahili is important in the world these days.

F. Motivation to be multilingual items

- I want to be able to speak several different languages.
- I am impressed by people who speak many languages fluently.
- I think speaking many languages is a sign that one is very intelligent.
- I think people who speak many languages are well-travelled and highly educated.
- Non-governmental Organizations value multilingual speakers over monolinguals.

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