The Investigation of the Possible Connections between Acculturation and the Acquisition of a Second Language on Libyan Teenage Students

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Abstract—The study investigates the possible connections between acculturation and the acquisition of a second language on Libyan teenage students in Australia. Specifically, the study examined how various socio-psychological variables influenced English oral proficiency (oral communicative competence and native-like pronunciation) of the participants. In addition, it looked at whether or not SLA affects acculturation towards the target language group. This is achieved by analysing data obtained from semi-structured interviews and oral proficiency interviews. The present study found a definite link between the students' acculturation process and their oral communicative competence but not native-like pronunciation. The results also provided evidence that SLL process has an impact on integration into the host society as well as the acquisition of a second language culture. Yet, it did not draw a clear conclusion with respect to how such a process affects these aspects.

Keywords—Acculturation, Native-like pronunciation, Oral communicative competence, Second language acquisition, Second language learners.

I. INTRODUCTION

WITH globalisation in the 20th and 21st century, learning a second language became an absolute necessary for meeting the needful era requirements. It is estimated that two-thirds of the worldwide population has become bilinguals [76], [65]. In the real world, the number of Arab L2 learners has rapidly increased. Approximately, 50% of international students in Australia come from Arab World countries. During the period 2004 to 2005, the number of Arabic international students who entered Australia for study purposes rose by 50%. Libyan Arab Jamahiriya showed the strongest growth of any country (in terms of the number of students) with an additional 457 students and was followed by Kuwait (+253 students) [66]. Indeed, it is somewhat surprising that no previously published studies seem to have been done on Arabic learners to investigate the connection between acculturation process and forging language learning. Thus, this study is designed to investigate the possible connections between acculturation and the acquisition of a foreign language on Arab-Libyan teenage students in Australia. The purpose of this study is to examine how various social and affective factors experienced by the subjects would influence their oral English proficiency (oral communicative competence and native like pronunciation). In addition, the present study aims at investigating whether SLA processes would affect acculturation into a target language group and shed lights on the mechanism of such influence.

II. RATIONALE AND SCOPE

In the last four decades, the study of second language acquisition (SLA) has been an area of interest for many linguists and scholars [27]. Much research has been done to call for a greater recognition of the significance of the social contexts, interactive nature of language use and emotional support. For example, [35], [32], [77], [78] point out that SLA is determined by the extent to which L2 learners socially and psychologically integrate with the target language (TL) group as well as the significant role that psychological elements play in acquiring the second language (L2). Additionally, many studies have been conducted on second language (L2) learners from various nationalities to investigate the relationship between acculturation (the social and psychological integration of L2 learners with TL group) and SLA. However, the results have differently varied. For instance [48] found various positive relationships between acculturation and SLA. In contrast, [84] found in his study, a negative correlation between acculturation and SLA.

Literature showed no previously published research was undertaken to investigate the connection between acculturation and the L2 proficiency of Arabic-Libyan leaners or even Arabic students. So this study will investigate the connection between acculturation and L2 proficiency of teenage Libyan students in Toowoomba. The study will examine whether or not the social and psychological integration of L2 leaner with TL group can support L2 communicative competence and enhance the acquisition of native-like pronunciation. Additionally, literature demonstrated that the possible impact of SLA on acculturation has not been researched. Hence, this study will investigate whether or not acculturation is influenced by the process of SLA.

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III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Q1: is there a relationship between acculturation and the teenage Libyan student's success in the acquisition of native-like pronunciation?

Q2: is there evidence of a relationship between acculturation and oral communicative competence of the teenage Libyan students? If so what was this relationship?

Q3: is acculturation influenced by second language acquisition? If so, what are the acculturation patterns being affected by SLA?

IV. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to investigate the possible connections between acculturation and the acquisition of a second language. Particularly, the present study examined how various social and affective factors (culture shock, motivation, L2 anxiety, social integration, social networks, attitudes, social context and length of residency) would influence second language learning. The study paid a great deal of focus on the learners' engagement in the Australian society and how such an act fosters their acculturation and ultimately their second language learning process. On the other face, the study investigated how L2 acquisition process may nurture the participants' acculturation towards the Australian society.

V. GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS

SLA= Second Language Acquisition
SSL= Second Language Learning
L2= Second Language
TL= Target Language
TLG= Target Language Group

VI. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Introduction

The process of acculturation has become a core of interest as a number of cross-cultural travellers increased in the last decades. Obviously, when individuals move to a new culture, they willingly experience new aspects to adjust to the new culture and its members. One of these aspects is the acquisition of a host society's language. Linguists considered that second language acquisition (SLA) is an integral part in acculturation [77], [79], [4]. They further maintained that SLA is achieved through the social and affective integration of a second language (L2) learner with a target language (TL) group (acculturation). Much research has been done to call for a greater recognition of the significance of the social and psychological variables in facilitating integration and acquiring a second language [10], [32], [24]. Their central role of social and emotional variables in facilitating acculturation has been given a top priority to account for success or failure in SLA.

Taking the perspective that a L2 learner's social and affective integration with the TL group can affect his/her learning in an effective and powerful way, this literature review will investigate the possible connections between acculturation and the acquisition of a second language. It will show that acculturative variables play an important part in access to a TL group and consequently acquire a TL. The literature will next reveal that the effect of SLA on acculturation has not been effectively studied and understood. The literature falls into four sections. In the first section, the key points of acculturation in SLA field are considered through the presentation of a history of acculturation and will discuss in detail the most influential acculturation models in SLA sphere. Secondly, the affective characteristics of a second language learner that impact on SLA success section will explain the significance of the affective factors (motivation, culture shock and language anxiety) in access to and acquiring a TL. Thirdly, the Social factors impacting on second language learners' access to a target language group section will explore the importance of social factors in facilitating integration with a TL group and thereby acquiring a TL. Fourthly, the influence of second language acquisition on acculturation section will demonstrate that very little research has been done to examine the connection between SLA and acculturation

B. Key Points of Acculturation in the Second Language Acquisition Field

Acculturation research first came to light in the 1930s. It has endured in the field of cultural anthropology placing a great focus on interaction between nations and on immigrants 'personal level of changes such as changes in attitudes, behaviour, beliefs and values [69], [20]. Basic changes in acculturation research gave rise to the foundation of marginality theory [71], [87] which addressed the negative ramifications of acculturation (dual culture exposure). This harsh criticism by marginalists led to a need for a broader position which involves both positive and harmful outcomes of acculturation. Research, then, shifted towards a unidimesional model that studies the linear function of amount of time an individual has spent in intra-group culture [20]. This review considers a number of cited unidimesional models (acculturation model, inter-group model, Berry's model and socio-educational model) that explained the concept of acculturation and highlighted its essence in successful language learning. These models reflect "the primary research interests of their progenitor and the contexts in which they have worked" [27].

Schumann's acculturation model is fundamentally based on the role of social and psychological constituents in second language acquisition (SLA). Reference [79] defines acculturation as '' the social and psychological integration of the learner with the target language (TL) group''. He claims that L2 learners acquire target language (TL) to the degree they acculturate to TL group. Schumann argues that there are a number of social psychological variables (Table I) that if they operate in a learning context, they will be conducive to second language (L2) learning.

TABLE I
SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES AFFECTING SECOND LANGUAGE
LEARNING [79], [27]

Social Factor	Description
Social dominance	TL group and L2 group eliminate the ethnic, racial or political barriers and regard each other as equals
Social integration	The L2 learners may assimilate (e.g. reject their own lifestyle and values in the good of the target language culture or acculturate (e.g. adapt lifestyle of TL group whilst preserving their cultural features and values).
Enclosure	Both groups share the same social institution (e.g. Churches, jobs, schools, clubs and trades).
Cohesiveness and size	If L2 group is not cohesive, its members will have more contact with TL group as well as if L2 group is small.
Cultural congruence	if L2 group culture and TL group are similar, contact would be more accessible between their members
Attitude	If the two groups display positive attitudes towards each other, L2 learning is more likely to occur.
Length of residence	Length of residence would develop more extensive contact and hence promote L2 learning.

Psychological Factor	Description
Language shock	The degree to which L2 learners are frightened they will appear comic in speaking L2.
Cultural shock	The extent to which L2 learners feel apprehension and disorientated upon entering a new culture.
Motivation	The L2 leaners are interactively (more powerful) or instrumentally motivated to learn the TL.
Ego permeability	The L2 learners perceive their first language (L1) to have flexible boundaries

As presented by Schumann, social factors determine the amount of contact with L2 learners and hence how successful they are learning. In addition, adoption to the majority language group and learning TL values and lifestyle is the best way to excel in L2 learning. In an updating study, [80] attempted to extend the scope of the acculturation model. He examined a number of cognitive theories (e.g. McLaughlin's cognitive theory and Cassor's connectionist lexical memory) to assess how they would explain pidginized interlanguage occurred in the early stages. It is concluded that the neurocognitive component is significant in both emotion and memory and hence can be seen as mediator between affect and cognition in acculturation and SLA [79], [80], [27], [28].

This model, which has been highly influential, has two major limitations. As [28] point an out, the model fails to acknowledge that factors like integration pattern and attitude are not fixed and static. Further, it fails to acknowledge that learners are not only subject to social conditions but can also create them.

Similarly, inter-group model of [38] identified a set of socio-psychological variables and conditions that contribute to group's ethno-linguistic vitality (a set of cultural, ethnic, and linguistic features shared by cultural, ethnic, or linguistic sub-group). L2 learners are most likely to master native-like proficiency of the dominant group, if they experience the following conditions:

- In-group identification or the mother language does not operate as an important ethnic group dimension for membership.
- Inter-ethnic comparison are not active
- Perceived in-group vitality is low
- Perceived in-group boundaries are open
- Identify strongly with and have intra-group status, based on categories such as occupation or religion.

For effective L2 learning, these five conditions should be linked to low ethno-linguistic vitality, minimal insecurity (high self-esteem), a desire (integrative motivation) to integrate with the dominant out-group, additive bilingualism and low situational anxiety. Conversely, if the oppositeness of the five conditions operates, ethno-linguistic and insecurity will be high, integrative motivation weak, interaction rare and L2 attainment low. The model put an emphasis on social identity of in-group members and, also, considers interaction as crucial factors [38], [27], [28]. On the negative side, the model, as the other socio-psychological models, "ignores the historical-structure factors that actually limit 'choices' learners can make and that determine the meaning of these choices" [94].

Berry's cross cultural model identified four acculturation strategies whereby learners deal with socio-cultural context and experience acculturation. First, assimilation occurs when L2 learners do away of their original culture and adopt a new cultural identity. Separation emerges in a situation in which L2 learners place a great value on their own culture and, in the meanwhile, avoid integration with TL group. Integration refers to an interest in both preserving one's original culture and seeking to participating in and learning values of the new culture. Finally, marginalisation comes out when L2 learners avoid maintaining of their original culture and reject the new culture [4]. Berry's model has gained a support as its four acculturation strategies" turn out to have a good descriptive and explanatory power'' [79]. However, the model by Berry has its critics. Reference [80] argued that this model is too simplistic to explain the complexity of acculturation process. Likewise, [89] considers that the two underlying dimensions (attitudes towards ethnic culture and attitudes towards mainstream culture) are better predictors of acculturation result than the four acculturation strategies.

Unlike the above three models which were designed to account for the role of acculturation in a natural setting, the Socio-educational model was devised to explain L2 learning in classroom settings, particularly the foreign language classroom [27], [34]. The model identified four influential factors involved in learning a second language; social and cultural milieu, individual differences, the setting and learning outcomes. Gardner considers that intelligence; motivation, language aptitude and situational anxiety would lead to individual differences. The learners 'social and cultural milieu determines their learning of TL culture and attitudes towards the language situation. Additionally, Gardner views that integrative motivation is more powerful and, along with the other factors, has a salient influence on linguistic outcomes as well as non-linguistic outcomes [34], [27], [28]. Despite acknowledgement of the significance of the Socio-educational model in SLA field, the model has been criticised by researchers. For example, [15], [23] stated that the major limitation of Gardner's model is that the ambiguity exists

about defining integration related-terms. That is, the model failed to draw a clear interpretation of the link between interrogative and instrumental causes and L2 success.

The above review has revealed that acculturation was interpreted and seen from various positions which have both similarities and differences (Table II). Thus, due to, [3] points out, the Schumann's acculturation model "has been very influential over the years and generates research up to this day" and serves the purposes of the present study, this model would be the ideal framework for this research. To clarify this notion, the current study seeks to investigate the possible connections between acculturation and SLA. Acculturation refers to the social and affective integration of a second language learner with a target language group [79]. This study will investigate the role that affective factors (motivation, culture shock and language anxiety) and social factors (social dominance, integration patterns, social networks and integration, attitudes, length of residency and cohesiveness) play to enable L2 learners to access a TL group and consequently acquire a TL.

TABLE II
SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE FOUR REVIEWED MODELS

Model's name	Social factors Affecting L2 acquisition	Psychological factors affecting L2 acquisition	Research setting
Acculturation Model	Social dominance, integration, enclosure, cohesiveness, attitude, Cultural congruence and length of residence.	Language and culture shock, motivation and ego-permeability	Natural setting
Inter-group model	Identification with original ethnic group, inter-ethnic comparison, perception of ethno-linguistic vitality, perception of in-group boundaries and identification with other social groups.	Integrative motivation, situational anxiety, insecurity (lack of self-confidence),	Natural setting
Cross cultural model	Assimilation, integration, separation and minimization.		Natural setting
Socio-educational model	Cultural and social milieu and setting	intelligence; motivation, language aptitude situational motivation	Classroom setting

C. Affective Characteristics of a Second Language Learner that Impact on SLA Success

Psychological factors play a central role in accounting for the acquisition of a second language [27]. How people feel towards or see a TL culture and it speakers would have an impact on learning a target language. An anxiety resulting from fear; discomfort and changes in behaviour pattern when one enters an unfamiliar culture may also lead to disorientation. Occasionally, as a result of such disorientation, learners are unable to cope with such changes and adapt to a new culture. This, in return, could cause avoidance, withdrawal, acute and criticism of the host culture and consequently result in rejection of a second culture and its

language [42]. Such Influential affective variables, which affect SLA, are notably: motivation, culture shock and language anxiety.

1. Motivation

Motivation is a significant principle for predicting success or failure in the acquisition of a second language [10]. It is defined as "the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" [34]. Many researchers acknowledged the truth of Corder's claim about the importance of motivation in SLA. Reference [24], for example, points out that motivation provides "the primary impetus to initiate the L2 learning and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process". He went on to explain that without adequate motivation, even bright or/ and talented students are unable to achieve any advance in second language learning. Reference [27] also explained the part that motivation plays in igniting learning efforts and considers it as "a key factor in language learning". Indeed, motivational orientations are driving factors by which individuals' goals are effectively achieved.

Motivation, generally, falls into two salient motivational orientations; namely: instrumental motivation and integrative motivation [67]. L2 learners experience and choose such orientations according to their goals, desires and attitudes towards the target language. So, they tend to be integratively motivated when they have positive attitudes towards the target language culture and a desire to become like TL speakers whom they value and admire. In contrast, L2 learners are considered instrumentally motivated when they see that second language learning enables them to get a better career or a higher rank in their society [34]. Recently, researchers have shown that Integrative-instrumental motivation and higher achievements of second language learning are closely intertwined [9], [41], [46], [30]. These investigators have further found that motivations determine the degree to which individuals learn the target language and make use of the opportunities provided by language context. Past studies have also reported that interagative motivation is as energized and effortful as instrumental one [67].

Although integrative-instrumental motivation are widely used by linguistics to account for SLA success or failure, they are not easily distinguished and do not meet the all spectrum of people's motivation [29]. Therefore, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is employed to interpret SLA attainment due to they can be easily identified [10]. On one hand, L2 learners' motivation may come from a feeling of enjoyment of a language, inherent scarification, and self-determination (intrinsic motivation). In other words, people engage in an activity due to they enjoy and fell satisfied with it. On the other hand, L2 learners get motivated to learn a second language because they expect external consequences such as rewards, promotions and money (extrinsic motivation) [22], [67]. The intrinsic-extrinsic continuum in motivation and the integrative-instrumental ones are applicable to second

language acquisition around the world. Recent research have shown that both classification of motivation (intrinsic-extrinsic motivation and integrative-instrumental motivation) have been used by L2 learners to trigger the learning efforts and success in SLA [1], [21], [41], [2], [58].

Intrinsic-extrinsic motivation is not to be distinguished from Integrative and instrumental ones. According to [28], "These four types of motivation should be seen as complementary rather than as distinct and oppositional". However, Integrative - instrumental continuum is more applicable for foreign and second language learning. They have been used as a basis by well-known SLA theories and research for explaining success or failure in second and foreign language learning [79], [34], [38], [10], [67], [36].

All in all, motivation is a highly complex phenomenon [10]. L2 leaners employ one of various types of motivation and sometimes two in order to ignite their second language learning effort. Motivation may result from learning as well as cause it. Motivation is not something that a L2 learner has or does not have but rather it varies from one situation to another relying on the learning context or activity [28].

2. Culture Shock

People's values, lifestyle, self-identity and way of thinking and communicating can be disoriented by a transition to an unfamiliar cultural setting. This disorientation, in some situations, leads to a harmful case in which people experience culture shock. Culture shock is largely used by researchers to describe a situation in which cross-cultural travellers (e.g. tourists, sojourners, international students, immigrants, etc.) experience psychological disorientation resulting from a strong discomfort, fear or insecurity upon entering a foreign culture [10], [11], [13], [73], [75], [79], [90]. It is a natural process as a part of adaptation to the existing cultural differences. Many Studies recorded difficulties that cross-culture travellers experience in order to adjust to a host society and learn a second language [31], [12]. These studies further explained that changes in behaviour patterns (e.g. food, clothes or ways of thinking) and losing of significant familiar characteristics (e.g. language or religion) led to cultural stress.

The common sources of culture shock may be associated with misunderstanding of deep levels of values in a second culture and negotiating conflicts between both cultures [11]. Reference [42] explains that it is easy for foreign individuals to familiarise the explicit rules of the new culture such as how to greet and apology; however, those individuals "probably cannot recognise let alone feel the values surrounding those interactions". More explicit and elaborated, [68], [88], [90] referred to a set of major sources for culture shock; (1) strain owing to effort required to manage necessary affective adaptation; (2) a sense of feeling of deprivation concerning friends, jobs or possessions; (3) being rejected by members of a second culture; (4) confusion in values and self-identity; (5) surprise, anxiety and indignation after getting cognizant of cultural differences; (6) feeling of powerless due to not being able to cope with the new environment and (7) personal

factors such as lack of self-efficacy, emotional resilience and social support [10]. All of these common sources are experienced though different stages of what some may call acculturation or culture acquisition.

It has become more common to refer to culture shock as a stage of acculturation [10]. Hence, culture shock is considered as the second phase in successive stages of culture acquisition (acculturation). Stage one is a period of excitement and happiness over the new life surroundings. Stage two, culture shock, happens as a result of cultural differences which lead feeling of loneliness, homesick, losing first identity, etc. Stage three incorporates three features; uncertainty, vacillating and recovery. In other words, some acculturative stress is managed while others go on for some time. However, generally, individuals begin to accept differences in values, lifestyles and thoughts. Stage four includes relative or full recovery of culture stress. People successfully get involved and construct a self-confidence in the second culture [10]. Not everyone goes through culture shock stages and these stages can be randomly experienced [88]. However, passing through culture shock stage is important [50] for acquiring communicative competence and individual's experiences it in various degrees.

Reference [42] points out that sojourners going through a culture shock stage would be easily able to adjust to a second culture and may be stuck in this phase for as long as one year. This mainly depends on "personal experience with culturally different situation" [88]. Occasionally, some individuals could never move out of such a stage and, in severe cases; this reaction can lead a person to the point of nervous breakdown. Additionally, a number of harmful responses arise if a person has no recovery from culture shock such as avoidance, withdrawal, acute, criticism of the host culture, stereotypes and prejudice. However, despite its possible negative consequences, culture shock is deemed as a unidirectional experience [74] that could either promote or inhibit adaptation processes to a host culture.

Culture shock needs to be seen not only as a negative reaction encountered by cross-cultural travellers, particularly L2 learners [10] but also viewed, on the positive side, more supportively as a basic cross-culture learning experience; individuals manage to understand and cope with circumstances related to, for example, intercultural communication or sociocultural skills. Such experiences, as a result, helps sojourner (between-culture travellers who stay in the host culture temparorily and return to the culture of origin once the purpose of the visit has been finished) to become conscious of changes across cultures, have sociocultural experiences and gain intercultural communication skills. On the negative side, acculturation would lead to psychological conflict and social disintegration and thereby results in acts of disorientation, homicide and general decline in mental health [5].

To summaries, Culture shock is complex phenomenon at both psychological and cognitive levels and its relation to a second language acquisition is not completely understood. It is, to certain extent, an inevitable adaptation process as

sojourners' (e.g. international students or immigrants) cultural values, lifestyle and thoughts are dissimilar to the new ones. It is seen by linguists and anthropologists [47], [88] as a common experience in intercultural interactions and for an individual learning a second language in the second culture. Culture shock is usually accompanied by physical or/and emotional discomfort [90] and stress that would end in either positive or negative outcomes.

3. Language Anxiety

Many SL or/and FL learners experience a feeling of tension, fear and nervousness while they learn an additional language. These affective states are mainly related to what some call language learning anxiety. It is defined as apprehension or nervousness arising when a learner is expected to act in the second or foreign language [69]. This disposition of anxiety "is linked directly to performing in the target language, so, it is not just a general performance anxiety" [70]. Two decades of research [27], [36], [70], [44], [91], [10] have provided an enormous amount of beneficial information about FL and/or SL anxiety and its effect on L2 learners' performance in a TL. A majority of such studies has reported that Language learning anxiety ranks high among factors influencing second language learning processes. This type of anxiety is experienced at various levels [10] and varies relying on learning situation [53], [70].

As the concept of anxiety is multi-faceted, there are two types of language learning anxiety: debilitative anxiety (trait anxiety or state anxiety) and facilitative anxiety. On one face, the former has a debilitating effect on L2 learners' performance. A L2 learner tends to experience a situational anxiety in response to a particular situation such as momentary fear or anxiousness of speaking in public. He/she usually manage to overcome this fear or anxiousness as it is a passing state and diminishes over time (state anxiety). However, occasionally, a feeling of fear or anxious of speaking may be a lasting trait rather than state and consequently have a negative, pervasive, long-term effect on language learning oral performance (trait anxiety) (Oxford, 1999). Recently published studies [39], [44], [92], [53], [60], [31] have shown a L2 anxiety has an adverse impact on oral performance of L2 speakers and found a consistent connection between second language anxiety and achievement.

On the other face, anxiety is seen as a helpful in learning FL or L2 such as keeping L2 leaners posit or alert (facilitative anxiety) [26], [25], [45], [83], [93]. Nevertheless, many researchers undermined this idea and indicated that such anxiety is only beneficial in simple tasks, but not in complex processes such as language learning [70]. Linguists have highly revealed a disposition towards the harmful effect of language learning anxiety on L2 or FL speaking in particular and language learning in a whole [92]. Also, they stated that this anxiety is caused by several factors relating to personality factors or external factors.

There are many causes for foreign language speaking anxiety. Despite some controversy about particular sources, language researchers listed a set of possible origins of this anxiety. Among of these are: fear or apprehension of losing ones' self-identity [70], negative social evaluation or/and constructing an unfavourable impression on TL speakers [37], learners' competitive nature [10], lack of self-confidence, perfectionism [60], [40] and poor performance in speaking of a target language [82]. All of such causes may lead to FL oral communication anxiety which its effect varies depending on ones' affective state and/or personality factors. This anxiety may have a direct effect on a learner such as avoidances communication with TL speakers or have an indirect effect through worry or self-doubt [70].

In short, anxiety "plays a major affective role in second language acquisition" [10]. Language anxiety is seen as a harmful psychological factor rather than helpful in both second language speaking and other L2 skills. It is attributable to a set of internal and external causes which have either direct or indirect effect on L2 learners' oral proficiency. Along with other affective and social factors, language anxiety would possibly enable L2 learners to access to a TL group and hence acquire and/or support their TL speaking skills.

Social Factors Impacting on Second Language Learners Access to a Target Language Group

Social integration is considered as a significant constituent involved in SLL [27], [28], [34], [38], [32], [79], [86]. For example, Social Relationships that L2 learners experience with their acquaintances, friends, social ties or the society as a whole would successfully lead to produce effective L2 users. Generally, there are a number of factors impacting learners' access to a TL group and thereby determine their L2 proficiency. In other words, mastering of the target language varies according to proximity and distance from the TL group and culture which is fundamentally governed by a number of socio-psychological factors [10], [36], [79].

There are many social factors affecting L2 learners' social integration with the target language speakers. These social variables are notably; the political and social dominance, integration patterns, social networks and enclosure, attitudes towards a particular ethnic group, length of residency in the TL group and cohesion. Firstly, the political and social dominance are seen by researchers [4], [10] as a causal factors that would influence SLA. If a L2 group language group is culturally, politically or economically superior to a TL group, the former are likely to learn a target language [79]. In other words, SLA will occur and contact between both groups will be promoted, only if they are approximately equal in social, political or economic status.

Secondly, Integration is an important variable in the acquisition of a second language [4], [79]. When a L2 learner adapts to or adopts a target language culture, he/she is more likely to achieve a high level of L2 proficiency [48]. Generally, adaptation or assimilation, as integration strategies, lead to social and emotional contact with TL speakers and hence lead to varying degrees of acquisition of second

language. In contrast, rejecting a target language culture and group and reducing contact with its speakers may result in low levels of L2 proficiency [85].

Thirdly, social networks and enclosure are influential in the acquisition of a second language and supporting L2 speaking proficiency. Obviously, linguistic norms are affected by personal relationships with TL individuals such as friends, relatives, classmates [62]. Also, sharing the same social facilities (e.g. schools, clubs or professions) with the TL group would promote L2 learner' opportunities for contact with TL speakers and "hinder any subsequent sociocultural integration" [26]. The acquisition and development of L2 varies from one to another, depending on the type of social network he/she creates and the extent to which he/she shared social facilities. Recent studies [59], [57], [85], [7] conducted on L2 learners from different nationalities shown that creating and immersing in social networks is an important and sometimes central in achieving high levels of L2 speaking proficiency. These studies further revealed that social facilities, such as schools and places of work, are significant in providing L2 learners with opportunities for having social ties and contact with TL users.

Fourthly, attitudes towards a target language group are a key determinant in the acquisition of second language. Socio-psychological models generally consider that L2 leaners' attitude towards a TL and its speakers are an indispensable part in predicting levels of success or failure for learners in the acquisition of second or foreign language [25], [14]. Attitudes could be negative or positive depending on how L2 learners think and feel about the L2 group. Reference [43] argues that when people have positive attitudes towards TL speakers, they will be highly motivated and thereby more successful in acquiring the L2. In contrast, many researchers reported the disadvantages of having negative attitudes towards TL users [27]. Reference [59] states that attitude is a two-way street; attitudes and behaviour of second language group is as influential as the ones of the L2 learner group. Moreover, L2 learners may start with positive attitude, but due to the lack of learning opportunities, they develop more negative attitudes [59], [6]. Researchers [58], [63] found that learners having positive attitudes manage to accomplish higher levels of English proficiency than those who holding negative attitudes.

Fifthly, length of residency in a TL group is another factor impacting SLA. It is thought to be a significant element for affording learners with more opportunities to acculturate to the TL group and consequently learn a L2 [4], [79]. A number of studies found that length of residency in a L2 community is relatively linked to success in second language learning, however, they did not give a full explanation of its mechanism. Moreover, [64] reported that a negative connection exists between the acquisition of native-like pronunciation and length of residency specified by years spent in a TL group. Finally, cohesiveness is an influential variable influencing SLA process. According to [79], cohesiveness would negatively influence L2 learning. He explained that if a L2 group is cohesive, then its members are more likely to remain with each other and thus reduce communication with TL speakers. Reference [57] validated this in his study on Sylheti women. Lie found that although these women successfully had English speaking contacts through created social networks, none of them had a high level of English proficiency. The author concluded that this is attributable to the tendency of Bangladeshis to live in the same area and remain together.

In summary, social factors are considered an essential key in mastering a TL in terms of communicative and socio-cultural competence [79], [32]. Such elements enable L2 learners effectively to integrate with a TL group and thereby learn a second language. They basically provide L2 leaners with opportunities to contact with the target language group and thus acquire a TL.

The Influence of Second Language Acquisition on Acculturation

Proficiency in a country's host language is seen to be fundamental to accomplishing 'full participation' or 'full integration' into a host society [52]. Although the TL provision is considered an important tool to facilitate immigrants' acculturation to a new society [52], the literature has shown that little research has been done to investigate the effect of learning a TL on acculturation. This area needs further research in order to understand such phenomenon and to give a full interpretation of the mechanism of such relationship.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The literature review supports the idea that the acquisition of a second language is an aspect of the process of acculturation and that acculturating factors are significant in obtaining a high level of L2 speaking proficiency. It shows that the social and affective factors (social integration, social networks, social context, attitudes, and length of residency, integration strategies, motivation, culture shock and language anxiety) rank high among other factors affecting SLA and L2 proficiency. Such variables are important for learners in order to experience successful L2 acquisition. Thus, following the literature, it is hypothesised that a positive connection between acculturation to the Australian society and English language acquisition should be observed on teenage Libyan international students who both begin to attain English before and after puberty.

Further research may include an investigation or/and exploration of the main elements affecting attitudes in SLA as a part in the process of acculturation. Such research could place a focus on L2 culture's effect on learners as well as its power across the world. Moreover, situational motivation or adaptive motivation is still worth further research in order to gain in-depth understanding of motivation and its role in SLA. These studies would look at the learning situations in which L2 learners do not use common types of motivation (integrative-instrumental motivation and intrinsic-extrinsic motivation) to trigger their learning effort.

VII. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGNS

A. Introduction

This chapter will present the methodological framework of this study, including (1) theoretical and methodological structure of the study, (2) ethical considerations, (3) theoretical framework of the study, (4) the subjects, (5) the settings of the study and (6) data-collection instruments and procedures.

B. Research Methodology

The present study pays a great deal of attention on understanding the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences. The research focuses on social phenomenon in its natural setting, so that qualitative methods are the idealist approach for this research [17]. Reference [18] points out that, in qualitative research, " the researcher relies on the view of participants, asks broad, general questions, collects data consisting largely of words (or text) from participants, describes and analyses these words for themes, and conducts the inquiry in a subjective, biased manner".

In this study, the qualitative research method used was a semi-structured interview (SSI) to explore the participants' experience, feelings, and thoughts and believes regarding the topic. This sort of qualitative data collection instrument allows interviewees freedom and time to express their views in their own terms [17], [55]. Additionally, by means of this instrument, the researcher is able add or/and take away other questions during the interview to probe unexpected issues that emerge [56]. Another quantitative data-collection instrument was used the oral proficiency interview (OPI). OPI was employed to assess the participants' oral communicative competence and native like pronunciation. Many previously published studies show that OPI proved to be valid and reliable instrument for measuring these characteristics of second language learning [48], [85].

C. Ethical Consideration

Prior to start the data collection process, the researcher created an information sheet outlining the purpose and aim of the study. The information sheet also explains the possible risks, potential risks management, and data coded process. The information sheet along with other ethics documentations were submitted to USQ ethics department. Permission was sought and granted by the university ethics committee under approval no: H12REA106. Preceding being signed the consent forms by both the participants and their parents, the researcher explained in details all the items in the information sheet. The study highly considered confidentiality, anonymity, secure treatment of personal details of the participants as stated in the information sheet and the ethics documentation. Also, participation in this study was voluntary and participants were allowed to withdraw at any time.

D. Theoretical Framework

Reference [79] formulated the acculturation model to account for the role that social and psychological constituents play in second language acquisition (SLA). The premise behind his model is that acculturation is the most significant variable in SLA and L2 learners will acquire the second language only to the degree that he acculturates to TL group [79]. This model distinguishes between two types of acculturative factors; social factors (social domains, integration strategy, attitudes, enclosure, length of residency), and psychological factors (motivation language shock and culture shock).

The first type of acculturative factors leads to social integration with TL speakers which, in return, supplies L2 learners with sufficient contact by which they acquire and develop L2. The second type occurs when L2 learners see the TL group as a "references group whose life style and values consciously or unconsciously (the L2 learners) desires to adapt to" [79]. In other words, the less social distance there is between L2 learners and TL speakers, the greater L2 success learners accomplish. Additionally, the more comfortable L2 learners feel towards L2, the more L2 learners engage in social contact with the native speakers. Schumann regards affective variables to be subordinate to social variables. So, Social and Linguistic functions in the host society are to depend on psychological factors which also determine the social distance between L2 learners and the target language group.

E. The Setting of Study

This study was undertaken in a rural city (Toowoomba) located in Southern Queensland in Australia. The majority population in this city is Australians and the dominant language is Australian-English. Additionally, a number of multicultural ethnic groups settle in Toowoomba such as the Arabic community, Asian communities, Sudanese community and refugees from African countries. A number of modern facilities exist in this city (e.g. shopping centres, Hotels, tourist attractions, etc.). The city has a large, prestigious university with a good percentage of Arabic international students in addition to other overseas students. Also, there is an Arabic-Islamic center in the city. The Arabic community has not long been in the city. No Arabic-English bilingual schools are available in Toowoomba. The neighborhood, where the participants live, is mainly made up of families of diverse cultural and linguistic background.

F. The Participants

The participants were four Libyan teenage students aged between 13-18 years who had lived in Australia between 3 and 5 years. All 4 participants were born in Libya and spent their early life there. All were students at different monolingual, public, preparatory and secondary schools in Australia. The participants' speaking proficiency was at a beginning level when they came to Australia. Each had had some form of English instruction in their home country by taking foreign language classes in their schools. The participants' parents are post graduate students doing doctoral studies at University of Southern Queensland (USQ). The

participants' community is cohesive, religious and new in Toowoomba.

TABLE III
OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPANTS

participants	Age of arrival	Current age	Gender	Year level	Native language
A	12	15	Female	Grade nine	Arabic
B	10	13	Female	Grade seven	Arabic
C	11	15	Male	Grade nine	Arabic
D	13	17	Female	Grade twelve	Arabic

G. Instruments and Procedures

1. Semi Structured Interview (SSI)

A semi-structured interview (SSI) was conducted with each participant by the researcher. A semi-structured interview is a "verbal questionnaire consisting of a series of questions designed to elicit specific answers on the part of respondents" [33]. The SSI consisted of 20 open-ended questions. created in order to obtain in-depth information about ''a participants' thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, reasoning, motivation and feelings about the topic'' [49].

2. SSI Procedures

Prior to start the SSI, the researcher provided the respondents with a brief explanation about some key words used in it. The researcher used both English and Arabic in the interviews as the participant's encountered difficulty comprehending some interview questions. The participants were asked regarding particular social and psychological aspects they experienced while learning English in Australia. In addition, they were questioned about their thoughts concerning the effectiveness of these aspects in helping them speaking or/and learning English. Scenarios, adopted from real life situations and real life incidents, were employed by the researcher to clarify and simplify interview questions. Within the interview session, the researcher changed the order of questions, added new ones, and varied the wording of other questions. This act helped to follow up upcoming information said by the participants. Each participant was individually interviewed in presence of his/her father.

3. Proficiency Interview (OPI)

In this study, the oral proficiency interview (OPI) was employed to assess speaking proficiency (oral communicative competence and native-like pronunciation) of the participants. The OPI was modeled on the Simulated Oral Proficiency Interview (SOPI) protocol which was original designed by the Centre of Applied Linguistics. Past studies demonstrated that SOPI is valid, reliable and easier to rate [61]. The OPI was made up of warm-up task, three picture-based, three topic-based , two situation-based tasks and a wind down (closing) task.

4. OPI Procedures

The participants were interviewed individually by the researcher and their responses were recorded digitally in tapes. The participants were given a test booklet including the entire interview's items as well as instructions. Prior to start the OPI, they were given five minutes to read the instructions and ask any possible arising questions. Then, the participants were asked by the researcher to talk about and/or describe various, general life topics and experience. For the assessment of the participants' L2 speaking proficiency, two native-speaking teachers scored the examinee's responses drawing on the Modified American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) proficiency guidelines [84] and The Stanford Foreign Language Oral Skills Evaluation Matrix (FLOSEM) as a rubric.

VIII. DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

The components of the analysis were determined by the participants' responses produced in semi-structured interviews as well as oral proficiency interviews. The analysis was also based on a thematic view by a deep reading of the transcripts. The researcher analyses the data according to his understanding of the participants' response and the theoretical framework (acculturation model) of the study. Analyzed data was classified into sections according to (1) the research questions, (2) socio-psychological factors mentioned in the literature review and (3) the interview questions.

A. Analysis of Data

This section will provide a description and analysis of data obtained from SSI and OPI. designed to investigate the following research questions:

"Q1 is there evidence of a relationship between acculturation and oral communicative competence of the Libyan teenage students? If so what was the relationship?"

"Q2 is there evidence of a relationship between acculturation and oral communicative competence of the teenage Libyan students? If so what was this relationship?"

"Q3 is acculturation influenced by second language acquisition? If so, what are the acculturation patterns being affected by SLA?"

B. Describing Outcomes of Interviews

All participants were interviewed to give answers regarding the social and psychological patterns they experienced while learning English in Australia. For example, all were investigated to see how they experienced specific acculturative factors; social relationships, attitudes towards the TL group, integration strategy, L2 social context, motivation, cultural differences and language anxiety and how such factors affected their speaking proficiency. Several questions were explained to them by using scenarios adopted from everyday life. The researcher re-interviewed the participants when interviews' answers are not clear.

C. Key Findings

The data clearly showed that all participants experienced various social and psychological aspects while they were learning English in Australia. The social-psychological aspects being experienced were as follows:

1. Social Dominance

All participants said that they did not consider themselves superior to their peers as individuals and the Australian community as a whole. Also, they reported that the members of the Australian society were friendly, cooperative and supportive. For example, the participant A said:

She has never regarded that she was better than the others; they all are brothers in humanity and equal. She had a lot of support from her teachers as well as her friends.

In response to a question concerning whether or not that act were helpful in their learning journey, all 4 participants said that that was useful. Although they were asked to give any example in what ways that factor was beneficial, all did not give any answers.

2. Social Integration and Social Networks

According to data, all participants were successfully able to integrate with both native-English speaking individuals and like-native speakers such as friends, classmates, teachers, colleagues, acquaintances (e.g. friends of their parents or friends) and their siblings. They have had a constant contact with their friends and classmates and casual conversations with teachers, colleagues, acquaintances. Such frequent and casual contacts were done through various social activities such as sport, chatting or studying at school. For instance, the participant C and B respectively reported:

He spokes Lot of English. He always Talks with his friends and classmates; they go on computers, play games together, play sport(.04)when they play sport they speak a lot and his friends help me to learn new words, new English....

She talks too much. At school, she usually play sport, or just sit down and do assignments with her classmates...... they usually talk about school, music and staff like that.

All said that even though they encountered many difficulties in the early days of their learning journey because of their poor English, that frequent talk and communication helped them to get better speaking skills gradually. In addition, the female participants did not use to socialize with their male classmate or take part in any social activities when any males participate in such activities. They just do integrate with males when it is a part of education in school. They said that they did not involve themselves in any social activity if it is against their principles (for example, religion or traditions). Participants A and B detailed

They do not take part in sport or (missing words) if boys take part.... It is against their religion........ if it is...when it is a part of education (.02) they do...

Their social networks were restricted to relationships with their female friends and classmates at school and rarely outside school. The male participant made social relationships with male friends inside and outside school. He also shared social activities (e.g. playing soccer in the club, studying at school, chatting at work) with both males and females classmates at school and males and females colleagues at work.

3. Attitudes

The data revealed that all participants **did not have negative attitudes** towards the host society. They formed their positive attitudes before and after coming to Australia. For example, one of them constructed a positive attitude towards the Australia society as well as her/his possible learning journey before they came to Australia such as the participant A who said:

When she was in Libya, she thought it will be a good experience. He made a judgment straight away...she said it would be helpful to know other cultures.

However, she did not mention how she constructed such attitude. From another point of view, attitudes were built or/and positively supported by the host society members. For example the participant C said an excerpt:

The Australians are nice, they want people to be their friends.....that was helpful

Additionally, despite they had little negative experience, that harmful side did not adversely affect their attitudes towards the host society and learning English. To most of them, such attitudes were helpful in both integration into the Australian society and learning English.

4. Enclosure (Social Context)

All participants had opportunities to learn to speak English, make friends, and create social networks at School. As being reported, schools were the major social context for all participants. Moreover, for a male participant, street was also an effective social context in which he learnt to speak English. They all went on to say that they met and made their friends at school and had lots of opportunities to converse with friends, teachers and classmates during school time. For example, the participant B said:

She made lot of friends at school (0.02) It was the only place for her to learn and speak English

In addition, at school, they received a lot of emotional and social support (e.g. encouraging words, motives, supplementary classes, cultural and social advice, etc.) from their teachers, friends and classmates. That support was very helpful and assists the participants to succeed linguistically, emotionally and culturally. For example, the participant B and D said respectively:

At school, the teachers told her to read more because it will help thier speaking skills.... Do not be shy when she does not understand....people will help her (.07)That support gave her a hand to keep on

At school, their teachers, friends and classmates said; ignore those who annoy her or let her disappointed....... They explained to some cultural things she did understand... yes it was very helpful

5. Length of Residency

All participants have lived in Australia for more than three years. During that period, they experienced various social aspects and had a frequent contact.

6. Motivation

The participants reported different types of motivation that initiated their learning efforts, particularly in speaking skills. Some said that their admiration with and her/his love of English as well as future reasons (e.g. jobs or better life) were the reasons in success of learning and speaking English. For example, the participant A, B and D said respectively:

She likes English that is one thing and she does want to learn it for future reasons like she wants to go to university and staff like that.

She learnt English because she really wants to learn new language and it is the language that most countries speak.

English is the most important language in the world.

She really liked to learn English so when she travels somewhere, she does not get nervous to speak to people……it is one of the most languages she is interested in.

Another reason igniting English learning efforts was situational or/and adaptive motive. The participant C found himself in Australia with his father and had no other options, therefore, he had to learn and speak English to confirm or/and adapt to the new situation. For instance, he said:

He just came to Australia (.04) like (.02) because of my dad is studying here and (.02) he had to go to school and learn English (.02) he could have two languages.

The researcher repeated the participant's words and explained them in more details to ensure his answer. The participants confirmed that the adaption to the new situation made him learn and speak English.

7. Culture Shock and Cultural Differences

Different cultural aspects were experienced by the participants upon entering the new culture. Two of the participant's experienced little harmful situations and stress as a result of cultural differences, misunderstanding of the TLG values and rejecting people. However, they easily got used to it and were successfully able to integrate with the TLG members. The participants A and D said respectively:

At the beginning it was because they think everything is wrong and what they are doing is not right but then they accept it as its problem not my problem……

Some classmates were annoying (.04) it is all about her religion……. And they asked me annoying questions and tried to pull her scarf... but after a while they stopped it

At that stage, the two participants had enough emotional support from their teachers, friends, and good classmates. For example, the participant D said:

[Her friends] were persuasive (.01) when she says I cannot do this because my religion is different. They say ok that is fine….. At school, her teachers, friends and classmates said; ignore those who annoy her or let her disappointed……. They explained to some cultural things she did not understand

According to their talk, that support helped them overcome cultural differences or any related-culture problems. Also, their determination and goals were supportive.

Because English is her goal and she has to do it (.02) so she just ignored them.

Additionally, they said that, somehow, these culture differences assisted them learn and speak English. Conversely, the other two participants (youngest ones) did not experience any culture differences.

8. Language Anxiety

TABLE IV
ORAL PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW RESULTS ON ACTFL AND FLOSEM SCALES

Participants	Level at arrival	ACTFL L Level	FLOSEM Level
A	Elementary	Advanced High	Advanced Fluency (High intermediate)
B	Elementary	Advanced Mid	Advanced Fluency (High intermediate)
C	Elementary	Advanced Low	Intermediate Fluency (Low intermediate)
D	Elementary	Advanced Low	Intermediate Fluency (Low intermediate)

According to data, all participants did not severely experience language stress due to L2 learning anxiety. Though their English levels were low when starting their learning journey, the participants did have any trait anxiety. They solely experienced some situational or momentary anxiety because of some annoying acts (e.g. laughing) done by some of their classmates. For example, the participant C said:

Once, he said a wrong word and (.02) his classmates laughed (missing word)...he really got embarrassed and stopped speaking

They all said that their teachers, some classmates and friends helped them not to feel fear or apprehension of speaking. By encouraging words of mouth from school staff and friends, they built self-confidence and kept advancing.

Participants' Oral Communicative Competence and Native-like Pronunciation

Two native-speaking experienced teachers measured the participants' oral communicative competence (OCC) and native-like pronunciation (NP) using an OPI and the results are presented in Table IV. The teachers used ACTFL and FLOSEM guidelines as rubrics. In regard to oral communicative competence, the scores varied from advanced low on the ACTFL scale to advanced high. Concerning native-like pronunciation, the marks ranged from intermediate fluency on FLOSEM scale to advanced fluency (see Table V). The participants, whose English level was elementary at arrival to Australia, are placed at various sub- scores on advanced level. However, none gained advanced (native-like pronunciation) level.

SLA Affecting Acculturation

According to data, some participants reported that SLA process influenced their integration into the Australian society and the acquisition of its culture. Some subjects reported that SLL process affected their acculturation towards the TL group. For example, the participant D reported:

Before, she was seeing people a bit bad and she should not be friendly to them but when she learnt English (.02) like when they chat, she discovered very good things like they are very kind....

When someone learns English s/he will know more about her friends, about their culture, how they think and how they live...

Also, the same experience was extracted from the participant A's saying:

It did help, like the more English someone knows the more adaptation s/he get..... Sometimes when they talk and make a joke... she knows, like when they say that joke, it makes difference if she only understands what but when she understands the content of the actual sentence she understands how it is a joke.

It is believed by the participant A that learning English and being English speakers is a tool by which they acquire and learn the second language culture such as understand the joke and its cultural connotation or implicture. However, they did not ample explanation and examples regarding such an influence and its mechanism. Conversely, some participants did not really comprehend the questions related to this topic. Though they said "yes, there is a connection between leaning English and acculturation", their answer was not clear and convincing

In summary, this chapter provided a full description of experiences that the participants had while learning English in Australia. It reported their beliefs in regard to the influence of experienced acculturation on initiating and supporting their second language learning. In addition, the present chapter demonstrated the amount of L2 speaking proficiency the subjects gained in the duration of four-year study abroad period. Such results will be now discussed in the following chapter.

TABLE V
A SUMMARY OF ACCULTURATIVE VARIABLES EXPERIENCED BY THE PARTICIPANTS

Acculturative aspects	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D
Length of residency	3.5 years	3.5 years	4 years	4 years
Integration patterns	Adaptation	Adaptation	Adaptation	Adaptation
Social networks	Friends Classmates Siblings acquaintances	Friends Classmates Acquaintances	Friends, classmates acquaintances Colleagues	Friends Classmates acquaintances
Attitudes	Positive	Positive	Positive	positive
Social context (enclosure)	School Home Public areas	School Public areas	School work sport club public areas	School Home Public areas
Motivation	Integrative & instrumental	Instrumental	Situation or adaptive	Integrative
Culture shock (CS)	Experienced (moved out of CS)	Not experienced	Not experienced	Experienced (moved out of CS)
Language anxiety	Sate anxiety	State anxiety	State anxiety	State anxiety
The amount of contact experienced by the participants as a result of acculturation				
Amount of contact	Frequent	Frequent	Frequent	Permanent

IX. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

A. Introduction

The current study is conducted to address answers to the questions (see Chapter I) of whether or not acculturation is related to oral communicative competence (OCC) as well as native-like pronunciation (NP). It also seeks to give answers to whether SLA process affects acculturation and to gain understanding of the mechanism of such an effect. This chapter draws upon the outcomes from the data analysis or/and description and the findings of the literature review to discuss the connections between acculturative factors (socio-psychological factors) and the acquisition of a second language. The chapter will highlight the theoretical and methodical implications in this study. The chapter will then provide a discussion for how socio-psychological factors (e.g. social domains, social networks, integration strategy, attitudes, social context, length of residency, culture shock, language anxiety and motivation) would influence second language acquisition and vice versa. It will next discuss the connection between age and SLA as well as skin color and higher levels of L2 oral proficiency. Afterward, limitations and implications of further research will be evaluated and a conclusion drawn at the end of this chapter.

B. Theoretical Modification

In this study, the researcher used Schumann's acculturation model to predict learner success with oral communicative competence as well as native-like pronunciation. He also adapted the Schumann's model in two ways: (1) by adding a factor (social networks) and replacing language shock with language anxiety and (2) by concentrating on both the learner and target culture. In addition, he will critically discuss and operationalize the claims of the model. As a two-way street, focusing on acculturation model, the study will throw light on how learning a second language would help learners to acculturate to a target language group.

C. Measurement of Acculturation

Acculturation was measured by the SSIs. All participants reported that had massive opportunities to integrate with their native-speaking members as well as like-native speakers [19]. They slightly varied on their acculturation process towards the host society and the ethnic communities in Australia. They were all found to be pretty deeply immersed in their native culture and to be self-restrain in their integration with the TL speakers (see acculturative factors being experienced by the participants in Chapter IV). In other words, all participants topped the TL group where they adapt to the TL society and maintain the native culture, landing themselves in the category of integration. Although such results proposed that the participants were regularly engrossed in their original culture, they showed frequency in their acculturation to the dominant group.

D. Discussion of the Research Questions

1. The Connection between Acculturation and Second Language Oral Proficiency (OCC)

Social and psychological factors are considered a significant part to cause acquisition of any target language [27], [28], [10], [34], [38], [32], [86]. As [79] point outs, "social factors and affective factors cluster in a single variable which is a major casual variable in SLA". Language, itself, is a social and psychological skill that humans acquire through integration and interaction with their peers [94]. Consequently, L2 learners need to socially and psychologically integrate with TL speakers in order to acquire the major component of the target language. It is seen by many linguists that social and psychological factors (social domains, social integration and networks, social context, attitudes ,length of residency, motivation, language anxiety and culture shock) play a key part in obtaining high levels of L2 oral proficiency as well as triggering or/and supporting L2 efforts [10], [48], [58], [64], [25], [26], [70], [62].

The results from the interviews are in line with the findings in the literature. On the relationship between acculturation process experienced by the participants and scores from OPI, it is extracted that the immersion in Australian society in Toowoomba contributed to success in obtaining high levels of oral communicative competence. Specially, the data showed that people's integration (adaptation) with the Australian society, no matter how much participants still stick to their native culture, results in greater levels of English proficiency. This result confirmed the findings in the Literature which conveyed that the more likely people are immersed in the host group, the greater levels of L2 speaking proficiency they showed [85], [48], [7], [59], [57]. Also, this conclusion nicely corresponds with the claim that getting closer to original society or/and culture does not necessitate a decrease in involvement with other ones [48], [72].

It is evidently found that participants depended on various social networks (e.g. close friends, teachers and classmates) for linguistic and emotional support such as building self,

confidence and understanding culture differences. Such result affirmed the findings of the literature that social networks created by L2 learners, particularly exchange one, and would be necessary for successful L2 learning [62]. The results lend further support to acculturation models [79], [4] that claimed that length of residency in the host community provides L2 learners with more opportunities to immerse in the TL group and consequently gain L2 oral proficiency. All participants spent more than a period of 3 years in Australia which, in return, gave them opportunity to enroll in monolingual Australian schools and integrate with TL speakers. It has been agreed that length of residency in a L2 community is relatively linked to success in acquiring oral communicative competence [79].

The participants clearly demonstrated positive acceptance of the other cultures and positive attitudes towards native, speaking individuals. Their schools were also found to be the most important environment where they created their social networks and had an emotional support. According to the data, positive attitudes towards the Australian community and the social context, specifically school, played an indispensable role in causing high levels of L2 oral proficiency. Indeed, this conclusion illustrated once more the significance of acculturative factors confirming Schumann's acculturation model. It is also well, matched with previously published research which claimed that L2 leaners' attitude towards TL speakers and sharing the same social facilities (e.g. schools, clubs or professions) with them would promote L2 learner' opportunities for contact with TL speakers and hinder any subsequent sociocultural integration [25], [26], [34].

According to the data, the participants were found to be either instrumentally or/and integrativelly motivated. In addition, one of them had a situational or adaptive motivation that he structured while starting his school. Such motivational orientations assisted the participants to advance in their learning of English skills, particularly speaking. As a matter of fact, their positive attitudes towards the TL group and their desire to become like native speakers whom they admire helped to learn English and obtain high levels of oral communicative competence. Further, particular future reasons (e.g. job or rewards) were beyond their learning and succeeding in having advanced levels of OCC. Additionally; the results reported that those who were integrativelly, oriented learners obtained higher levels than those who were instrumentally, oriented leaners. It is further found that motivational orientations vary from one learner to another and did not restrict to specific types. Indeed, the results confirmed the findings of the literature which reported the significance of motivation in SLA and variety in constructing their motivational orientations according to their needs [21], [2], [58], [10], [67], [29]. It goes hand in hand with the proposal that that interagative motivation is more powerful than instrumental one [79].

A drawn corollary of the data clearly revealed that culture shock is a stage of acculturation process asserting [10]'s proposal that culture shock is a phase in the process of the

culture acquisition or/and acculturation. It is found that only two participants (the oldest ones) experienced culture shock stage while the others (the youngest ones) did not go through that stage. This could be attributable to their age as they arrived in Australia at age of nine. Generally, although it was a slight harmful experience, culture shock stage was a channel by which the participants identified the TL culture and understood cultural differences. TL individuals (e.g. friends, teachers and classmate) were found to be supportive for the participants in the early days of that phase. They provided participants with emotional support to figure out the culture differences and engage in the new environment.

Such a conclusion is compatible with the findings of the literature which hold that culture shock is deemed as basic cross, culture learning experience whereby L2 learners manage to understand and cope with circumstances related to intercultural communication or sociocultural skills [5]. Moreover, such outcomes correspond with social support networks hypothesis [6] which proposed that support from other people, such as friends or colloquies, would provide compensatory and protective environment for immigrants' emotional and physical well, being.

The results, at first glance, seemed to indicate that language learning anxiety was not a part of acculturation process and did not have any effect on the participants' learning journey. However, if the examples of slight apprehension of speaking that the participants said are taken into consideration, it becomes apparent that situational anxiety was experienced. Nevertheless, that type of L2 anxiety was not an obstacle in front of the participant. It appeared to be related to momentary situations and then vanish [70].

2. The Connection between Acculturation and Native, Like Pronunciation (NP)

Although a positive connection was found between acculturation and high levels of oral communicative competence, the results did not find acculturation to be positively linked to L2 pronunciation. Both early and mid, late learners did not achieve native, like pronunciation. The participants' oral communicative competence (morphology, syntax, vocabulary, etc.) was found to be highly influenced with acculturation whilst the pronunciation remained relatively uninfluenced. This corollary could be consistent with the claims that L2 learners who immerse in the host society may speak fluently but they may not do so with native, like pronunciation [81]. The literature findings show different results in regard to achieving an authentic, native, like pronunciation of a second language, particularly after a specified biological time [59], [8], [48]. So, it might be proposed that aspects of second language learning may not be acquired equally for both early and late L2 learners.

3. The Effect of SLA on Acculturation

Acquisition of a second language is seen to be valuable in enabling the transference of cultural knowledge (including the social norms of the host society). Insufficient target language skills are viewed as a major barrier to social and economic integration, especially in relation to addressing sociality and securing employment [52]. The result from interviews demonstrated a connection between SLA and acculturation, yet it did not provide a clear, full picture of such a process. The participants reported that SLA process relatively affected acculturation and/or their culture acquisition. To certain extent, SLA helped them in acquiring some cultural differences. However, no strong evidence was given to explain and support such a concept. Though the results did indicate to, some extent, cultural or/and acculturative patterns being affected by SLA process. It was no possible to draw a specific, clear conclusion with respect to this connection.

E. Discussion of Additional Findings

1. The Acquisition of Second Language and Age

The age of the participants was not a focus on this study. However, significant outcomes occurred and seemed to be worth discussing. Generally, the participants started their English leaning journey at different ages. The participant C (male), for example, began at age of 9 while the rest (female participants) started at age of 9 and 12. That is, they all began to learn English at both the beginning or /and the end of puberty which "begins between ages of 8 and 13 in most girls or 9 and 14 in most boys" [16]. It is found that both late learners (started learning English after puberty age) and early learners (began L2 attainment at or before puberty age) achieved great level of L2 proficiency. Such results invalidates the claim that language learning which takes place after the age of puberty will be slower and less successful than normal first language learning [51], [54], [81]. Early and late learning might have been characterized at different age in 1960's and 1970's.

2. Skin Color and High Levels of L2 Proficiency

Although skin color was not a main concern in this research, it was found to be related to L2 attainment. The results plainly demonstrated that black, skin participants (A and B) achieved greater levels in both oral proficient and native like pronunciation than white, skin participants (C and D) (see Table IV). The review of literature has revealed that no studies were conducted in such field. Consequently, it could be an important area to be investigated.

F. Implications for Further Research

It became clear in the course of the inquiry that more investigation is needed to be done in the areas of acculturation. The influence of SLA on achieving integration into a new society and on experiencing cultural acquisition is still worth further research so as to form a full picture about such phenomena. Much is known about the acculturative factors (e.g. attitudes) affecting SLA. Nevertheless, awareness of how such elements are shaped still needs to be investigated; particularly on those whose English is foreign language. The effect of the foreign dominant culture and its power across the world on forming language choice and attitudes require more

examination. In addition, further research could explore whether or not a link exists between black, skin individuals and achievement of high levels of L2.

The study points out that integrative and instrumental motivation do not meet all L2 learners' spectrums. The data clearly indicates that L2 learners could use a situational or adaptive orientation to trigger their L2 efforts. So, additional research on this subset may provide more understanding of second language learning motivation. Finally, the study shows the significance of supportive host environments in acculturation process and study abroad, specifically in avoiding cultural shock. Thus, as [85] suggests, further research on this field could aid understanding the role of teachers, friends and peers in providing emotional support to L2 learners and can assist study abroad programs.

G. Limitations

The most important limitation of this research is that the study involved a small number of participants and a short duration of the study period. Such limitations would be a barrier in generalizing the findings. The second limitation is that the interviews did not establish a base of clear and detailed data for investigating how SLA may affect acculturation processes towards the host society. The final limitation is that cultural restrictions, traditions and customs ,which the participants have, created difficulty using more detailed interview questions for the aim of measuring or/and examining certain features among the participants and forming a further comprehension of their acculturation towards TLG.

X. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the literature reported that acculturation and second language learning are positively linked; second language acquisition is accomplished through psychological and social immersion in a host society. This study used SSI supported by like, life scenarios and OPI to discover the possible connections between acculturation and SLA. The data confirmed the findings of the literature review proposing a strong link between acculturation process towards a host society and high levels of oral communicative competence. The study also explored, similar to previously published studies [48] that acculturation is negatively related to native, like pronunciation. Though the participants' oral communicative competence was influenced by acculturation, native, like pronunciation remained relatively uninfluenced.

The study further uncovered that SLA has impacts on acculturation, yet it did not draw an ultimate, clear conclusion regarding the influence of SLA on acculturation and/or culture acquisition. It is found that it is not always the case that language learning becomes slower and less successful after the age of puberty. Such views are not comparatively compatible with the critical period hypothesis (CPH) proposed by Lenneberg [54]. Skin color was found to be associated with higher levels of oral communicative competence as well as native, close pronunciation. Black, skin participants attained higher oral proficiency levels than the white ones. Such a

concept could be related to neurological differences between black, skin people and white ones. This is worthy of further exploration and research.

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