Learning to express, learning as self-expression: a multimethod investigation of the L2 selves of distance adult Irish L2 learners

A Thesis submitted to fulfill requirements for the award Doctor of Philosophy,

Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge, DCU, by

Conchúr Mac Lochlainn, B.A.

Supervisors: **Dr Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl**

Dr. Colin Flynn

2023

Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of Doctor of Philosophy is entirely my own work and that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

Signed: Conchúr S. Mac Lochlainn

ID No: 10371771

Date: 13/01/2023

Epigraphs

“Dá nglacfaí leis na línte sin,
Dob éigean a dhiúltú,
Cén mise no frithmhise,
A chífí im scáthán?”

[Had I accepted the lines,
That I had to turn down,
Which me, or *alter*-me,
Would I see in the mirror?]

- Seán Ó Ríordáin, ‘Línte Liombó’ (translation by Celia De Fréine).

“Live in fragments no longer” – E.M. Forster, “Howards End”

“To me, this sounds like a real-life version of a story—the title of which is often translated as “The Useless Tree”—from the *Zhuangzi*, a collection of writings attributed Zhuang Zhou, a fourth-century Chinese philosopher. The story is about a carpenter who sees a tree (in one version, a serrate oak, a similar-looking relative to our coast live oak) of impressive size and age. But the carpenter passes it right by, declaring it a “worthless tree” that has only gotten to be this old because its gnarled branches would not be good for timber. Soon afterward, the tree appears to him in a dream and asks, “Are you comparing me with those useful trees?” The tree points out to him that fruit trees and timber trees are regularly ravaged. Meanwhile, uselessness has been this tree’s strategy: “This is of great use to me. If I had been of some use, would I ever have grown this large?” The tree balks at the distinction between usefulness and worth, made by a man who only sees trees as potential timber: “What’s the point of this—things condemning things? You a worthless man about to die—how do you know I’m a worthless tree?”

- Jenny Odell, ‘How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy’ (translation of the *Zhuangzi* by Burton Watson).

Acknowledgements

While writing a doctoral thesis can be a solitary enterprise, it is only proper to acknowledge the many people who have supported me, without whom this monograph would not have been possible. I must start with my two fantastic supervisors, Dr. Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl and Dr. Cóilín Ó Floinn. Mairéad, I have known you for 12 years now, and have learned so much from you. Whenever I struggled to believe in myself, you had enough belief for us both, and taught me how to find my voice. I can never repay this, but I can promise to follow your example and put into practice all that you have taught me. Cóilín, one of the greatest pleasures of this process has been getting to know you, and as a researcher whose work directly inspires my own, I am very lucky to have had your support. From your uncanny ability to find the right reference, sagely advice, and fantastic sense of humour, I hope that we get many more chances to work together.

Within the wider team at *Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge*, many thanks to Dr. Gearóid Ó Cleircín for his kindness as independent panel member, as well as Dr. Úna Bhreathnach, who served as my internal examiner for transfer and raised important points for my consideration. I will be forever grateful to Prof. Ciarán Mac Murchaidh for his support, guidance, and encouragement, and to Dr. Ciarán Mac an Bhaird, for his helpfulness and counsel. I always enjoyed discussing my work at PGR meetings and will always appreciate the love of learning that *Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge* has fostered in me. *Tuigim go maith nach dtagann deireadh leis an aistear foghlama agus go raibh míle maith agaibh uile as bhur gcuid tacaíochta agus comhairle*.

My direct work colleagues were a font of both support and great fun, and I know I would have had a much crankier process were it not for the pranks and gags we shared along the way (we did also *work*, I hasten to add). From Dr. Elaine Beirne and Dr. Oisín Ó Doinn, who always had time to talk about the rollercoaster life of a PhD student, to Caitríona Nic Giolla Mhichíl, whose infectious laugh can cure most ailments, there was always a calming voice or sympathetic ear. Méabh Riordan, Dererca Ní Chianáin, Richard Herlihy and Oisín Dillon (the "Boojie Gang", named after DCU's famed, succulent chicken goujons), formed a solid core of comrades, as did Stiofán Ó Briain and Hannah Ní Rís in earlier times. Whether it was green screen antics, after work Gaeilge rap gigs, or snorting coffee out of my nose at a well-timed joke, I have made lifelong friendships at DCU and will always look back on these days with great fondness.

I come from a big family, and I wouldn't be at this point without them, either. Thank you to my parents, Bernie and Liam, for their love and support. From Sunday dinners to Starbucks drive thrus, we are lucky to have you, and, as always, "all that you do does not go unnoticed"!

My beloved younger sisters Maedhbh and Clíona are my best friends, a constant source of wisdom and belly laughs, and have both served as foils and intellectual examiners for most of my life. Maedhbh, your thoughts made this thesis stronger, particularly your own reflective understanding of qualitative research, and Clíona, I am flabbergasted at your proofreading abilities. I swear that I have learned my lesson re: commas and hope you enjoy your well-earned Dr. Martens! My older brothers Andrew and Brian, walking and running buddies, respectively, have always inspired me and shown me that it isn't falling that matters but getting back up, and I thank you both for your lessons. It would be churlish to not also mention our other brother, Harry the labradinger, the best boy, in whose whiskey-brown eyes there is wisdom beyond simple human comprehension (the less said about his feline cousin Ziggy the better).

It is important to acknowledge the untimely passing of Prof. Zoltán Dörnyei earlier this year, whose work was a catalyst for my own, as even the most casual perusal of this document indicates. His death robs the field of language learning motivation of one of its most important voices, and I will always regret that I never had the opportunity to speak to him, either about this project, or the million other questions I would have posed to him. At the same time, his work will live on and inspire for many years to come, as it has myself and countless others.

Lastly, this thesis would not have been possible without its true protagonists, the learners on these LMOOC courses. Across survey instruments and interviews, I had the privilege to briefly glance into the lives and learning experiences of some truly remarkable human beings. I was in consistent awe at the meaning that could be drawn from learning Irish, and how every assumption I may have had ran into the hard pavement of messy, real lives. I do not think that it is an overstatement to say that I leave this project a changed person, with a new perspective on learning and on life. Perhaps the most important lesson has been to remain open to new experiences and to seek always to expand the space of what is possible, for yourself, but also for others, in a world much better experienced as part of a plural. I thank each participant for their trust in me, and this thesis is dedicated to them, in the hope that they keep reaching and keep learning.

Table of Contents

Declaration ii

Epigraphs iii

Acknowledgements iv

Table of Contents vi

List of Appendixes ix

List of Figures x

List of Tables xi

List of Abbreviations xiii

Abstract xiv

1. Introduction 1

1.1 Introduction 1

1.2 Rationale and aims 2

1.3 Theoretical framework 3

1.4 The Irish language – L2 context 4
1.4.1 Past 4
1.4.2 Current Context 4
1.4.3 Future? 5

1.5 Study context – Fáilte ar Líne LMOOCS 6

1.6 Research questions 7

1.7 Methodological approach 8

1.8 Summary of findings and original contribution 8
1.8.1 Summary of findings 9
1.8.2 Summary of study contribution 12

1.9 Researcher positionality 13

1.10 Chapter summary 16

2. Literature Review 17

2.1 LLM research – genesis and rationale 18
2.1.1 The socio-educational model of LLM 19
2.1.2 Criticisms of the SEM – pedagogical relevance? 21
2.1.3 Criticism of integrativeness – disintegration? 21
2.1.4 A LOTE to think about 23

2.2 The L2 motivational self-system (L2MSS) 24
2.2.1 Empirical support 26
2.2.2 Critical assessment 27
2.2.3 Revising the L2MSS – From outside in, to inside out 32
2.2.4 Interim Summary – The gaps in the guides 33

2.3 Other theories of LLM and relational conceptualisation 37
2.3.1 Social-psychological 37
2.3.2 L2 Investment 37

2.3.3 Language learner autonomy 38
2.3.4 Reviewing the record 38

2.4 Minority and heritage language learning within LLM 40
2.4.1 Defining the “heritage language learner” 40
2.4.2 Research regarding HLL motivation 41
2.4.3 LLM in an Irish L2 context 43

2.5 Adult non-formal language learning motivation 46
2.5.1 Motivational salience – the non-formal adult language learner 47
2.5.2 Technology and LLM – From Chalk to Click 49
2.5.3 Empirical study of adult non-formal LLM 50

2.6 Conclusion 52

3. Methodology 54

3.1 Introduction 54

3.2 Study Objectives and Research Questions 54

3.3 Research Methodology 56
3.3.1 Research Design employed in study 57
3.3.2 Overall aims of methodology 59
3.3.3 Integrated analysis – thinking dialectically 63
3.3.4 Study context, sampling, and conceptualising participants 66
3.3.5 Research Ethics 68

3.4 Quantitative survey instruments 69
3.4.1 S1 – Setting the scene 69
3.4.2 S2 – Clarifying parameters 71
3.4.3 S3 – Confirmation 72
3.4.4 Data Analysis 73

3.5 Narrative Interviews (n=42) 75
3.5.1 Interviewee recruitment 76
3.5.2 Practice and protocol 76
3.5.3 Medium of Interview 77
3.5.4 Positional elements 77
3.5.5 Transcription procedures 78
3.5.6 Data Analysis and interpretation 78

3.6 Methodological limitations 80
3.6.1 Self-report data 80
3.6.2 Non-longitudinal data 81
3.6.3 COVID-19 pandemic 82

3.7 Conclusion 83

4. Quantitative survey (n=638) 84
4.1 Participant Overview and Profile 84
4.1.2 Summary of findings 86

4.2 RQ1 - How well do existing theories of LLM explain the motivations of non-formal adult Irish L2 learners? 90
4.2.1 Factor Analysis 90
4.2.2 Descriptive Analysis 93
4.2.3 Correlational analysis – relations and predictions 96

4.3 RQ2 - What is the impact of previous learning experience and SRP on the possession of specific L2 Guides? 104
4.3.1 Differences by previous experience 104
4.3.2 Differences by self-reported proficiency (SRP) 110
4.3.3 Correlational analysis – are relations constant across groups? 113
4.4 RQ3 - Do learners of differing heritage and nationalities differ from one another? 116
4.4.1 Categorising Learners 116
4.4.2 Comparing learner heritage and nationality categories 118
4.4.3 Correlational analysis – Are relations constant across heritage category? 125
4 4.4 Do learners of more distant heritage differ from those of more recent heritage? 126
4.5 Summary of findings and chapter conclusions 128
4.5.1 RQ1: General findings 128
4.5.2 RQ2: Shaped, and shaping - The L2 learning experience 129
4.5.3 RQ3: More than labels – assessing social identity 129
4.5.4 Conclusion - Summing up the snapshot 130
5 Semi-structured interviews (n=42) 131
5.1.1 Participants – overview (n=42) 131
5.1.2 Summary of findings 132
5.2 RQ1 – L2 Selves in context 136
5.2.1 Narrative frames: Understanding, expressing, changing 136
5.2.2 Possible futures – L2 Selves by domain 139
5.2.3 Self-discrepancies 144
5.3 RQ2 - L2 learning experiences and possible selves 149
5.3.1 L2 engagement – experiences, attitudes, and preferences 149
5.3.2 Agency and control - possibility in context 151
5.3.3 Social Others: Inspiring and Impeding 154
5.3.4 Selves in Possibility Space 159
5.4 RQ3 - Heritage and Social Identities – Remembering and Reclaiming 161
5.4.1 Family and Community Identities 161
5.4.2 Personal Identities, Possible Connections 165
5.4.3 “Between Two Worlds” - L2 Ownership and Legitimacy 169
5.5 Conclusion 173
6. Discussion & Conclusion 175
6.1 The “near” and “far” of study conclusions 176
6.2 Answering RQs – “the near” 178
6.2.1 RQ1: Assessing the L2MSS 179
6.2.2 Implications of RQ1 – Complex, Contextual, and Fuelled by Deficit/Fulfilment 183
6.2.3 RQ2: L2 Learning Contexts: Experience, and experiencing 189
6.2.4 Implications of RQ2 – Impacted Unpredictably by Experience 192
6.2.5: RQ3: Who lies beneath? Social identity and L2 selves 195
6.2.6 Implications of RQ3 – Both personal and social 198
6.3 Original contribution – “the far” 200
6.3.1 Theory 201
6.3.2 Empirical 202
6.3.3 Methodological 203
6.3.4 Context 205

6.3.5 Knowledge of Practice ... 207
6.4 Suggestions for further research ... 209
6.4.1 Replication in different Irish L2 contexts ... 209
6.4.2 Longitudinal study ... 209
6.4.3 Ethnographic and practitioner research ... 210
6.4.4 Locus and generality of self ... 210
6.5 Conclusion – Learning to express, learning as self-expression ... 210
References ... 213
Appendixes ... 247

List of Appendixes

Appendixes ... 247
Appendix A1 – Ethics Confirmation (Survey) ... 247
Appendix A2 – Consent form (Survey) ... 248
Appendix B1 – Ethics Confirmation (Interviews) ... 249
Appendix B2 – PLS + IC (Interviews) ... 250
Appendix C1 – Item listings (S3) ... 254
Appendix C2 – Invitation (on FL) (S3) ... 258
Appendix C3 – Item listings (S2) ... 259
Appendix C4 – Item listings (S1) ... 266
Appendix D1 – EFA Models (S3) ... 270
Appendix D2 – Regression model (Learning Effort) ... 293
Appendix E1 – Question Text for Interviewee Prompt ... 295
Appendix E2 – Semi-structured Interview Prompts ... 296
Appendix E3 – Top-level concept maps and coding frames (NVIVO) ... 297
Appendix F1 – Overview of course content and sample Week (Week 1, Irish 101) ... 300

List of Figures

Figure 1: Graffiti on street art in Dublin city centre (trans: ‘don’t lose (your) heart') 6
Figure 2: Sample homepage of an Irish language MOOC (Irish 101) 7
Figure 3: L2 Selves in this context are 9
Figure 4: Researcher Positionality 14
Figure 5: Schematic of literature review 17
Figure 6: Dörnyei’s (2009: 29) original L2MSS 25
Figure 7: Schematic - Issues regarding L2MSS 27
Figure 8: A four-guide L2MSS (adopted from Papi et al., 2019) 32
Figure 9: Summary of gaps in L2MSS literature 36
Figure 10: Synthesis of Literature Review – Questions Raised 53
Figure 11: Methodology and RQs, mapped 57
Figure 12: Conceptualising study sample 67
Figure 13: Primary survey development 69
Figure 15: Summary of survey findings 86
Figure 15: Scree Plot (L2 Selves factor analysis) 91
Figure 16: Learner categorisation decision tree (n=638) 117
Figure 17: Demographic contrast of survey and interview samples 131
Figure 19: Interviewee Nationality Distribution 132
Figure 19: Summary of findings 133
Figure 20: A narrative model of the L2MSS (RQ1) 134
Figure 21: Three narrative themes of self 137
Figure 22: The near and far 176
Figure 23: Restatement of RQs 178
Figure 24: Results summary (RQ1) 179
Figure 25: Correlations – L2 Guides/Outcome variables (n=638) 180
Figure 26: Results summary (RQ2) 189
Figure 27: Correlations – L2 Guides/Learning Effort, by SRP (n=631) 190
Figure 28: Results Summary (RQ3) 195
Figure 29: Comparative analysis of importance/learning effort (social category) 196
Figure 30: Situating sample contribution 205

List of Tables

Table 1: Original contribution 13
Table 2: Summary of meta-analyses and reviews regarding L2MSS 34
Table 3: Survey iterations 58
Table 4: RQ operationalisation (QUANT) 60
Table 5: RQ operationalisation (QUAL) 62
Table 6: Study description, using Leech and Onwuegbuzie's (2009) criteria 64
Table 7: Analytical criteria of study 65
Table 8: Independent (Explanatory) Variables (S2) 71
Table 9: Posited dependent variables (S2) 72
Table 10: Finalised scales (S3) 73
Table 11: Iterations of Qualitative Coding 78
Table 12: Demographical data regarding survey participants (n=638) 84
Table 13: Items with significant cross-load (EFA) 92
Table 14: Item cross-loadings (EFA) 92
Table 15: Descriptive statistics (L2 Guides and Integrative Orientation) 93
Table 16: Responses to specific items – Ideal and Ought-to Other scales 94
Table 17: Responses to item – Ought-to Own 94
Table 18: Descriptive statistics (L2 Use) 95
Table 19: Correlations (L2 Selves) (n=638) 96
Table 20: Correlations – L2 Guides/Learning Effort (n = 638) 97
Table 21: Multiple Regression: Learning Effort (n= 637) 98
Table 22: Descriptive statistics (L2 Speaker Self-Concept) 99
Table 23: Correlations – L2 Guides/Speaker Self-Concept 100
Table 24: Correlations – L2 Use Scales/L2 Guides 101
Table 25: Correlations– Current F2F/L2 guides (n=638) 101
Table 26: Descriptive statistics – Future L2 Target items 102
Table 27: "Native-like-ability" selection, by item 103
Table 28: Correlations – Future L2 Target/L2 Guides (n=638) 103
Table 29: Frequencies - "Have you ever studied Irish before?" 105
Table 30: Frequencies – Level of formal experience 105
Table 31: Frequencies - "Other" by type of experience 106
Table 32: MANOVA - Form of experience (Levene test) 106
Table 33: Kruskal-Wallis - form of experience 107
Table 34: Crosstab - Nationality/Heritage by Formal/Informal Experience 108
Table 35: Crosstab - Age by Formal/Informal Experience 108
Table 36: Crosstab - Gender by Formal/Informal Experience 109
Table 37: Independent samples t-test – Formal/Informal Comparison 109
Table 38: Independent samples t-test – SRP by Formal/Informal 110
Table 39: Frequencies– "How would you describe your current level of Irish? I can speak…" 111
Table 40: Crosstab - Learner Experience by SRP 111
Table 41: Kruskal-Wallis – SRP 112
Table 42: Correlations- Learning Effort/L2 Guides (Form of Experience) 113
Table 43: Correlations- L2 Target/L2 Guides (Form of Experience) 114
Table 44: Correlations - Learning Effort/L2 Guides (SRP) 114
Table 45: Correlations - L2 Target/L2 Guides (SRP) 115
Table 46: Heritage/National Category (Levene test) 118
Table 47: ANOVA - Heritage/Nationality 119
Table 48: Kruskal-Wallis– L2 Self-Concept items (Heritage/Nationality) 120
Table 49: Crosstab - L2 Learning Experience/Heritage/Nationality 121
Table 50: ANOVA - L2 Guides (Experience/Heritage/Nationality) 122
Table 51: Kruskal-Wallis - 'Becoming an Irish speaker is important to me' (by L2 Experience/Heritage) 123

Table 52: ANOVA - L2 Use (Experience/Heritage/Nationality) 124
Table 53: Correlations - Learning Effort (by Heritage/Nationality) 125
Table 54: Correlations – L2 Target (by Heritage/Nationality) 126
Table 55: Frequencies – Most-Recent Heritage Link (LIH) 126
Table 56: ANOVA – Distance of Irish Heritage 127
Table 57: Summary and Operationalisation of RQ1 136
Table 58: Forms of Future L2 selves 140
Table 59: Narrative Extracts – Ideal/Ought-to Distinctions 144
Table 60: Summary and Operationalisation of RQ2 149
Table 61: Summary and Operationalisation of RQ3 161
Table 62: L2 Selves are 177
Table 63: Comparison of Studies Measuring 4-guide L2MSS 184
Table 64: Contrasting Self-Concordance and L2 Self-Discrepancy 186
Table 65: Summary of contribution 200
Table 66: Impact of 4-guide L2MSS amongst Relevant Studies 202

List of Abbreviations

LL – Language Learning

LLM – Language Learning Motivation

L1 – First Language

L2 – Second Language

LOTE – Language Other than English

L2MSS – L2 Motivational Self System

SEM – Socio-educational Model

HLL – Heritage Language Learning

CALL – Computer Assisted Language Learning

MOOC – Massive Open Online Course

LMOOC – Language Massive Open Online Course

SRP – Self-reported Proficiency

LIH – Learner of Irish Heritage

NIL – Non-Irish Learner

Abstract

Learning to express, learning as self-expression: a multimethod exploration of the L2 selves of Irish distance L2 learners.

Conchúr Mac Lochlainn, B.A.

This multimethod study is an exploration of the validity and interpretive utility of Dörnyei's (2009) 'L2 motivational self-system' (L2MSS), as it applies to adult, non-formal learners of Irish, who are learning through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). It is grounded in the psychology of language learning motivation (LLM), assessing whether non-formal adult Irish L2 learners are motivated by future L2 guides, both *Ideal*, reflecting hopes and dreams, and *Ought-to*, representing obligations and responsibilities. Three research questions are addressed, i) exploring the theory's validity at a general level and examining whether ii) the L2 learning experience and iii) learner heritage background, are meaningful in predicting, and understanding, the motivations of learners.

Using distinct samples from an iterated quantitative survey instrument (final n=638) and narrative interviews (n=42), evidence demonstrates the theory's utility in an underexplored context, while raising questions regarding adult Irish language learners and theories of self. Learners endorsed and articulated internalised reasons to learn, encompassing personal hopes and obligations, with social others less directly impactful on their motivation. The futures learners described often referenced non-L2 related aspirations of self, and were less-directly related to L2 proficiency, in many cases. Challenges in relation to the latter, due to contextual difficulties, low efficacy beliefs, and limited contact with L2 speakers and learners, are described. Recommendations to encourage sustained L2 learning and support adult learners in fostering and developing L2 selves are made, to aid them in realising their personal language learning goals.

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

During the 2020 *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann*, a traditional Irish music competition, the celebrated Irish singer/songwriter Imelda May tweeted[1] the following regarding bittersweet feelings it evoked within her:

> After watching the #Fleadh2020 on @TG4TV, I'm overcome with grief for the language that was stolen from me. The stories, poetry, songs that should be on my tongue. The embarrassment at having to learn like a child my own teanga [language] that should never have been taken away from me. #gaeilge

For a language-learning researcher, particularly one interested in the psychology of learning, this tweet intrigues. An extensive literature affirms the importance of affective factors in language learning, but the intensity May describes provokes pause for thought. Researchers have long analysed L2 Anxiety, a reticence and nervousness in using an L2 (Teimouri, Goetze, and Plonsky, 2019), and have recently generated a body of work on the potential of positive emotionality to support language learning (Gregersen, 2019; MacIntyre, Ross, and Clément, 2019). May's account does not simply relate to feelings in learning or using Irish, however, but to who she feels she is or could have been, within her sense of self. Words like "grief" and "stolen" are rare in academic literature on language learning but can be found in popular accounts of language learners and users. Author Margaret Drabble (2019) recounted when learning German while grieving the loss of her daughter, "My German has not been utilitarian. It has been a language of mourning and of loss. And in that, there has been comfort". Chinese American author Yiyun Li (2016) had a different journey, and writes of renouncing her native Mandarin, shifting to English. Li notes "...this violent desire to erase a life in a native language is only wishful thinking", mediating on what is gained, and lost, in attempting to do so.

When learning a second language, one engages not simply with another culture, or speakers of that language, but also how one perceives of oneself. Self-perspective can be impacted positively, negatively, or in complex and ambiguous ways. This study explores that phenomenon, and its impact on LLM, using two complementary methods sampling adult Irish L2 learners, recruited through a series of non-formal Irish language and culture Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

[1] Dr. Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl is credited for bringing this example to the author's attention.

1.2 Rationale and aims

Researchers have natural interest in understanding how and why language learners develop and maintain motivation to learn a second language. A subfield of applied linguistics, language learning motivation (henceforth **LLM**) has a 60-year history of research (Gardner and Lambert, 1959) from diverse perspectives (MacIntyre, Noels and Moore, 2010), and sometimes, substantial debate (e.g., Oxford and Shearin, 1994; Crooks and Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 2010). It is a field with a dominant focus on a particular subset of humans, learning a particular language; those learning English as an L2, typically in formal instructional contexts (Boo, Dörnyei, and Ryan, 2015; 151; Al-Hoorie, 2018, p. 731).

A broader phenomenon is those learning languages other than English (**LOTEs**), as adults, through informal and non-formal means (see Chik and Ho, 2017). These learners differ in their experiences, histories, and passions, ranging from intrinsic enjoyment to the desire to become like native or highly proficient speakers of the L2 studied. Many are older than those learning languages formally and may approach an L2 with diverse attitudes and intentions. LLM as a field often conceptualises language learners in rigid terms, and critiques argue it has failed to keep pace with changes regarding digital technology and modalities of learning (Henry and Lamb, 2019; Al-Hoorie, 2017). Although of diverse epistemological and methodological foundations, theoretically oriented towards generating insights for practitioners, research has also been criticised as failing to fulfil this promise (see Al-Hoorie et al., 2021).

The rationale of this study is to expand upon this literature, in its general monolingual and mono-modal bias, using the example of adult non-formal learners of Irish to fulfil several identified gaps. A small body of work has considered similar issues for adult Irish L2 learners, in either entirely face-to-face (Flynn, 2020) contexts, or focusing on subgroups of learners, such as college-aged adults (Petit, 2016). To our knowledge, this is the first study assessing social-psychological differences across cross-sections of globally diverse adult non-formal Irish L2 learners. The numbers who fall into this category is plausibly in the millions (Ní Aodha, 2016), suggesting the study is timely.

The study examines the utility of theories regarding LLM in this unusual context, with particular attention to what might be atypical about these learners. There are both conceptual and practical implications to these aims. Regarding theory, the study provides valuable data not for generalisation of sample, but of framework: are theories of the L2 self, described below, expressly developed with an English L2 context in mind, applicable in a very different learning context? For practitioners, there is scant evidence base assessing the needs and desires of Irish adult L2 learners, particularly those who live abroad and make use of CALL tools. This

study, in presenting data on the psychological desires and needs of these learners, provides an outline of areas where provision could improve, and learners be better supported.

1.3 Theoretical framework

There are many ways of conceptualising LLM, as the recent publication of the 700-page *Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning* (Lamb et al., 2019) illustrates. A focus on self and identity, querying how learning a language relates to, and has implications for, one's wider self (see Ushioda, 2009), is the frame adopted in this study. The dominant framework within the field, considered in the following chapter, is Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (**L2MSS**) (introduced in Dörnyei, 2005). The theory blends two social-psychological approaches: Markus and Nurius' (1986) "possible selves", positing that we imagine ourselves in different future states, desired and feared, and Higgins' (1987) "self-discrepancy theory", suggesting that discrepancies between how we see ourselves at present, and how we wish to be/fear becoming, motivate us to act, to reduce self-discrepancies. Two future L2 "guides" are described, namely the:

- **Ideal L2 Self**, the vision of the person we would like to become, who can speak the L2
- **Ought-to L2 Self**, attributes we believe we should possess to meet social expectation, relating to the L2 (both adopted from Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2021, pp. 63-64)

Future self-images interact with L2 learning experiences, and, theoretically, provoke behavioural change, when fulfilling certain criteria (being vivid, accessible, primed, and viewed plausible, amongst others (see Dörnyei, 2009)). A recent development with which this thesis engages extensively is stances of the self (outlined originally in Higgins, 1987); within LLM, an initial binary distinction between personal aspirations and hopes (**Ideal**), and social expectation (**Ought-to**) has been challenged by researchers who argue that whether the self-stance is "Own", or "Other" should also be considered (Lanvers, 2016; Teimouri, 2017; Papi et al., 2019; Tseng, Cheng, and Gao, 2020).

More broadly, the term "self" is much used, and sometimes, abused (MacIntyre, 2022). When learning a second language, do we seek to become a new or better version of ourselves, or to express something important to the haze of memories, biases, needs, experiences, and drives which constitute a messy self? Defining "the self" has frustrated philosophers, poets, and theologians, amongst others, for thousands of years (Wiley, 1994) and in considering the subject (in this specific case), focus is kept on its emotional and relational content; whatever else, to be a self is to experience, in all human capacity (Erikson, 2007). Operationally, "self" within this study refers to the following:

> …the totality of you, including your body, your sense of identity, your reputation (how others know you), and so on. It encompasses both the physical self and the self that is constructed out of meaning. – (Baumeister, 1999, p. 247).

Our concern is primarily the latter portion - "constructed out of meaning" - as relates to learning Irish. A premise adopted is that people are capable of, and do, envision, and describe possible L2 selves in context, and furthermore that exploring their self-interpretations is a valid, and enriching, way to understand how they make sense of themselves as language learners (Murray, 2009).

1.4 The Irish language – L2 context

1.4.1 Past

Irish (*Gaeilge*), the L2 considered, is an example of what the author Barry McCrea evocatively refers to as one of Europe's "languages of the night" (quoted in Ní Riordáin, 2018). It is a) a minority language, b) a national language, c) an official language of the European Union and d) a language with whom millions have heritage/ancestral links. A Celtic language, it has the third-oldest continuous vernacular in Western Europe, and has been spoken on the island of Ireland for at least two thousand years (potentially far longer, see Laing, 2006, p. 11). Once the predominant language on the island (Mac Giolla Chríost, 2005, p. 91) it entered rapid decline in the 19th century, following the Irish famine, in which over a million Irish people died and a further million emigrated largely from Irish-speaking areas (Ó Tuathaigh, 2015). De Fréine (1978, p. 47), cited in Romaine, 2008, pp. 14-15) argues this constituted language decline on an incomparably swift scale. The language was placed at the centre of revivalist efforts (Watson, 2002, p. 742), securing official status following Irish independence, with mixed results in terms of the success in re-establishing the language as a widely-spoken tongue, perhaps due to over-reliance on the educational system as a means of transmission (Warren, 2012, p. 325).

1.4.2 Current Context

Approximately half a million people on the island of Ireland claim to be able to speak the language fluently today (while over 2 million claim some L2 competence) (CSO, 2016; NISRA, 2022). The relationship of the language with the people of Ireland is complex, and its role within wider Irish national identity is ambiguous (Walsh, 2020). As of 2022, Irish is a compulsory school subject in the Republic of Ireland, and its status is debated (Mac Murchaidh, 2008, p. 212), provoking an array of discourses in Irish media, ranging from supportive (e.g., De Barra, 2017), to critics of current policy (e.g., McConnell, 2019) to openly hostile (e.g., Myers, 2013). In Northern Ireland, the language is a subject of political and

legislative debate. Although it "has come to be associated with nationalist/republican identities" (McMonagle, 2010, p. 255), this issue is in flux, with some (e.g., Mitchell and Miller, 2019) highlighting the language's possible role in "…revision of narrow or destructive understandings of history" (p. 249) through inclusive teaching practices. Public attitudes towards Irish within Ireland cover a spectrum, though surveys suggest they are, on aggregate, positive (Darmody and Daly, 2015, p. 79).

Irish's linguistic status is also in flux, with the language classified as "definitely endangered" (UNESCO, 2010, p. 25) or even in irreparable decline (Carnie, 1995). Regions where Irish is traditionally spoken as an L1, *Gaeltachtaí*, located primarily along the Western seaboard, have suffered a consistent attrition of speaker density (see Ó Giollagáin et al., 2007; Ó Giollagáin and Charlton, 2015). The future viability of such communities (symbolic representations of the language's vitality, see Ó Torna, 2005) is consequently also in steep decline. The language is reaching a point where intergenerational transmission is under threat within these regions, and attempts to promote the usage of the language outside the formal educational system appear only partially successful (Ó Riagáin, Williams and Morcno, 2008, pp. 12-13; Ó hIfearnáin, 2013).

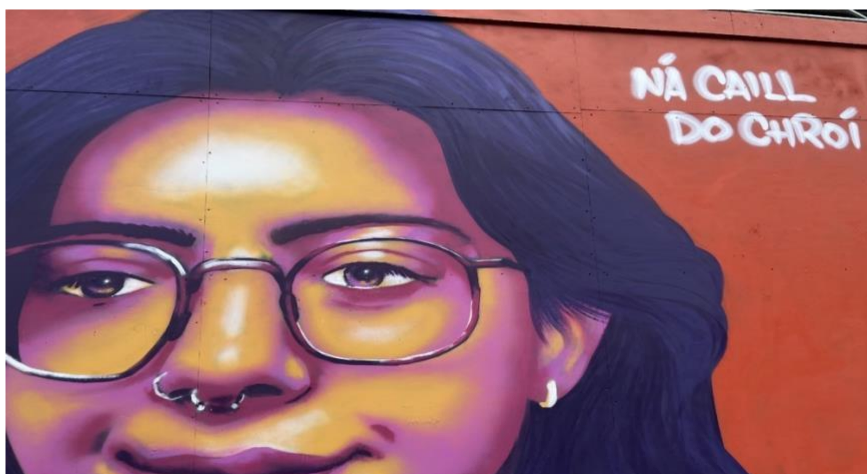
1.4.3 Future?

> What does community mean in terms of the transmission of a language?
>
> Does it need to be a physical place? Can it be brought about through endeavour? What would that place look like? – Dunbar (2020).

Despite these difficulties, Irish has seen promising, if uneven, revitalisation as an L2 in urban areas and amongst non-traditional speech communities, carrying prestige, to a sometimes-surprising degree (Romaine, 2008, p. 19). A network of Irish-language schools has led to an increase in Irish speakers within urban areas, founded on more active forms of parental participation (Ó Laoire, 2012, pp. 18-19); more daily users of Irish are now located outside the *Gaeltacht* than within it (Walsh and O'Rourke, 2017). The growth of new forms of media, be it volunteer broadcast radio (Walsh and Day, 2021) or online networks (Nic Giolla Mhichíl, Lynn and Rosati, 2018), has widened ways to interact with the language. Further, Irish is often highly visible and audible in Irish urban landscapes, in ways that are sometimes superficial (see Carson, 2016), but also creative (see **Figure 1**). This growth extends to networks of what have been termed "new speakers", who often speak non-traditional or post-traditional forms of Irish, and raise questions regarding L2 legitimacy and ownership (O'Rourke, 2011; Walsh and O'Rourke, 2020). This can include tensions between standardised (written) Irish and dialectal

speech (Nic Fhlannchadha and Hickey, 2018), and debates about "correct" forms of linguistic usage in both social and educational contexts (Seoighe, 2018; Ó Murchadha and Flynn, 2018).

Figure 1: Graffiti on street art in Dublin city centre (trans: 'don't lose (your) heart')

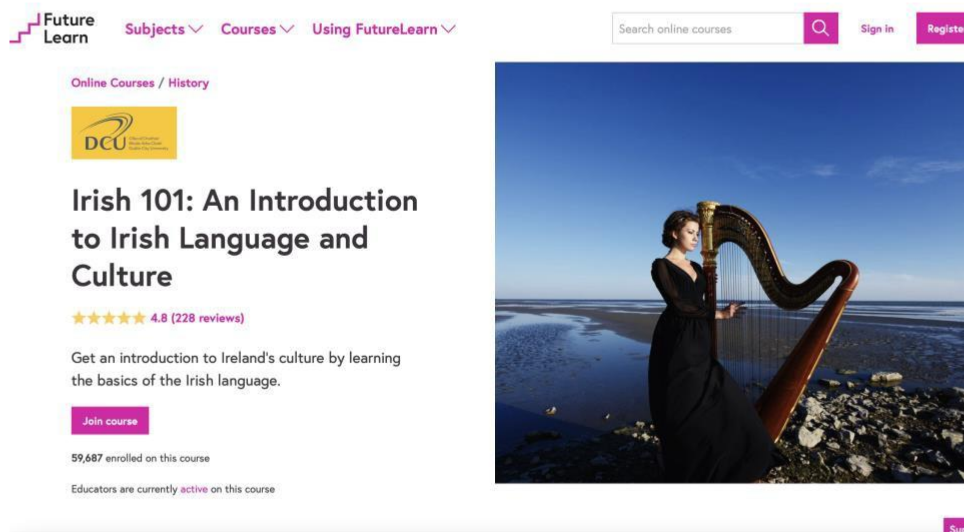


The simultaneous revival and endangerment of the language in Ireland is echoed in global trends. There are approximately 80 million people of Irish descent around the world, and the teaching and learning of Irish is consequently quite common abroad, through practice groups and cultural organisations across the (generally English-speaking) world. A number of US universities offer formal courses in Irish, and it has a remarkable history of use abroad. Ó Conchubhair (2008) notes that globalisation has created a paradoxical levelling of cultural differences *and* yearning for the pure, the authentic, and the rooted, as Irish could be described (pp. 238-9). The motivations of those learning Irish abroad have been analysed using sociolinguistic frames (for example, in Walsh and Ní Dhúda, 2015), reporting complex motives, practices and social relations amongst those doing so. Almost a million people are actively learning Irish on Duolingo (RTÉ, 2020), the large majority of whom live outside Ireland, further evidence of global interest. Despite this interest, however, rates of course completion are low (Ó Coimín, 2017). New learning opportunities for a range of informal learners who may previously have struggled to find such materials, has led to new types of learner commencing study (Ó Conchubhair, 2008, pp. 237-38), but learner intentions, and implications for their L2 selves, are very much underexplored.

1.5 Study context – Fáilte ar Líne LMOOCS

The context of the study - a series of a Language Massive Open Online Courses (**LMOOCs**) designed as an introduction to the Irish language and Irish culture – is quite specific. These courses, delivered via the FutureLearn platform, have had approximately 100,000 registrations since launch in early 2018.

Figure 2: Sample homepage of an Irish language MOOC (Irish 101)



A MOOC (described within literature review and methodology chapters) is an online course open and free to participate in, containing learning materials usable in a self-directed manner. MOOC users represent a particular type of language learner, and are a useful population to assess many growth trends in non-formal adult language learning. It would be possible to write a thesis describing the social interaction of language learners within a MOOC (indeed, such research is needed). This is not such a thesis, however; the study context was used primarily to recruit participants, non-formal Irish language learners, of varying means, commitments, and psychological orientations.

1.6 Research questions

The study is guided by three research questions, from initially general, to context-specific, rooted in the literature considered.

- **RQ1,** the most general, assesses both the predictive validity, and interpretive utility, of the L2MSS. In essence, the question relates to whether the theory, and global findings (see Al-Hoorie, 2018, for review), are like findings in this context. This question frames **RQ2** and **RQ3**, which have foci that are more specific.

- **RQ2,** in recognition of the diversity of respondents, examines how learners differ regarding impacts, and interpretations, of both previous, and present, L2 learning experiences, upon L2 selves. This element is often neglected in L2MSS research (Dörnyei, 2019a), and analysing how and why learners differ by both level and self-interpretation of experience is an important means of assessing the L2MSS.

- **RQ3** examines social-psychological differences between learners of differing heritage and national backgrounds regarding future L2 selves. A focus on the self entails recognising that what we can imagine ourselves being, and becoming, links to our relationships with others. It is of particular interest whether learners with an Irish or Irish heritage background have stronger, deeper, or more sustained self-motivations than learners without these affective links.

1.7 Methodological approach

A multiple method approach was employed to answer these questions, using two forms of data: an iterated quantitative survey instrument (final n=638), and semi-structured interviews (n=42). The purpose of using these methods is that in analysing a topic as complex as LLM, it is vital to consider the diverse perspectives from which it can be conceptualised. Motivation is an individual difference, in which persons vary, but this emphasis invariably leads to general findings (Ryan, 2019, pp. 172-73), which, when the topic of study is the self, cannot do full justice to the contextual nature of an individual life (Ushioda, 2019b, p. 665).

Quantitative methods were used to assess how learners varied from each other, using scales to represent variables, while narrative interviews considered both what was common, and distinct, in how learners varied over time and in self-interpretation. Neither method is superior; rather, they are distinct ways of conceptualising evidence in considering **RQs**. Rather than integrating results sequentially, the two strands were assessed using differing logics:

- Quantitatively assessing statistical reliability (internally and externally), predictive ability, and magnitude of differences, and,
- Qualitatively assessing interpretive coherence, narrative salience, and thematic similarities/differences.

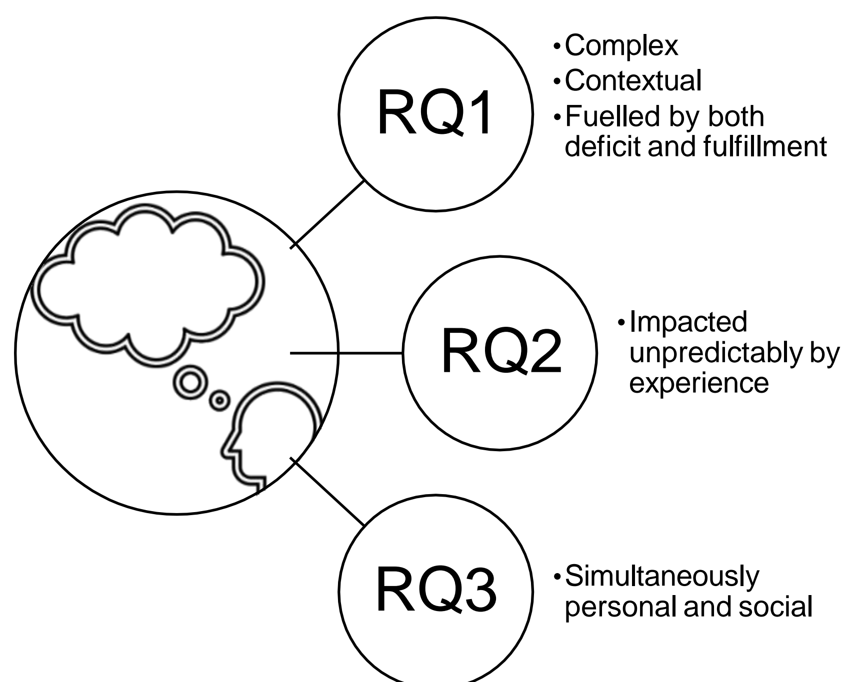
Comparison revealed much commonality between findings relating to **RQs**, while provoking creative and epistemological tension, reflected upon in the study's final chapter.

1.8 Summary of findings and original contribution

This thesis contains substantial empirical data, and to guide the reader, the primary findings and contributions are summarised in this section. The former are categorised into five statements regarding L2 selves within this context, each of which will be supported over the length of the monograph, represented in **Figure 3:**

1.8.1 Summary of findings

Figure 3: L2 Selves in this context are…



1.8.1.1 Complex (RQ1)

Many adult Irish L2 learners are simultaneously motivated by both ideals and obligations, but focused on their own desires/expectations, rather than those of social others. Learners often reported these others (friends, family) will be proud of them if they learn Irish, but would not be disappointed were they to fail to do so, suggesting an Ought-to L2 self makes limited sense here, if not interpreted to include both “Own” and “Other” stances. Personal responsibility to learn Irish was common and quantitatively, this factor exerted influence on L2 motivation independent of the Ideal (Own) L2 Self. Interviews demonstrate that when the attitudes of others were influential, they generally aligned with those of the learners themselves, indicating internalisation (Claro, 2019; McEown and Oga-Baldwin, 2019). Imagined, hypothetical and deceased others were also referenced, examples of an **inner audience** (Moretti and Higgins, 1999). Viewing personal desires and social expectations as either aligning or conflicting in a binary sense therefore fails to address the complexity of how others, both living and imagined, are represented within the self, issues which might be especially salient for minority language learners (MacIntyre, Moore and Sparling, 2017).

1.8.1.2 Contextual (RQ1)

The types of future L2 selves learners expressed were frequently contextual and specific, in manners unlike those of English L2 learners (similar findings have been reported in other

minority L2 contexts, like Olsen, 2018, and Banegas and Roberts, 2022). Future L2 targets were ranked moderately in quantitative data and tended to be contingent when referenced by interviewees. Three non-exclusive categories of L2-related future self-images were interpreted from narratives: **proficiency-oriented**, **relational**, and **experiential** self-images. These were built upon two primary purposes, the pursuit of self-expression, and/or self-understanding. Proficiency-oriented self-images relate to future L2 targets, while relational ones involve explicit comparison with oneself at present, or an alternative version of oneself/others. Experiential self-images refer to desired experiences (immersive holidays, cultural uses) which do not implicate permanent changes in self, but opportunities to use Irish in particular ways with particular people. Dörnyei wrote extensively regarding criteria required for an L2 self to motivate (e.g., Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2021, pp. 65-66), but whether a motivating L2 self can be singular experiences, or must reflect permanent change, remains a key question. Non-proficiency related L2 selves, reflecting wider life, may be common amongst non-formal adult learners (see Lanvers, 2012, p. 170), and focus on distinct life domains (as outlined by Nakamura, 2019), is useful in understanding personalised L2 goals.

1.8.1.3 Fuelled by both deficit and fulfilment (RQ1)

A central pillar of the L2MSS, self-discrepancy, theorises that deficits between present self-concept vis-à-vis future visions motivate changes in behaviour (Higgins, 1987). Quantitative evidence for self-discrepancies was found, as learners with a higher Current L2 self generally report higher future L2 selves and proficiency targets than those with a lower Current L2 self. The practical importance of these higher targets when learners might have few external referents with whom to develop their language skills was much less clear. Many interviewees described senses of meaning and purpose in learning closer to the concept of self-concordance (Sheldon and Elliott, 1999; Henry, 2022), seeking to understand or contextualise themselves. Fulfilling commitments, remembering ancestors and working towards a new perspective on heritage are self-based motivations without obvious external markers of progress, but where one's "view of themselves as a continuous entity matters" (MacIntyre, 2022, p. 89). These personally-meaningful reasons to learn suggest the L2MSS as constituted may excessively emphasise future self-improvement, rather than present self-fulfilment, as a parallel motive of learning. The positive emotionality and meaning learners can feel from engaging in self-directed learning without attaching success/failure criteria to them raises questions relating to how, or even if, success can be defined in non-formal contexts.

1.8.1.4 Impacted Unpredictably by Experience (RQ2)

Participants varied by levels of previous experience learning Irish, and these differences impacted motivation in different ways. This variation raises questions regarding open and massive forms of language learning, where those of differing backgrounds and proficiency levels interact. Quantitively, learners with contrasting forms of experience (informal, formal) were similar, suggesting distinct experiences may lead to the same destinations from different directions, but present self-reported proficiency (SRP) was a very strong determinant of both future "Own" L2 selves and higher L2 targets.

An unusual finding was that greater previous L2 learning experience appeared to have declining impact on L2 effort. This reflects a lesser-examined element of the L2MSS; how relative L2 proficiency effects future L2 self-images over time (Thorsen, Cliffordson and Henry, 2020). A term, **discrepancy satiation**, is introduced to describe how learners can appear relatively satisfied with present levels of effort, even when having a strong future possible L2 self. There are likely both personal and social/interactional reasons for these findings. A conceptual lens to describe the interaction of learning experiences and future L2 selves, **possibility space**[2], is also introduced, to partially explain these gaps between reported L2 learning and L2 use. Three levels - identity-relevance, expressive affordance, and temporal coherence - describe why learning may be a personally-meaningful task, but not inspire active efforts to further use the language actively.

1.8.1.5 Simultaneously Personal and Social (RQ3)

Irish is a LOTE, a neglected topic within L2MSS literature (Mendoza and Phung, 2019; Csizér, 2019), and rich comparative data was generated as to how Irish implicates both personal and social aspects of identity. Although Irish nationals surveyed reported higher commitment to learning Irish and a stronger Current L2 Self than either LIHs (learners of Irish heritage) or those of non-Irish backgrounds, differences were small across most other scales. Learners of distant heritage also displayed equivalent motivation to those of more recent. Irish heritage is complex, and a persistent issue is that as a social category, links between Irish (L2) and Irish (national) or diasporic identities can be leaden with normative or essentialised assumptions which inhibit learners (see Garland, 2008).

Narrative interviews also revealed interplay between personal and social aspects of identity, reflecting wider group status and identification with Irish speakers (per Gardner, 1985's integrative orientation). The term "connection" describes how these foci can be in alignment or in tension. Some interviewees rooted their connections to Irish directly in nationality/heritage but others argued against rigid categories as exclusionary, preferring to conceptualise

[2] This concept is adopted from Davis and Sumara (2007), referenced in Murray (2013), as well as Brophy's (1999) work on a "motivational zone of proximal development").

themselves in fluid terms. Others still, in feeling connection, did not emphasise others at all, but how Irish allowed them to connect with elements of their own selves privately, further examples of the self-fulfilment outlined in **RQ1**. Collectively, findings demonstrate that categorising learners by social background, although pragmatically useful, raises interesting questions regarding identification and self-narrative, and that non-formal learners of Irish approach the language from many identity stances. These stances are impacted by, but not reducible to, social identity.

1.8.2 Summary of study contribution

These contentions will be supported through qualitative and quantitative data over the chapters that follow. The original contribution of this thesis is to draw closer attention to the psychological profiles of diverse adult learners of Irish as an L2, focusing on their desires within their personal learning contexts. It compliments several existing studies (particularly Flynn, 2020 and O'Rourke and Walsh, 2020), but is a multimethod examination of an under considered digital learning context and heterodox learning population. In doing so, it links to a wider global literature of some vibrancy (described in section 1.3), and demonstrates that far from being unique, many of the challenges facing adult learners of Irish may provide insight into areas where the L2MSS requires additional inquiry. More broadly, it examines truly diverse participants, ranging in age, L2 experiences, and nationality/heritage.

Independent contributions, regarding **theory, empirical data, methodology, context** and **contribution towards practice**, are returned to in the study conclusion, but summarised in **Table 1**, to allow the reader to assess the scale of impact the study addresses.

Table 1: Original contribution

Aspect	Original contribution
Theory	• Usage of L2 stances, joining a handful of global studies • Diversity of L2 positions amongst Irish learners revealed • Theorising regarding **discrepancy satiation** and **possibility space**, linking context to wider literature
Empirical data	• Results comparable to global findings but with some unusual aspects • Measurement of multiple forms of self and outcome-based variables • Comparison with other contexts undertaken
Methodology	• Innovative dialectical data generation • Development and validation of multiple forms of self and outcome-based variables • Both categorical and individual-level elements considered
Context	• Novel i) L2 of study, ii) study context, and iii) sample of learners, fulfilling several gaps identified in research
Contributions towards practice	• Issues relating to learner and instructor positionality highlighted • Motivational challenges for learners interacting at scale explored

1.9 Researcher positionality

> When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination – indeed, everything and anything except me. – Ralph Ellison, 'Invisible Man'.

The researcher within this project had a somewhat unusual role and elaboration regarding interest in and motivations for this project, as well as positionality, is warranted. In doing so, I write this brief section from a first-person perspective, to be clear as to my own intentions and

thoughts, and to avoid being an 'Invisible Man'. Three domains seem relevant in this regard, my **personal**, **professional** and **researcher** stances, as outlined in **Figure 4**:

Figure 4: Researcher Positionality

My interest in the psychological motivations of those learning Irish has developed from my **personal history** as an Irish L2 learner and speaker. I attended *Gaelscoil Chluain Dolcáin* and *Coláiste Chilliain,* two Irish medium schools in Clondalkin, West Dublin. Following this formal education, I earned a Bachelor of Arts through Irish at Fiontar, DCU (now *Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge*, under whose banner I am proud to submit this thesis). Outwardly, I suspect this appears a path of linear progression and interest but my relationship with Irish is more complex. In truth, I disliked Irish in childhood, finding it alienating to move from an English - speaking home, and world, to reciting maths tables and songs through a strange language I rarely used outside school (what I now understand to be a common phenomenon, see Ó Duibhir, 2018). Like many peers, some of my most thrilling moments at school were paradoxically through English, like swapping Pokémon cards excitedly *as Béarla*, whilst craning to spot incoming teachers.

This feeling changed, however; as my time at school ended, I realised that in the wider world we were atypical, and that learning entirely through Irish was a gift most in Ireland never receive, some of whom come to regret deeply. Originally stilted and alien, Irish became mine by choice, rooting me in a story that predates me and will outlive me. It became a marker of uniqueness, pride, and laughter, and the friendships and camaraderie the language inspired made me come to appreciate it quite deeply. This shift in perspective, which I cannot entirely explain, made me curious to hear the stories of others and ask whether such journeys were

common, particularly as I encountered those apathetic to, or negatively disposed, towards Irish.

As is not unheard of (though by no means a rule) amongst Irish speakers, I am comfortable going by two names – Conor and *Conchúr*. When asked (typically out of well-meaning politeness) which I prefer be used, I have always struggled to give the honest, impractical answer – both. At this point, there is no Conor absent *Conchúr*, and vice-versa, a fact that sometimes confounds friend and family alike. Reflecting on this, I recall Séamus Heaney's note, that there is "No such thing as innocent bystanding". My somewhat naïve initial interest has gradually given way to an understanding that my analytical reasoning as a **researcher** is not rooted in the perspective of some omniscient other, but in these experiences, which I acknowledge openly. My Irish-speaking identity is personal, rooted not in desires to conform, but wider, often imagined identities. I am neither religious nor spiritual, but have felt a responsibility to protect the language my unnamed and unknown ancestors spoke. I also feel affinity with indigenous cultures around the world, and, like certain interviewees, believe in the value of linguistic diversity. This comes not from a reductive nationalism of "them and us", but wonder at the endless variation of human experience, across language and culture, social class, sexuality, gender identity, creed, and other categories. I realise now, in ways I did not when commencing this project, how much this thinking weaves through my scholarly work, and how my own positional ambiguity and search for meaning has in turn driven my interest.

When I joined Dublin City University as a digital support officer designing these courses in 2017, I gladly took the opportunity to explore these questions academically. My **professional** roles relating to the study context has varied, from writing content and designing resources, to responding to learners directly, typically through an anonymised account. In one sense, this represents a close relationship to learners, but from another, as noted, my work did not necessarily align with how learners experienced courses. Although I delivered tips and feedback, my role was often closer to mascot than teacher. It was a strange feeling to have helped design an interactive resource, see it come to life, but feel detached from those using it. Questions of scale, and the frequently limited ability of tutors on MOOCs to connect with learners (Bali, 2015) therefore adds complexity to this positionality. Although a proud member of the team, my concern as a researcher has been with understanding learners in broader terms, including their lives "beyond the big data logs" (Veletsianos, Reich and Pasquini, 2016), to which my professional role would (appropriately) be limited. For me, the neglect of this research topic is in a tendency to reduce learners to individual data points, so as to "diagnose and predict" (Kraftl et al., 2022, p. 501), rather than social beings, whose learning occurs through varieties of modalities, experiences, and practices. As such, although my experiences as a course designer are inseparable from my role as a researcher, they are bidirectional. I

hope that my research has made me a better learning designer, but it has unquestionably equipped me with a stronger ability to respect and empathise, that not all see the world as I do, and there is value in both my perspective, and theirs.

1.10 Chapter summary

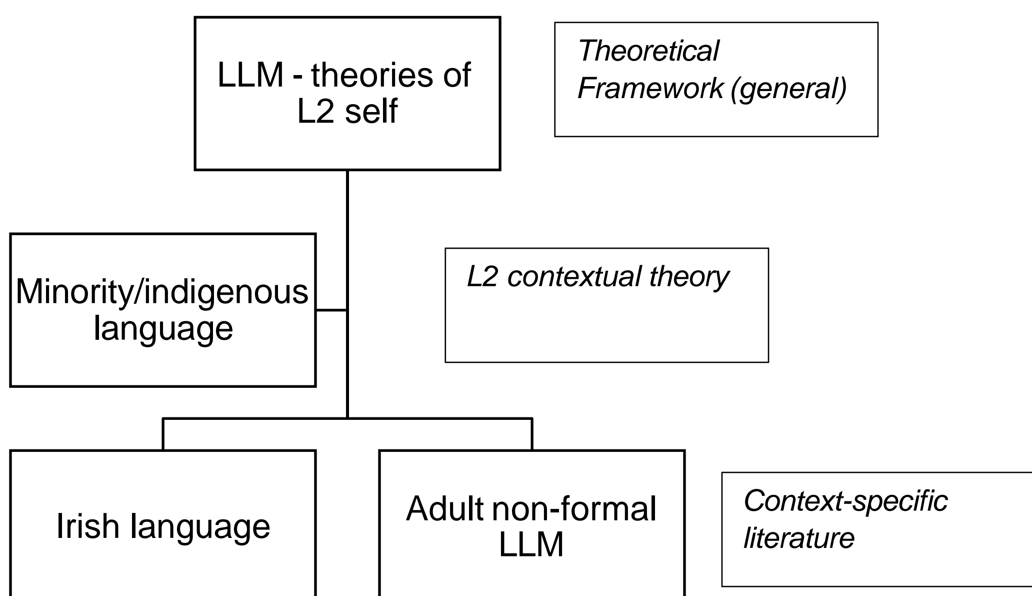
The study consists of five chapters following this introduction. **Chapter 2** reviews the framing literatures of the study, from general to specific. From a brief history of LLM, and its emphasis on both external and internal psychological identification, to what is particular about this context, both Irish as an L2, and the participants, as non-formal adult learners. **Chapter 3** defines and describes the study's methodological design. Justifications for multiple forms of data to answer RQs are introduced, as well as a description of data generation tools, participant recruitment, analytical decisions, and limitations of the methods utilised. **Chapter 4** concerns the primary quantitative results (n=638), where cross-sections of participants were queried across an array of self-based variable scales. **Chapter 5** presents the results of narrative interviews (n=42), where a distinct cross-section of participants described their experiences learning the language. **Chapter 6** summarises findings, bringing the two branches of the study into dialogue and elaborates upon the contribution of the study. It also presents implications and wider lessons, alongside recommendations for further research.

2. Literature Review

This chapter is rooted in the social-psychology of language learning, particularly psycholinguistic elements, and the rise of language learning “beyond the classroom” (Chik and Ho, 2017, p. 163), including digital methods, underexplored in literature on LLM (Al-Hoorie, 2017, pp. 7-8). This is true not only of Irish, but of adult language learners more generally. The study assesses how relevant theories of LLM are for such non-formal adult learners.

Four themes frame this synthesis, at different levels of focus: i) the various theories of LLM which focus on the self, ii) studies exploring minority and heritage languages within such models, iii) studies exploring the motivations of learners of Irish, and iv) how the non-formal adult learner is and should be considered, within self-based theories.

Figure 5: Schematic of literature review



Findings highlight a paucity of study regarding lifelong, non-formal adult language learners using the L2MSS, particularly in online learning contexts, and a need to consider non-formal adult Irish learners more closely in order to reflect their growing diversity. Although technology has arguably broadened the numbers of Irish L2 non-formal learners greatly, instructors, facilitators and designers can benefit from a deeper understanding of the psychological elements of their motivations. Adult L2 learners represent interesting cases through which theories of self and identity can be considered, and studies such as this are essential to explore these complex inter-related elements, using situated, applied examples. The review assesses each element in turn, and concludes by introducing the three questions that shaped the study design.

2.1 LLM research – genesis and rationale

Examining why people learn a second language is a favourite topic (perhaps overly so, see Ushioda, 2016, p. 565) of many student linguists attempting to understand L2 learning, with compelling justification: if motivation is a fundamental drive for doing something, it is of great importance in language learning, an invariably long-term endeavour. Though first language acquisition is a near-universal experience (Saffran, Senghas and Trueswell, 2001, p. 12874), huge variation occurs amongst those attempting to learn a second, with failure tending "to be the norm in many (especially instructed) L2 situations" (Dörnyei, 2022, p. 2). Explaining variation, including what *specific* differences are relevant in whether one fails or succeeds[3], is a concern of educators, pedagogues, and policy-makers who seek to, for a variety of reasons (generally economic, see Ushioda, 2017, p. 472), encourage L2 learning.

One common explanation relates to language aptitude, that individuals are more/less successful learning languages due to various cognitive differences (analogous, if distinct, to the *g* construct of IQ) (Wen, Biedroń and Skehan, 2017, p. 3). This is a focus of much research as to why certain persons excel at language learning, through measurement of mental and pragmatic linguistic ability, including semantic understanding, grammatical and inferential reasoning (e.g. Skehan, 1991, Carroll, 1990). No definition of language learning aptitude has gained universal acceptance, however, as conceptualisations range from an innate biological tendency to a socially malleable construct (Li, 2016, pp. 805-6). Furthermore, even acknowledging the consistent significance of aptitude in aspects of successful L2 acquisition (Li's meta-analysis reports a correlation of r= .49 between aptitude and aggregated measures, ibid, p. 822), it is questionable whether it is a unitary entity, as it may refer to "…a number of cognitive factors" (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, p. 38), relations between which are understudied. Aptitude may also offer limited insight into practical interventions to aid learners, as much research on the construct has (perhaps problematically) assumed it is fairly fixed (Wen, Biedroń and Skehan, 2017, p. 6; Boo, Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, p. 149)). Variation is observable even amongst language learners who might be considered "high aptitude" in other contexts, and many confident learners suffer paralysing blocks attempting to learn an L2 (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cole, 1986). In this light, it is worth asking whether learning a language is psychologically distinct from other subjects, and if so, what are the key factors in those differences?

---

[3] These terms are utilised illustratively; what one considers success or failure is relative, an issue returned to extensively within the study.

2.1.1 The socio-educational model of LLM

Lead by the pioneering work of Gardner and Lambert (1959) (1972), social psychologists became interested in the role that affective factors play in successful learning, with motivation chief amongst them (see Al-Hoorie and MacIntyre, 2019, for a comprehensive overview). An affective factor concerns meanings, feelings, and emotions, as opposed to a cognitive one, concerning thought and reasoning (though motivation reflects elements of both) (Gardner, 2005, p. 4). Defining “motivation” is a complex question, though Dörnyei and Ushioda’s (2021) description as i) why, ii) how long and iii) how hard, one willingly engages in an activity, is suitably parsimonious (p. 4). Gardner and Lambert’s initial agenda was to explore the links between affective elements and elements reflecting L2 achievement (Gardner, 2019a, p. 6). L2 learning is at core a social, interactive process, as language is, beyond a store of symbolic representations, a skill to be practiced, often with other speakers or members of a particular speech community (Dörnyei, 1998, p. 118). One learns not merely *how* other groups speak through learning an L2, but also their mannerisms, understandings and, arguably, ways of being. This can have consequences, in “changing”, even “losing” a sense of self when learning a second language (Foster, 1997, pp. 34-35). Studying motivation is necessarily studying *maintenance* of action over a period of time (see Dörnyei and Henry, 2022), and if “high” motivation is conducive to learning a language to greater fluency, how affective variables might be antecedents of L2 achievement (itself a perspective not without criticism, see Pavlenko (2002, p. 280)).

Gardner and colleagues sought to identify affective factors implicated in L2 acquisition. Research conducted primarily (though not exclusively, see Gardner, 2019b, pp. 30-31) in Canada cumulated in the socio-educational model (SEM), a framework emphasising the complementary role of affect, alongside aptitude, as a key variable in L2 acquisition (Gardner, 1985). The model describes language learning as being mediated both by attitudes towards the particular learning situation and towards the L2 group in question (Gardner, 2001). It was arguably “radically ahead of its time” (Ushioda, 2012, p. 60) in comparison with contemporaneous psychological research, suggesting that attitudinal elements are central in successful L2 acquisition (MacIntyre et al., 2019, p. 60) and interpreting processes of learning (Gardner, 2019a, pp. 10-11). Emerging from the model is integrativeness; a topic of subsequent debate (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 26), defined as:

> …an individual’s openness to taking on characteristics of another cultural/linguistic group. Individuals for whom their own ethnolinguistic heritage is a major part of their sense of identity would be low in integrativeness; those for whom their ethnicity is not a major component, and who are interested in other cultural communities would be high in integrativeness. - (Gardner, 2005, p. 7)

Integrativeness represents openness to moving beyond one's present ethnolinguistic identity and adopting mannerisms of others. Gardner (2019a) roots the theory in psychological identification (referencing Mowrer, 1950); as a child models behaviour from parents and social others, so too is there "a social psychological link between the learning process and the language learning context" (p. 6). MacIntyre (2007) notes integrativeness is multi-faceted, consisting of "…a complex set of attitudes, goal-directed behaviours, and motivations" (p.566), rather than identification with specific L2 speakers. Importantly, it is not solely an orientation (i.e. factor or reason), and three constructs - i) interest in foreign languages (in general), ii) attitudes towards the L2 community (specifically), and iii) the Integrative orientation - form wider integrativeness (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003, p. 126). A person with low ethnocentricity, positive attitudes towards the L2 group, and a sense of cultural openness, would be high in integrativeness. The model is dynamic, suggesting contact with speakers has both linguistic and non-linguistic (relating to attitudes/affect) outcomes (see Gardner, 2001, pp. 11-12), affecting the likelihood a learner would continue to learn the L2.

This was not the sole orientation Gardner and colleagues considered. They further described an *instrumental* orientation, representing "…the potential pragmatic gains of L2 proficiency, such as to get a better job or to pass a required examination" (Lin and Warschauer, 2011, p. 59). Though occasionally presented as dichotomous to an integrative orientation, this is not the case; the two are often correlated. To be low/high on one does not imply being high/low on the other (Gardner and MacIntyre, 1991, p. 58). Indeed, a motivated learner would likely display high motivation across orientations (MacIntyre, MacKinnon and Clément, 2009, p. 58). The relationship of these constructs to wider motivational research has been ambiguous, however; Noels et al. (2000) note that despite superficial similarities between an integrative-instrumental contrast and well-known distinctions between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (examined below), relating these constructs is far from simple. Though aspects of integrativeness, including positive attitudes towards language learning, resemble intrinsic motivation, it also incorporates socially mediated (therefore extrinsic) attitudes (pp. 77-78). While intrinsic motivation relates to enjoying learning, rather than social identity (Sugita McEown, Chaffee and Noels, 2014, p. 25), integrativeness includes desires to meet members of an L2 community and feel belonging.

Gardner and Lambert, amongst others, conducted a large body of research (generally psychometric, a matter of some criticism) (Ushioda, 2011b, p. 11), based on a standardised instrument, the *Attitudes and Motivations Battery Test* (AMBT) (Gardner, 1985). Research typically showed strong correlations between integrativeness and L2 grades (see Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993; Gardner, 2019b, p. 31). In particular, their Franco-Canadian context proved highly fruitful for such comparative contrasts (since Anglophones and Francophones are each

required to learn the other's language, and the two communities are intermingled). The model has proved applicable in contexts as diverse as Turkey and Japan (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003, list 75 studies, including 9 non-Canada ones (p. 137)), however. This body of work lead the model to be labelled essentially dominant (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991, p. 225), and an array of criticisms saw this status gradually decline.

2.1.2 Criticisms of the SEM – pedagogical relevance?

Initial criticism focused on pedagogical relevance, analogous to the concerns regarding L2 aptitude articulated at the start of this chapter: if attitudes towards L2 speakers shape affective experiences learning an L2, might this present a rather limited view of motivation, in that *negative* attitudes towards L2 communities are reinforcing? Crookes and Schmidt (ibid) argued that the model lacked direct classroom relevance, where teachers are primarily concerned not with *reasons* for study, but that a student is studying (distinguishing motivation as an orientation or attitude, versus a state/behaviour). In focusing on attitudes towards L2 speakers/groups (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 566), the model was perceived as providing limited scope to investigate classroom-level motivations, or how non-community related dynamics evolve, given a likely substantial role for these social aspects in LLM.

Their criticisms were echoed by Oxford and Shearin (1994), who observed that the model had no analogue in wider psychology. Though learning a language might contain unusual elements in comparison to other subjects, concepts like self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), value-expectancy (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002), self-regulation (Schunk and Zimmerman, 2012) or mastery and goal orientation (Ames and Archer, 1988) are important in language learning, particularly as a sustained activity involving exercise of metacognition, as in any other subject of study (Ushioda, 2001, p. 97). Similarly, it is unlikely learning a language is divorced from other aspects of a person's life, implying representing learners within broader, non-L2 contexts is also important (Ushioda, 2011a, p. 229). A perceived neglect of language learning as process-based lead to the theory being described as one primarily concerned with "macro-level analysis" (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, p. 77) rather than a model of motivation, per say.

2.1.3 Criticism of integrativeness – disintegration?

Criticisms deepened with arguments that the integrative orientation relates well only to certain L2s in certain contexts. Clément and Kruidenier (1983) argued integrativeness is relevant primarily where two (or more) linguistic groups of comparable sociolinguistic strength/vitality exist in close proximity to each other; where this dynamic is absent (commonly, instructed LL occurs in environments with limited, if any, exposure to L2 speakers), it is unlikely that learners would have developed attitudes (positive or negative) towards L2 speakers (McGroarty, 2001, p. 71; Dörnyei, 2010, p. 75). Clément and Kruidenier (1983) suggested four orientations *do*

display universality: travel, knowledge, friendship and instrumentality (cited in Noels et al., 2000, p. 59). In a sense, this narrows Gardner's conceptualisation of openness to other groups, given his caution LLM is complex, not merely a particular reason to learn (Gardner, 2007, p. 10). This redefinition appears to have sparked the genesis of an abridged definition of the construct described above, however, attracting researchers "…to a simplified perception of the highly complex psychological notion of motivation" (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, p. 76).

Attempting to link wider educational psychology to LLM research, Noels et al. (2000) adopting Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory, focused on distinctions between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation comes from within, "doing an activity for the inherent satisfaction of the activity itself" (Deci and Ryan, 2000, p. 71). It can be stratified into three sub-categories, reflecting desires for i) knowledge, ii) stimulation, and iii) achievement/mastery (Vallerand et al., 1992, pp. 1005-6). Extrinsic motivation, external to a person, is layered, and can be distinguished by degree of internalisation (Deci and Ryan, 2000, p. 71). For some, learning a language may provoke a sense of personal obligation and purpose, while for others it may be pursued solely to satisfy externally-imposed goals, such as for mandatory course credits. The distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic, and, in particular, the gradual internalisation of what is initially external (Ushioda, 2013a, pp. 134-35), is useful in explaining how motivation evolves over time (Sugita McEown and Oga-Baldwin, 2019, p. 3). Furthermore, the theory contains an empirically testable prediction, that intrinsic motivation is more conducive for sustained learning in most contexts (evidence for which was generated by Ramage, 1990, cited in Noels et al., 2000, p. 63). The model is frequently utilised in LLM research (including digital L2 learning, see Henry and Lamb, 2019), and a body of work has also applied the theory to heritage language learning contexts. Research conducted primarily by Noels and colleagues (Noels, 2005; Comanaru and Noels, 2009) found distinct motivational patterns, heritage learners generally possessing more-internalised forms of motivation (see Noels, 2009, p. 303) in comparison to non-heritage learners. The utility of these studies for this context is explored in section 2.3.3.

This literature expanded upon work generated by Gardner and colleagues, but specific criticisms of integrativeness emerged in light of its perceived inability to explain the motivations of those learning Global English (Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie, 2017, p. 456). Longitudinal research conducted by Dörnyei, Csizér and Németh (2006) found the integrative orientation correlated strongly with effort amongst a large (n= 13,000+) sample of Hungarian schoolchildren learning English (or any of four additional languages) in spite of limited contact with L2 speakers (Dörnyei, 2010, pp. 76-78). Contemporaneous reviews (Coetzee-Van-Rooey, 2006; Lamb, 2004) argued that integrativeness made little sense in an ELT context, given limited referents

with whom learners might expect to integrate with in an increasingly globalised world. Alternative frameworks hypothesising this relationship between learners without access to English speakers, but demonstrating high L2 motivation, were presented, such as Yashima's (2002) "international posture". Yashima posited Japanese learners of English might seek to connect with a globalised, cosmopolitan culture they associated with it (Yashima, 2009, p. 145), rather than identifying directly with English speakers. Lamb (2004) reported similar patterns in Indonesia, where English was associated with a global culture in the minds of teenage learners (p. 13) (though this does not necessarily contradict Gardner's writings, see Gardner, 2001, p. 10). Postructuralist researchers argued that in the case of Global English, it is inappropriate to delineate L2 ownership in multilingual contexts (Pavlenko and Norton, 2007, p. 676), and suggested that L2 learning is best-construed as a form of social investment (Norton Peirce, 1995), desires access social and economic capital, in learning a second language (see section 2.3.2).

2.1.4 A LOTE to think about…

With these issues in mind, the degree to which an integrative orientation is relevant in a **LOTE** context is contestable; while compelling in the context of English language learning, these criticisms are less so in others. Al-Hoorie (2017) notes that when LOTE learners are examined, "the…integrative orientation appears to resurface" (p. 7). Though of declining use in LLM (Boo, Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, p. 154), the integrative orientation may be of utility in an Irish L2 context. LOTES, and in particular minority, regional, or national languages, generally *are* associated with specific speech communities (Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie, 2017, p. 459). These communities may feel the sense of ownership implied by the theory (demonstrated in Kwok and Carson's (2018) study of learners of Japanese as an L2, and Oakes and Howard (2022), comparing FLL of French across four countries). Construed in a broad sense (as intended, see Gardner, 2019a), an integrative element may be critical for those learning LOTEs (Gearing and Roger, 2019, pp. 129-30).

However, the relevance of these social aspects in minority L2 contexts, where learners may not consider contact with L2 speakers possible, is unclear. Although attitudes towards speakers likely influence those learning Irish, these speech communities are under significant linguistic pressure (Ó Giollagáin et al., 2007, p. 10). Ó Ceallaigh and Ní Dhonnabháin (2015, p. 189) note "a dearth of opportunities" for L2 use amongst students, and perceptions of limited opportunities is also true for adult learners (Flynn, 2020, p. 193). Ó Laoire (2018) highlights ambiguity amongst Irish L2 trainee teachers, who often spend periods of time in the *Gaeltacht*, asking:

> Do these instructors imagine themselves as learners or as new members of an Irish-speaking community, within, outside the *Gaeltacht*, or both? This raises an important question about the expectations of learners from the immersion period. – (p. 148[4]).

Social-psychological research often focuses on intergroup dynamics (Clément, Noels and MacIntyre, 2007, p. 56) and the social expectations of Irish L2 learners can be opaque. Petit (2016), examining college-age learners of Irish, reported specific life moments (e.g. visiting summer colleges) sparked the imaginative viability of using the language (pp. 53-54). Raising this specificity to an international level, though many attempt to learn Irish outside of Ireland (Walsh and Ní Dhúda, 2015, p. 175) it is unclear whether this entails desires to become similar to Irish speakers, or to join specific communities. Identification with referents broader than a speech community, but also narrower (e.g. individual family members), are simultaneously at play (see Clément, Noels and MacIntyre, 2007). In light of this ambiguity relating to identification, the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS), the most-utilised framework within LLM, developed to consider these issues, is next analysed.

2.2 The L2 motivational self-system (L2MSS)

Dörnyei (2005; 2009), partially critiquing Gardner, and building upon his co-authored Hungarian analysis above, suggested that integrativeness should be reinterpreted (2009, p. 26). He argued LLM should be linked more closely with general theories of self and identity within psychology, and developed a model termed the **L2 motivational self system** (L2MSS) to do so. Drawing upon two theories, Dörnyei proposed what motivates sustained L2 learning is not primarily attitudes towards L2 speakers as external referents, but rather incongruences between our current self-image (that which we perceive ourselves to be) and possible future L2 self-images (that which we can imagine being/becoming). This was inspired by Markus and Nurius' (1986) **possible selves** theory, which posits that we naturally imagine the person/s we would like to become (or are afraid of becoming). This framework is commonly applied in diverse contexts across psychology, and a large body of empirical work supports its foundations (see Vandellen and Hoyle, 2008 for a review). Higgins' (1987) **self-discrepancy theory**, also utilised, suggests that when discrepancies between current and future self-images fulfil specific criteria (described below), we are motivated to act, in order to reduce them (Dörnyei 2009, p. 18). Where healthy, self-discrepancy can provoke behavioural changes, as we strive to become more congruent with the preferred images we have of ourselves. Dörnyei devised a three-part system on this insight (ibid, p. 29):

---

[4] This piece was published in Irish, and translated by the researcher.

Figure 6: Dörnyei's (2009: 29) original L2MSS

Ideal L2 self	Ought-to L2 Self	L2 learning experience
• Promotional • Hopes and dreams • Approach tendency	• Preventional • Obligations and duties • Avoid tendency	• Situational • Contextual

The **Ideal L2 Self** represents the L2-related future self we wish to become, including dreams, desires, and hopes (see Boyatzis and Akrivou, 2006). An example would be imagining oneself as a confident, competent and self-secure Irish speaker. The **Ought-to L2 self** reflects the L2-related behaviours/obligations we believe others expect us to fulfil (to avoid emotions such as shame or judgement should we fail to fulfil these expectations, see Higgins, 1987, p. 322). An example would be to feel others would be disappointed at one's failure to learn Irish. The delineation between what others expect of us, and what we expect of ourselves, is often unclear (Dörnyei, 2009, pp. 13-14). Drawing clear lines between Ideal and Ought-to is not always possible, as studying Irish language learners demonstrates. That we internalise obligation, to differing degrees, is reminiscent of self-determination theory, and delineating the latter from the former is a task some have questioned (see MacIntyre, MacKinnon and Clément, 2009). The **L2 learning experience** represents the external learning environment, encompassing all elements not included in the self-guides described above. It has been argued that this concept is under-theorised (Dörnyei, 2019a, p. 22), given findings that positive learning experiences often correlate more strongly with criterion variables than either the Ideal or Ought-to L2 self (Papi, 2010, p. 469), and that the social/individual context of learning is critical to understanding how language learners develop temporally (Ushioda, 2015).

Not all language learners develop future L2 self-guides, and only self-images with particular properties (e.g., vivid, "primed" in context) are likely motivating (Dörnyei, 2009, pp. 32-38). Vague self-images, accessed infrequently or contradicting other parts of self, will be ineffective in promoting sustained effort, and unlikely to provoke behavioural changes. Similarly, a self-image is not a goal, but an evolving cognitive representation; Markus and Nurius (1986) write that an impactful possible self is self-specific, built upon both i) what we have experienced, and ii) what we can imagine experiencing (p. 954), with phenomenological elements key to its efficacy (Dörnyei and Chan, 2013, p. 440). Many can abstractly imagine themselves becoming

an astronaut, but someone with an "astronaut possible self" would imagine sensory elements (i.e. the feel of a spacesuit on one's skin, movement in a zero-g environment) someone not possessing such an image would lack. Dörnyei believed it was better to consider an integrative orientation as a dimension of one's Ideal L2 self:

> Looking at 'integrativeness' from the self perspective, the concept can be conceived of as the L2-specific facet of one's ideal self. If our ideal self is associated with the mastery of an L2, that is, if the person that we would like to become is proficient in the L2, we can be described in Gardner's (1985) terminology as having an integrative disposition. – Dörnyei (2010, p. 78).

Therefore, relationships between L2 community and internal images of oneself as an L2 speaker can be redefined based on Dörnyei's reading. Viewing others who speak the L2 as a community a learner would like to become similar to, or to join (social-psychological, based on attitudes towards L2 speakers) is one way of analysing this relationship between self and social groups. Viewing L2 speakers as the closest external referents we might meet to our internal L2 self-image (Ushioda, 2011a, pp. 226-27) is another. From the latter perspective, an integrative disposition is also just one element of this future self, which can include non-linguistic elements (Lanvers, 2012, pp. 167-170).

2.2.1 Empirical support

The L2MSS has proved influential from inception, with initial empirical support, particularly for the Ideal L2 Self, reported in various studies (Ryan, 2009; Csizér and Lukács, 2010; Taguchi, Magid and Papi, 2009; Ueki and Takeuchi, 2013; Busse, 2013; Dörnyei and Chan, 2013), including in some heritage learning contexts (Xie, 2014; Olsen, 2018). An explosion of interest in self-based perspectives more generally may be due to a perceived methodological versatility (Boo, Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, p. 155). The L2MSS is arguably the presently-dominant lens through which LLM is conceived (Al-Hoorie, 2018, p. 722), and, despite shifts to questioning whether 'motivation' is a unitary, stable concept (see Dörnyei, 2019b, p. 51), remains central with a field of incredibly diverse perspectives (Lamb et al., 2019). Initial criticism that the model might not prove appropriate across cultures (see MacIntyre, MacKinnon and Clément, 2009, and below) was countered with evidence in Asian EFL contexts (Ryan, 2009, p. 131; Taguchi, Magid and Papi, 2009, p. 88), suggesting that although some differences are observable cross-culturally, the model provides some plausible means of explaining those differences (ibid, pp. 80-81). However, there is evidence that the relative strengths of L2 selves vary across learning contexts (for example, see Ueki and Takeuchi, 2013, p. 249). When correlated with criterion measures (typically intended effort) elements of the model (particularly the Ideal L2 Self) correlate strongly, suggesting a close link between self-described levels of motivation and the possession of an Ideal L2 self (Al-Hoorie, 2018, p.

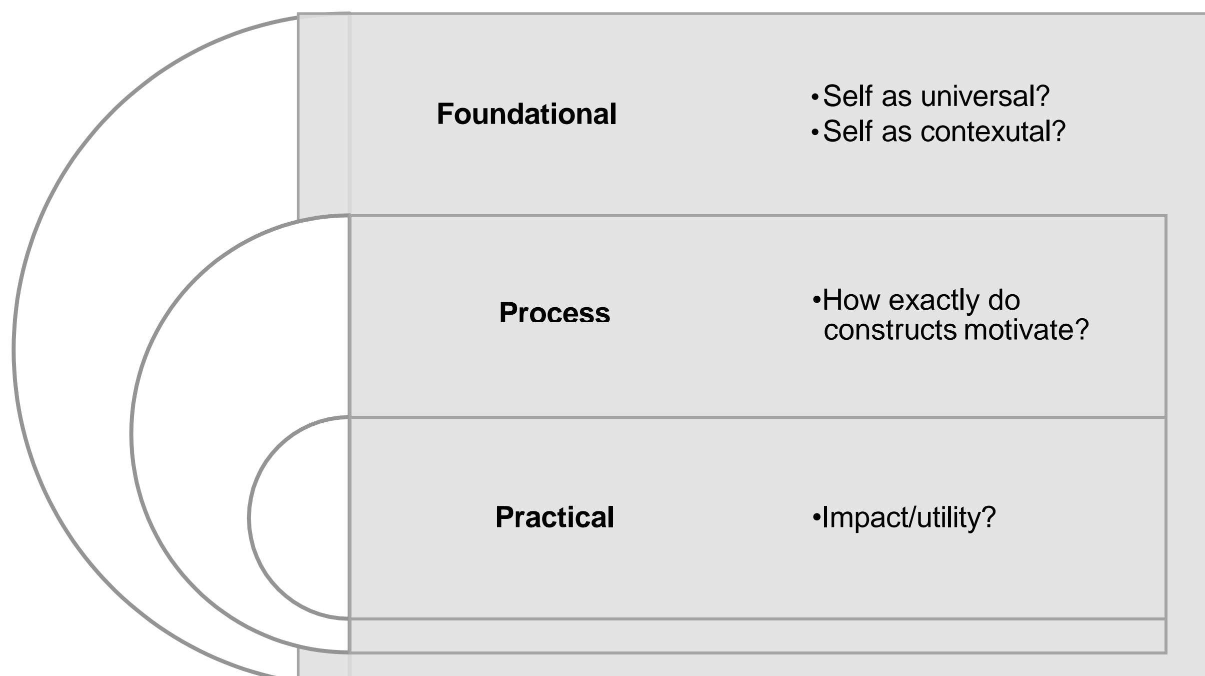
731). Additionally, the Ideal L2 self generally correlates strongly with the integrative orientation (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 81), suggesting it relates to similar affective structures.

This body of work has encompassed a variety of methods (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, p. 90), including in-depth qualitative and narrative approaches (e.g. Lamb, 2011; Hiver et al., 2019), less common using the socio-educational model, due to a largely quantitative logic of psychometric measurement (Ushioda, 2009, p. 215). The model suits longitudinal study, as "the self" lends itself to prolonged scrutiny, a topic heretofore under-researched (Ryan and Dörnyei, 2013; Dörnyei, 2019b, p. 61). The model also (theoretically) links LLM to a wider field of educational psychology, incorporating how L2 anxiety (Papi, 2010), emotions (Teimouri, 2017), vision (Dörnyei and Chan, 2013), and willingness-to-communicate (Yashima, 2009) interact with L2 selves, to develop a more holistic model of L2 learning. Although generating a large body of work, recent reviews have emphasised several outstanding questions regarding the L2MSS, and key issues both definitionally and practically are important to consider in assessing its impact.

2.2.2 Critical assessment

In this section, several issues regarding the L2MSS, and existing literature, are explored, as represented thematically in **Figure 7**:

Figure 7: Schematic - Issues regarding L2MSS



Issues include i) **how to define the self/selves**, to ii) **how L2 selves (in particular) can be understood relationally,** iii) **exploring the processes by which it motivates**, to iv) **practical impact**. This collation is non-exhaustive, but synthesises several questions researchers have raised in adopting the L2MSS as a framework.

2.2.2.1 Scoping the self

A foundational question considered by MacIntyre (2022), is that "the self" is, invariably, an unreliable narrator. As a lens through which we interpret the world, we cannot assume its accuracy/fidelity:

> …being rooted in one's own perspective, subject to layers upon layers of potentially biased interpretations, the self is more than a little prone to error…
>
> …An individual's autobiography is best viewed as a combination of fiction and nonfiction, part experiential image and part imagination. – p. 86.

This concern is also emphasised by Al-Hoorie (2016, 2019). We are, by definition, unaware of how unconscious elements shape the self, and Baumeister (2019) notes that self-deception is common, likely due to pursuit of social desirability (pp. 143-144). One means of addressing this foundational quandary is to *accept* it; as outlined by Murray (2009), what we represent and give meaning to reveals much about how we view ourselves, and the world (p. 59), biases and all. Whether a particular self-image is "true" is generally less relevant than whether we *believe* it to be true. There is evidence that how we experience life, and remember these experiences, differ, sometimes greatly (e.g., Kahneman and Riis, 2005), but within this subjectivity, exploration of self-understanding and meaning is important (Gregersen, 2019, p. 635). These concerns do however raise a caution: it is important aware of the fallible and interpretive nature of self-perception, and to refrain from viewing self-narrative through a naïvely-realist lens.

Beyond questioning its nature lies issues regarding whether "the self" is a human cross-cultural universal? In a stimulating popular history, Storr (2017), lists various social/historical perspectives, such as "the tribal self" (primordial humankind), "the perfectible self" (Hellenic philosophy), "the good self" (humanistic psychology), "the bad self" (Christian ontology), and "the digital self" (21st century sociology). Storr's interest is far from unique, and social psychologists have long debated whether cultural frames differ regarding the concept of the self, particularly "self" and "other". Markus and Kitayama (1991) distinguish self as *independent* (linking to Western understandings of a unique, self-defining being, p. 226) from *interdependent* (defined in relation to others, common in many non-Western cultures, ibid, p. 227). Although intentionally broad, this has been criticised as simplistic; Vignoles et al. (2016) argue cultural variation, even using an independent/interdependent distinction, could have

many internal dimensions, e.g., expression v. harmony, amongst others (p. 976). Noels (2009) argues that concepts such as "autonomy" and "agency", important in LLM, might also be culturally relative (p. 309). Cultural diversity is underrepresented within psychological research generally, often conducted using cross-sections of what Henrich, Heine and Norenzayan (2010) refer to (in study abstract), as "among the least-representative populations one could find for generalizing about humans", those 'Western, Educated, Industrial, Rich, Democratic' (WEIRD). The full implications lie beyond this study, but note is taken of this concern, to caution against overgeneralisations, and to reflect on the richness of subject matter.

Lastly, questions of self or *selves*, are meaningful, given arguments multilingual dynamics may lead us to speak of either i) multiple interacting L2 selves, and/or ii) a multilingual self, not reducible to sub-parts (Henry, 2017, p. 553) - how might these self-images interact? In a globalised, multilingual world, assumptions that a learner of a single native language is learning a second sequentially may be inadequate, as functional multilingualism is "constitutive of being human'" (Ushioda, 2017, p. 479).

2.2.2.2 Decontextualised L2 selves?

In addition to criticisms regarding fidelity and universality, it is argued that much L2MSS research does not adequately consider wider life, including "age, gender or context" (Al-Hoorie, 2018, p. 734). Existing research does not always recognise language learners as persons with "social relationships and lived experiences as well as individuality" (Ushioda, 2019a, p. 203). Yet adult non-formal language learners of differing life/learning contexts present distinct questions for the L2MSS (Lanvers, 2016, pp. 88-90). Such learners are unlikely to experience pressure to learn a target language, as younger learners might (Petit, 2016, p. 50). Age is also a factor in considering the role of possible selves, as adults typically possess a more fixed sense of self less malleable to change (Ryan and Dörnyei, 2013, p. 96). Models failing to account for the ways future selves change across life stages (as reported by Cross and Markus, 1991) fail to consider aging itself (Andringa and Godfroid, 2020, p. 138 discuss a broader neglect of adult learners within applied linguistics). Although social psychologists have "largely shied away from the task of saying what selves are" (Thagard, 2014, p. 146), the self represents a particular person, bound and (partially) shaped by personal/social context and history (Markus and Nurius, 1986); as such, our possible selves are also partially shaped by our social context (Oyserman, 2015, p. 3). Nakamura (2019) demonstrates that learners envision different domains of L2 self-image (such as career, leisure), and that an L2 self can be stronger in one domain than another (p. 119), illustrating how future selves change in context. Caruso and Fraschini (2021), using a Q Methodology approach, similarly demonstrate the future visions of tertiary students of Italian (in an

Australian context) vary, arguing for more personalised instructional approaches to do justice to this diversity (p. 564).

Within LLM, the substantial work of Ushioda (cited throughout this thesis) has led to greater appreciation of "context" (both internal (e.g. beliefs, interpretations, and memories), and external, (e.g. life and material constraints)) (e.g. Ushioda, 2015, p. 51) as critical. Clément and Norton (2021) argue against "a tendency…to represent learners in terms of their intrapsychic processes" (p.165), to the exclusion of the social/environmental, also recognised by Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie (2017), arguing the L2MSS may lean towards individualistic perspectives of psychology (p. 459). Al-Hoorie et al. (2021) suggests a shift to using "engagement", as a means of understanding "specific tasks, in certain environments, and under certain conditions" (p. 145), rather than emphasising self-interpretation.

2.2.2.3 Motivational mechanisms – how does a future L2 self motivate?

Hessel (2015) emphasises that possible selves are not innately motivating, absent qualitative elements (p. 104); a future L2 self could simultaneously be desired and rarely accessed (thought about frequently). These distinctions are at the core of self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987, pp. 315-318), which theorises that different self-discrepancies provoke different affective patterns. Though highlighted in framing the L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2009, pp. 32-38), these dimensions are rarely operationalised (Al-Hoorie, 2018, p. 736). Becoming an Irish speaker could be a vivid future self-image but considered implausible, due to insufficient contact with L2 speakers and/or beliefs regarding difficulty (facets of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977)). A lack of general, widely-used scales measuring these factors is compounded by the fact that scales reflecting both current and future L2 selves (allowing for comparison) are uncommon (Thorsen, Henry and Cliffordson, 2020, pp. 586-587). This absence of focus on relative discrepancy, how and why an L2 self becomes/remains motivating, is surprising - given the central motivational mechanism of the L2MSS is supposedly change in self-discrepancy (Lanvers, 2016, p. 80). Ryan and Irie (2014) describe a tension; a language instructor must both i) promote self-belief, and ii) encourage realism (p. 122). Dörnyei and Ushioda (2021, pp. 62-63) write of various means through which a future self might influence in practice, including:

- Generating process imagery (i.e. the phenomenological "doing" self, citing Knäuper et al., 2009)
- Mental contrasting, where obstacles and desired outcomes are compared (citing Oettingen and Sevincer, 2018)
- Emotional salience, where positive emotionality is primed to promote action (citing MacIntyre, Ross, and Clément, 2019)

A useful distinction articulated by Oyserman et al. (2004) is between **self-enhancing** (provoking positive esteem) and **self-regulating** (provoking behavioural change) possible selves. In many instances, self-enhancement is an overriding motivational goal, but may not contain the self-regulating content to encourage behavioural change (see Henry, 2021, p. 237).

Although these theories provide some basis for further research, how an L2 self actually motivates remains *terra incognita*. For example, whether discrepancy reduction due to an increase in one's actual/current L2 self, meeting an ideal, is equivalent to a reduction in future L2 self, lowering expectations (as described in Thorsen, Henry, and Cliffordson, 2020) would appear meaningful. Intuitively, the former seems preferable, reflecting satiated achievement, rather than reduced expectations, but the absence of relational research on this question makes generalisation difficult, and is an issue confronted in this research.

2.2.2.4 Impact and effect – flattering to deceive?

Several meta-reviews of the L2MSS have been published, using both qualitative content analysis, and quantitative meta-analytic approaches. Al-Hoorie (2018) examined 30 quantitative studies assessing the relative impact of the L2MSS and reported mixed results. Although the Ideal L2 self correlated strongly with intended effort (r = .61), it was less correlated with achievement, where operationalised (r = .20) (p. 731). The effects of the Ought-to L2 self were weaker upon both effort (r = .38), and negative (though non-significant) with L2 achievement (ibid). The L2 learning experience, where measured, was slightly more correlated with intended effort (r = .66), and as correlated with L2 achievement (r = .17) (ibid) as the Ideal L2 self. Moskovsky et al. (2016) is an instructive study that found a *negative* relationship between L2 achievement and an Ideal L2 self in their Saudi EFL context (though scales were predictive of subjective effort). The authors discussed several possible theories, such as the social context, and inadequacy of a self-assessed Ideal L2 self, absent operationalisation in behaviour (pp. 650-652).

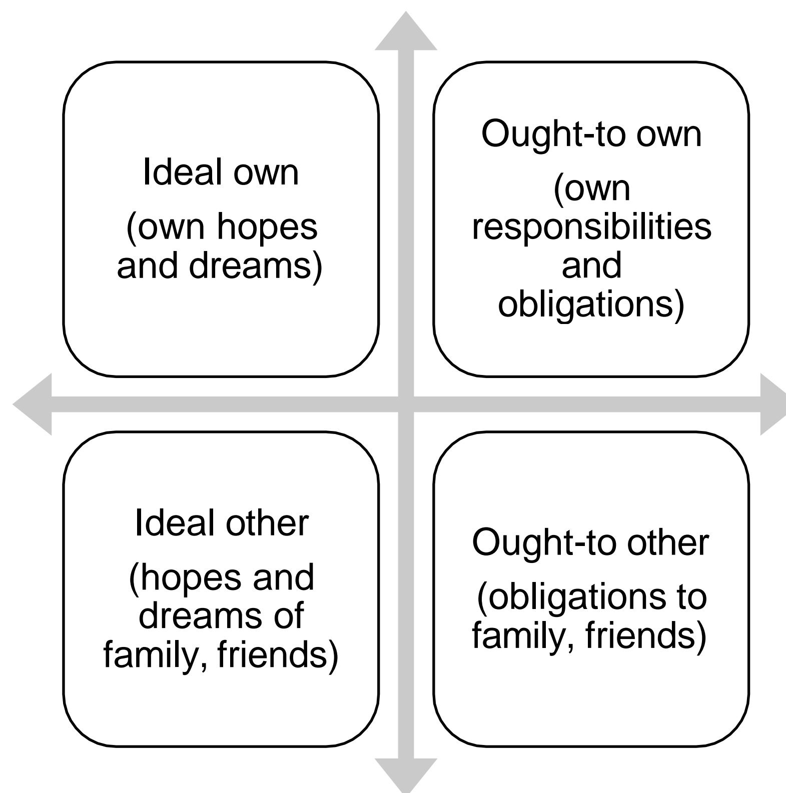
These studies raise an important question. What, if anything, can motivational constructs measured quantitatively be expected to predict? In a recent replication study, Hiver and Al-Hoorie (2020) found scales used in an influential study overlapped (pp. 78-79), arguing that intended effort is as likely an antecedent of an L2 self as a variable that it explains. Model measurement suggested that was the case in their replication, leading the authors to argue for more psychometrically valid studies, which more carefully distinguish constructs (p. 83). Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013) caution against conflating L2 achievement (typically the fruit of many sources) with motivation, as motivation relates to "action, rather than achievement" (p. 201). What exactly is the appropriate proxy against which to measure a psychological concept,

and how might such correlations be of practical use? These questions are analysed extensively in the following chapter, considering the methodology and study design adopted.

2.2.3 Revising the L2MSS – From outside in, to inside out

Lanvers (2016), Teimouri (2017) and Papi et al. (2019) have argued that the L2MSS may fail to fully incorporate L2 stances, an additional element of self-discrepancy theory (see Higgins, 1998). Dörnyei's (2009) model suggests that the Ideal L2 self links to an internalised promotion (maximisation of gains) focus, and the Ought-to L2 self to an externalised prevention (minimisation of losses) focus (p. 18). These need not be the sole examples: it is possible to imagine internalised obligation, an "Ought-to Own", and externalised promotion, an "Ideal Other", both described in Higgins' initial work (Higgins, 1987, pp. 322-23). Dörnyei and Ushioda raised this question in introducing the model (2009, p. 352), albeit without clear resolution. Most research conducted using the L2MSS utilises a dualistic "Ideal/Own" and "Ought/Other" divide, without considering interaction with stances. If standpoints are incorporated, a "2x2" model of the L2MSS becomes relevant:

Figure 8: A four-guide L2MSS (adopted from Papi et al., 2019)



This dynamic has appeal, linking to self-determination theory (see Noels, 2009, p. 297 for a discussion on categorising motivation by internal/external dimension). One question is how to separate the two (raised by Al-Hoorie, 2018, p. 738)? Future L2 guides arguably form "context for the now self" (Markus and Nurius, 1987, p. 962), with self-determination the process

through which internalisation occurs. The distinction is temporal; possible selves are future-oriented (vis-à-vis an "actual" or "Current L2 Self"), while self-determination concerns what is integrated/not integrated at present (Sugita McEown, Noels and Chaffee, 2014, p. 26).

Several studies provide preliminary evidence for this revision. Using a sample of English L2 learners in the United States, Papi and colleagues report each guide correlated significantly with intended effort (Ought-to Own most strongly) (Papi et al., 2019, p. 350), in keeping with the hypothesis that all guides are potentially motivating, depending on context. Teimouri (2017), studying Iranian EFL learners, found that although Ought-to L2 selves (Own and Other) could be distinguished by stance, Ideal L2 selves could not, implying "both social and personal aspects of learners' ideal L2 self are highly internalized and so desirable that they do not lend themselves to separation" (p. 700). Tseng, Cheng and Gao (2020), in contrast, validated the four-guide model, arguing it could allow for measurement of a broader range of self-based relations (p.15). Feng and Papi (2020) found similar in a study measuring multiple criterion variables, while Takahashi and Im (2020), in an innovative comparison, assessed both a four-guide L2MSS and constructs from self-determination theory (e.g. Intrinsic motivation); they found the Ought-to L2 Own and Other scales to link to different externalised orientations, providing further evidence for this contrast (p. 685). Perhaps the most ambitious quantitative study to date is Papi and Khajavy (2021), who linked L2 guides to emotions, regulatory focus, and outcomes among a sample of Iranian ELT students. This study contained certain unusual findings, such as that both Other-phrased guides predicted L2 Anxiety, while the Ought-to Own did not (p. 558). These collective findings are contrasted with quantitative findings here in the study conclusion, but it is clear that although this literature is promising, it remains preliminary, and wider gaps within L2MSS literature persist.

2.2.4 Interim Summary – The gaps in the guides

To summarise, this portion synthesises and provides evidence regarding practical issues relating to the L2MSS, using five recent analyses of the theory to demonstrate these issues. N=3 are meta-analyses or qualitative content analyses, comparing empirical studies, and n=2 are theory-based reviews, in which researchers highlight and identify specific areas requiring greater research. The studies and chapters are:

Table 2: Summary of meta-analyses and reviews regarding L2MSS

Study	Title	Type of article
Mendoza and Phung (2019)	*"Motivation to learn languages other than English: A critical research synthesis."*	Empirical review (**n= 30**) – qualitative content analysis of L2MSS studies of LOTEs.
Al-Hoorie (2018)	"*The L2 Motivational Self-system: a meta-analysis."*	Empirical review (**n= 39** unique samples) – quantitative meta-analysis of L2MSS.
Mahmoodi and Yousefi (2021)	*"Second language motivation research 2010-2019: a synthetic exploration."*	Empirical review[5] (**n= 100**) – qualitative content analysis of LLM studies.
Csizér (2019)	*"The L2 Motivational Self System."*	Theory-based review – book chapter summary of L2MSS.
Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie (2017)	"*The Motivational Foundation of Learning Languages Other than Global English: Theoretical Issues and Research Directions."*	Theory-based review – journal article focused on reviewing L2MSS in LOTE context.

2.2.4.1 Monolingual bias?

Reviews demonstrate English is the overwhelming language of focus in L2MSS research, with LOTEs under-considered. Indeed, the rationale of Mendoza and Phung's (2019) study was this paucity. Within an even narrower focus, just three studies "described the learning of regional, immigrant, or indigenous languages" (p. 135). Al-Hoorie (2018) also discusses this gap, particularly the difficulty of including non-ELT samples in meta-analysis (just n=3 studies were non-ELT (p. 731), arguing that it "risks deriving an incomplete theory of language learning motivation" (p. 735). Csizér (2019) draws attention to this absence also (p. 85), while Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie (2017) raise a theory-based argument, suggesting that although the L2MSS is generally valid, "...there are some more subtle aspects of the construct that do not do full justice to the understanding of the motivation underlying learning LOTEs…" (p.464), and that

[5] This study analyses wider LLM, with n=39 studies adopting the L2MSS (p. 9).

the model is “not sensitive to this aspect” (ibid, p. 465), namely, exploring L2 communities with which an L2 might be associated.

2.2.4.2 Adult learners

Several reviews note not merely L2 of focus, but also sampling, as unrepresentative. A striking finding in Mahmoodi and Yousefi (2021) was that n=66 (of 100) studies were conducted amongst samples from formal university contexts (small minorities being in either secondary, or elementary, level contexts (p. 283)). The authors did not include “adult learners” as a category. Al-Hoorie (2018) notes that younger learners are underrepresented, emphasising that “What motivates a 7-year-old might not motivate a 17-year-old” (p. 734), but what motivates a 37 or 57-year old might equally differ. Mendoza and Phung (2019) report that just n=6 (15.3%) of the n=30 studies reviewed were of adult learners, including, interestingly, two studies - (MacIntyre, Moore and Sparling, 2017), explored below, and Hamilton and Serrano (2015)) - of indigenous/minority languages.

2.2.4.3 Technologically-enhanced language learning

An absence of studies reporting on the impact of technologies language learners use, particularly in non-formal learning contexts, is examined more closely in **Section 2.5.** Mendoza and Phung (2019) report that “not 1 of the 30 studies examined the L2 Learning Experience in terms of online communities...” (p. 135), and Mahmoodi and Yousefi (2021) identified “Technology and Motivation” as a trend for further research, “to further explore the motivational potentials of digital technologies and…. interaction with these technologies” (p. 287). Although Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie (2017) focus on L2 differences, they do not explore technology as expanding access to differing L2s; nor does Csizér (2019) or Al-Hoorie (2018).

2.2.4.4 Standardising reporting practices

An issue plaguing comparative study is insufficient data for comparison. Mahmoodi and Yousefi (2021) note this point, and in particular, limited reporting on effect sizes, “…of critical importance, facilitating the interpretation of research findings” (p. 285). Absent standardised practices, it is difficult to directly compare studies, and contextualise findings. This concern is shared by Al-Hoorie (2018), highlighting tendencies to avoid using factor analysis to validate quantitative scales can lead to scale overlap (p. 733), impacting replicability.

2.2.4.5 Limited outcome variables

Al-Hoorie (2018) focuses extensively on what is characterised as excessive emphasis on self-reported intended effort, and limited consideration of more diverse, behaviour-based variables. There are contexts where it is difficult to attain “objective” measures of L2 proficiency (e.g. grades), but “...even subjective self-ratings of proficiency can hardly be found in the literature” (p. 730), which suggests a clear gap. Csizér (2019), citing this article, agrees,

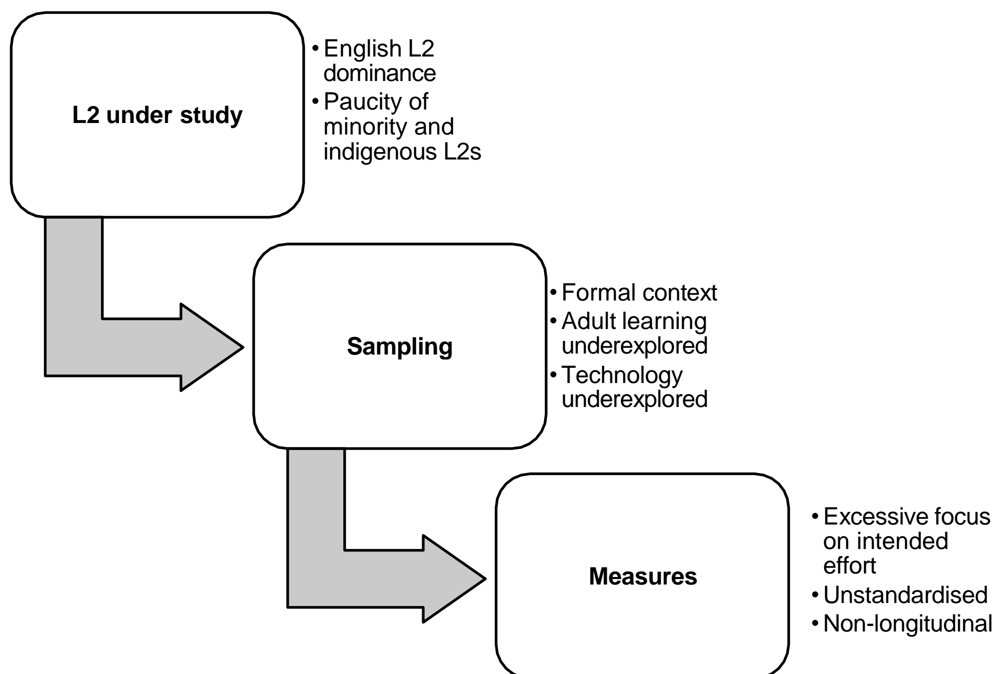
noting, “the peculiar position of the L2 learning experience” (p. 85), which, absent more diverse study, “…does not do justice to the diversity of educational contexts around the world” (ibid). Mahmoodi and Yousefi (2021) argue that although diversity of study is welcome, should be expanded to include other elements, including, but not limited to, “sexuality, gender, class, poverty, inequality, race, and other sociopolitical orientations” (p. 284).

The term “outcome variable” is, of course, unsuitable when considering interpretive research, theorising motivation as bidirectional/complex. Csizér (2019) therefore also calls for more qualitative inquiry “…to see how individual students’ motivation shapes their particular learning processes” (p.87). Mendoza and Phung (2019) also argue that qualitative studies should collect data which is longitudinal, and ethnographic (triangulating perspectives) (p. 134).

2.2.4.6 Summary

The reviews analysed pointed to common issues regarding the L2MSS. Thematically, these relate to three broad elements: i) the L2 under study, ii) sampling, and iii) the measures by which efficacy of the L2MSS is assessed or interpreted.

Figure 9: Summary of gaps in L2MSS literature



Although a consistent finding is methodological diversity, an overwhelming ELT focus has not improved since Boo, Dörnyei and Ryan’s (2015) earlier meta-analysis of LLM. Within a non-ELT context, most studies assess global languages, and little work has considered minority, heritage, and indigenous contexts. Regarding sampling, study focus tends to be narrow, with convenience-based university samples dominant. While more mature adult learners are not necessarily different from younger learners in affective senses, this absence of comparison is

a weakness, as one can hypothesise ways they *might* differ (see **section 2.2.2.2**). Relatedly, there is a parallel absence of study in digital learning contexts, noted in two studies, and explored in other studies analysed below (Henry and Lamb, 2019).

Issues regarding measurement, including overemphasis on intended effort, and general reliance on non-longitudinal data, are informative, and were influential when the methodology appropriate to the research questions of the study was designed. The preceding two broad themes, L2 under study, and samples, have foundational implications, foreshadowing the two following sections of literature review, focusing on minority/heritage languages within LLM (section 2.4) and a brief review of literature examining adult non-formal language learners (section 2.5), to understand more closely the immediate context of the LMOOC. Prior to this analysis, a brief note is made of how the theory adopted in this thesis relates to the wider field of LLM.

2.3 Other theories of LLM and relational conceptualisation

2.3.1 Social-psychological

Though this study focuses on the L2MSS (and to a lesser extent, the SEM), these theories exist in a wider context, within a field containing much diversity of thought and perspective. MacIntyre, Moore and Noels (2010) argue LLM is diverse, with some perspectives complimentary, and some contradicting (p. 2). Broad schools can be observed, such as the social-psychological (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, p. 76), emphasising how attitudes towards groups or speakers shape the motivations of those learning an L2. Beyond Gardner's (1985) SEM, examples include Schumann's Acculturation model (1978), Clément's situated identity theory (Clément and Noels, 1992), and Giles and Byrne's (1982) model of intergroup contact. Each emphasises social dimensions of L2 learning and the role of attitudes towards speech communities. This focus has influenced much work on minority language motivation research (including Irish L2 studies such as Harris and Murtagh, 1999; Flynn, 2020), and remains important.

2.3.2 L2 Investment

From a post-structuralist perspective, as highlighted above, Norton's concept of *investment* (Norton Peirce, 1995) conceptualises human behaviour beyond a psychological focus, as embedded in material and social practices (Norton, 2012, p. 3). This literature raises important questions regarding power and positionality in language learning; language learners may face marginalisation and discrimination (racism, sexism, and homophobia, amongst others), limiting the degree to which a learner feels invested in particular learning practices/contexts (Darvin and Norton, 2015, p. 37). Further, native speakers can be reified or granted great representational power by learners (Pavlenko, 2003, p. 257). This issue is well-studied in an

Irish L2 context, where learners often both aspire to particular target varieties (demonstrated by Flynn, 2020), and have strong, if shifting, opinions regarding preferred L2 uses (see Ó Murchadha and Kavanagh, 2021).

2.3.3 Language learner autonomy

Language learner autonomy (see Little, 2007; Ushioda, 2011a) conceptualises agency within a broader humanistic domain, that a learner will be more motivated if an activity fulfils their basic desires to self-direct (aspects shared with Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory). Language learner autonomy is complex and often ambiguously defined, containing moral, political, and psychological facets (Benson, 2007, p. 24, reflecting upon Benson, 1997). Lamb (2007, cited in Ushioda, 2011a, p. 223) argues that there are two broad ways to conceptualise learner autonomy, as i) self-direction and management of learning, and/or ii) the experience of one's behaviour as self-determined. While the former definition is more literal, the latter reflects fulfilment of fundamental needs to exercise agency (Ushioda, 2022 , pp. 12-13). This ambiguous terminology can lead to myth-making that autonomy relates to, as examples, instructor-independent learning, or particular forms/sets of desirable behaviours (see Carson, 2010, pp. 77-79). In reality, appearing to be "autonomous" behaviourally, and *feeling* a sense of autonomy, are distinct, if related, things. Autonomy may be critical to possible selves; future identities are entwined in questions of self-belief and efficacy. Lamb's (2011) qualitative study, for example, contrasted four Indonesian learners of English. Those considered motivated aligned their learning with desired possible identities, while those less motivated believed they had limited agency (p. 190). This focus on agency is included in work conceptualising possible selves (Erikson, 2007), making this literature an important focus of study.

2.3.4 Reviewing the record

Several articles/chapters present a wider history of LLM, such as Dörnyei and Ushioda's (2021, p. 39-57) sketching of its evolution: from an initial social-psychological focus, through a cognitive phase (when theories from educational psychology were gradually adopted), followed by contextual study (process-oriented) to the current dynamic/complexity-focused period (raising challenges, see Dörnyei, 2020, pp. 41). While this developmental history holds some truth, certain points are worthy of debate. Firstly, it is perhaps not accurate to describe wholesale shifts, as many phases do not contradict one other (MacIntyre, Noels and Moore, 2010) but speak of differing emphases. Concerning integrativeness, Dörnyei (2010, pp. 78-79) has argued the L2MSS to be a redefinition, rather than a revolution. Claro (2019) reasons persuasively that the Ideal L2 Self and Gardner's Integrative orientation are distinct concepts; one's own idealised representation of oneself (Ideal L2 self), and the way one perceives social others (external referents, representing an integrative target group), often in dynamic relation

to internal images. Claro notes that these "others" may be living persons, but also imagined persons and communities (p. 249). Though different *types* of study are associated with a social-psychological lens, this conceptual shift is arguably not a radical departure. Furthermore, the typical method through which self-based perspectives is operationalised - cross-sectional measurement - is largely the same as earlier social-psychological research. Thus, this shift has been assessed as replacing one form of questionnaire measurement with another, without adequately taking advantage of a broader palette of self-based perspectives available (Irie and Brewster, 2013, p. 112). This continuity may not be entirely positive, given Ushioda's note (2012, cited in Petit, 2016, p. 43):

> ...possible selves imply individual subjective experience and perception, and the extent to which this individuality can be meaningfully captured through a quantitative measurement instrument that pre-defines respondent options seems questionable. - (p. 68)

Though LLM has seen an expansion in methods utilised (including growth in qualitative and mixed-methods research (Boo, Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, p. 153)), this has only recently coloured wider theorising, conceptualising possible selves in dynamic, situated and interpretive senses, as suggested by Ushioda above. Alternative perspectives include viewing motivation as a culturally situated or shaped activity (e.g. Kim, 2005), for example, appear relatively uncommon in the field of LLM.

This thesis adopts an holistic approach, in keeping with MacIntyre, Noels and Moore (2010) warning that the search for a single theory refutes an important principle, "the possibility of dialogue and discovery of how one perspective may inform the other" (p. 3). A principle called for in considering this literature, is to ask how such theories relate and how their conceptualisations of LLM can best be used in practice.

2.4 Minority and heritage language learning within LLM

A consistent finding highlighted above is inadequate representation of indigenous, heritage and diasporic languages within relevant (LLM) literatures. Minority language learners and speakers are under-explored within applied linguistics, and the study of minority languages is "underfunded and often an afterthought'" (Leeman and King, 2015, p. 211, cited in Al-Hoorie, 2017, p.6). This is unfortunate, as the vast majority of extant languages are in effect minority languages, a trend likely to intensify (Romaine, 2006). Many affective features of interest to applied linguists (e.g., the negotiation of multiple languages, their manifestation in self/identity), are relevant in minority language contexts (Noels and Clément, 2015). Intergenerational transmission and perceived linguistic vitality (Harwood, Giles and Bourhis, 1994) are also pertinent for minority language speakers. The affective and psychological profiles of those who speak minority languages, including complex patterns of identification (Walsh, 2017; Miller and Kubota, 2013) and desires to revive or preserve a language (Duff, Liu and Li, 2017) may be unusual to those who learn English or another world language as an L2.

Though underexplored, these concerns are not entirely unconsidered, and several studies referenced above argue for the inclusion of more diverse L2s within motivational research (Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie, 2017; Mendoza and Phung, 2019; Csizér, 2019). Sociolinguistic research has also explored the process of becoming a "new speaker" of (generally European) minority languages, including Irish (O'Rourke and Walsh, 2015a; Walsh and O'Rourke, 2014; Seoighe, 2018). Social norms, legitimacy, patterns of engagement with the language, and opportunities to use Irish in different social contexts are all pertinent within this research project. This literature has not been tied to the psychology of language learning, however, nor has it tended to focus on the actual educational practices of these learners.

2.4.1 Defining the "heritage language learner"

An initial, highly political concept, critical to understanding minority and indigenous languages, given the sociocultural status of the Irish language, is heritage language learning (HLL). As discussed in this study's introduction, millions around the globe possess potential affective ties to Irish, often many generations removed from L1 speakers (Ó Conchubhair, 2008, pp. 237-8). A foundational question is who precisely can be considered a heritage language learner? Definitions of the term vary, from personally meaningful or family-based connections (as per Fishman, 2001), which would fit many Irish L2 diasporic learners, to those "concerned about the study, maintenance and revitalization of their minority languages" (Valdés, 2005, p. 411), which (implicitly) assumes some form of community membership. This cleft regarding L2 contact is referred to by Polinsky and Kagan (2007) as between "broad" and "narrow" (p. 369) conceptions of heritage. Van Deusen-Scholl (2003) similarly distinguishes **heritage**

learners (where family members may speak the L2) from **heritage motivations**, desired connections with ancestral languages more distant (p. 222).

Some, such as Baker and Jones (1998), view the term "heritage learner" as archaic, that problematically evokes the past, rather than modern, living tongues (p. 503). Lee (2005), presenting a four-factor taxonomy exploring variation, argues that differences will be found within any label categorising such learners (pp. 562-563). Miller and Kubota (2013, p. 237) echo this point, while Leeman (2015, describing Hornburger and Wang, 2008) adds that said terms are not always used by respondents to describe themselves:

> …debates about whether the definition of heritage language learner should be based on linguistic proficiency, familial ties, or ancestry fail to consider how learners see themselves or their relationship with the language in question. – (p.104)

Regardless of definition, as Kagan (2005) notes, pedagogically speaking, HL learners "…cannot be viewed as either native speakers of the target language or as foreign language learners…" (p. 213). This limbo existence, being neither native nor foreign, might also be true regarding affective dimensions of L2 learning (e.g. emotional connection and identity). Relationships of heritage learners to heritage languages are invariably personal, encompassing family, self-interpretation, and/or abstract social identity (Lynch, 2003 highlights that many such social factors are relevant). Defining the relationship of those with distant heritage attempting to learn the language is difficult (Duff, 2017, p. 601), varying between languages, contexts, and individuals.

2.4.2 Research regarding HLL motivation

Some work, primarily conducted by Noels and colleagues (e.g. Noels, 2005; Comanaru and Noels, 2009), has explored heritage motivations using existing approaches in LLM, in addition to some more contextually-relevant explorations of Irish L2 learners assessed below. This research generally focuses on heritage learners of specific L2s - such as Chinese, or Spanish - and rarely considers either a) languages with smaller numbers of speakers, and/or b) learners of more distant heritage. Many minority languages differ substantially in their processes of loss and reclamation (Duff, 2017) less relevant where the L2 is a global, vibrant language. Noels (2009), reporting on a preliminary (self-determination theory-based) study comparing heritage and non-heritage learners, wrote:

> ...we need to be more attentive to the student's network of interpersonal contacts, the relative status of ethnolinguistic groups under consideration, the opportunities for direct contact with the language community, the heritage background of the learner, among other dimensions. - (p. 299).

This is relevant where linguistic vitality and limited opportunities for L2 contact mediate motivation. Noels' qualitative findings reported differences in learner orientation according to social background (ibid, p. 301). Heritage learners displayed high levels of integrated

regulation, the extrinsic orientation most deeply "assimilated into the self" (Deci and Ryan, 2000, p. 73). Though extrinsic (i.e. not performed for its own sake), integrated regulation describes responsibilities/obligations that heritage learners may feel when learning an ancestral language. Banegas and Roberts (2022) report similar findings regarding heritage learners of Welsh in Argentina, who described social and personal responsibilities not reducible to, though supported-by, family relations (pp. 1146-1147). This does not map well onto the L2MSS as currently conceived, implying desires to protect a wider culture one feels responsibility for.

A study focusing on distant HLL is Noels' (2005) quantitative study of L2 German learners in Canada. The sample (n=99) contained both heritage and non-heritage learners (university students). Results highlighted three broad factors: i) self-determined motivation, ii) inter-group contact, and iii) more general orientations to learn German, respectively (p. 300). Although learners were of low proficiency, there was evidence that "issues pertaining to intergroup relations and social identity are salient"' (ibid, p. 304), suggesting distant heritage learners may indeed prove qualitatively distinct in an affective sense. It is here that elements of an "imagined community" (Kanno and Norton, 2003) and of belonging may become important with learners viewing themselves as connecting with/connected to others across space and time.

2.4.2.1 The L2MSS in a HLL context

Differences have been observed across a handful of studies employing the L2MSS in HLL contexts. Xie's (2014) aforementioned comparison of Chinese heritage/non-heritage learners in Canada (n= 208) reported that distinctions between these groups related primarily to integrativeness. Though the Ideal L2 self predicted motivated behaviour among both samples, the Integrative scale was only predictive for heritage learners, suggesting that a blended social/cultural form of motivation mediated an L2 self (p. 194) and supports heritage L2 learning as wider cultural belonging. Olsen (2018), in a comparative study of learners of *te reo Māori* and foreign languages, reported similar, arguing that there is "a need for a deeper understanding of… the languages that learners learn, learners' relationships to those languages, and perhaps also the social or vital status of those languages" (p. 298).

A final study highlighted is MacIntyre, Moore and Sparling's (2017) qualitative study of (n=12) Scots Gaelic learners in Nova Scotia. The authors introduced a novel concept, the "Rooted L2 Self", synthesising complex forms of identification and responsibility found amongst heritage learners. The construct blends integrativeness, given the presence of an L2 community respondents hope to preserve, with the L2MSS; namely, the type of L2 self learners generate, spanning connections with the past and future. The concept also incorporates Ushioda's (2009) "Person-in-Context" relational conception of motivation, in that

elements of song, dance and culture provide learners a “rootedness” in a particular place (MacIntyre, Moore and Sparling, 2017, p. 512). This raises many of the themes considered within this review; a question raised by Duff (2017), weighing the concept’s utility in other types of HLL contexts, is where learners may not be rooted, but rather “…may feel quite uprooted, unrooted, or thoroughly transplanted” (p. 601).

In an Irish diasporic context, Rains (2003) notes that the word “root” itself implies an essentialised notion (a “tree” from whence they sprang, see pp. 23-26) which need not reflect the heterogenous and ambiguous elements present amongst Irish heritage persons around the world. A question these contexts raise is how those persons feel; are they “rooted” or “re-rooting”? This question may prove complex, dependent on the nature of heritage and perceptions of belonging and identity in relation to it.

2.4.3 LLM in an Irish L2 context

2.4.3.1 Primary-level studies – Ireland

Researchers have examined the motivations of Irish L2 learners across varying contexts, including at school-level in Ireland, and in studies of adult Irish learners, both in Ireland and abroad. Examples of the former include the influential “20-school-study” (Harris and Murtagh, 1999), where authors surveyed a representative sample of primary-level students, parents, and teachers regarding their attitudes towards the language. Responses were largely positive, albeit with evidence that learners questioned the utilitarian value of Irish (often preferring foreign languages, pp. 73-74). The report queried how L2 learners in non-*Gaeltacht* regions might be expected to immerse themselves in Irish L2 culture, given limited opportunities to do so, using “…Irish culture and authentic materials in a way that was intended to be enjoyable for pupils and relevant to their own lives” (p. 93).

The use of cultural artefacts to motivate learners highlights the unusual relationship many Irish schoolchildren have with Irish (L2), a national language often unfamiliar to persons learning it, and not accessible through L2 speakers outside particular contexts. This dual relationship, - alien and familiar - speaks to the difficulty of using frameworks based on attitudes towards speakers, either real or imagined, with whom learners may wish to integrate. Though Irish is quite visible/audible in Ireland (see Carson, 2016), it is a language to which students may have relatively little socially meaningful exposure. Some evidence suggests that immersive education and positive exposure, in particular, are highly-conducive to allowing students to not only envision L2 use, but to use the language socially, to promote “...maintenance and use of Irish after they leave school” (Murtagh, 2007, p. 450).

2.4.3.2 Adult studies – non-Irish context

Additional studies have explored the motivations of adult learners, more directly relevant here. In an exploratory qualitative study of adult Irish L2 learners in Canada (n=13), Giles (2016) reported heritage and ethnicity were influences on those learning the language, and many qualities and meanings were associated with Irish by learners (p. 141). Four further studies conducted abroad warrant note: Lore and Beaton (2000), studying Irish (amongst a dozen other L2) learners at Goldsmith University in London, and Nic Craith and Leyland (1997), who studied Irish learners in the North-West of England. Both studies were small, but found common dimensions, namely that identity and heritage were implicated in those learning the language abroad. Walsh and Ní Dhúda (2015) interviewed n=13 proficient Irish speakers in the United States and reported similar. They observed not merely extrinsic elements, such as a desire to preserve Irish culture, but also "deeper and more powerful intrinsic motivation" linked to "personal commitment and dedication..." (p. 191). Vaughan (2016) noted questions of authenticity and desired belonging, with the language often viewed as a birth right, self-expression, and a cultural reclamation amongst heritage learners (pp. 63-64).

2.4.3.3 Adult studies – Irish context

In an Irish context, Wright and McGrory (2005) studied the motivations of adults learning Irish (n=104) in Belfast, finding cultural motivations, heritage and personal identity to be relevant (possibly relating to the Northern Irish context). Two further Ireland-based studies deserve extended scrutiny. Petit (2016), in a masters-level study of learners (n = 45) recruited through a *Cumann Gaelach* (Irish-language society), provided (to our knowledge) the first measure of the L2MSS sampling Irish L2 learners. The Ideal L2 self correlated very strongly (r = .75**) with criterion variables, and the Ought-to L2 self was much weaker (r = .34**) (ibid, p. 49). Petit suggested that intrinsic forms of motivation were far stronger than extrinsic, socially-mediated forms (ibid, p.50). Extended interviews conducted with n=6 participants revealed several common trends in *mudes* (Pujolar and Puigdeval, 2015, pp. 171-72), or moments, when becoming an Irish speaker appeared possible to respondents, like trips to *Coláistí Samhraidh* (summer colleges) in Irish-speaking areas, which prompted learners to envision themselves becoming Irish speakers (Petit, 2016, p. 52).

The second study is a qualitative interview analysis with n=16 adult learners at a central Dublin learning centre, by Flynn and Harris (2016). The authors reported diverse orientations, and questioned whether the traditional constructs used to describe and define LLM are adequate in the case of Irish, given many of the factors considered in this review, such as community contact and social identity ambiguity. They suggested five (non-exclusive) classifications of learner (pp. 380-382):

- Integrative-oriented,
- Instrumentally-motivated,
- Intrinsically-motivated,
- Extrinsically-motivated,
- Socioculturally motivated.

The first four link to concepts already analysed, but the fifth is an enigma, as "Adult learners of this type may desire to (re-)connect with aspects of their culture and/or heritage through the learning of Irish which may act as a powerful motivating force" (Flynn and Harris, 2016, p. 381). Assessing these motivations, neglected within wider LLM, and particularly how they may link with personal (rather than social, the primary focus of the socio-educational model) forms of identity (Oyserman, 2015, p. 4) is a defining question of this thesis. In agreement with Flynn and Harris (2016), the L2MSS presents interesting and pertinent ways to measure and appraise these motivations at different points of the learning process.

2.4.4.4 Published books

Two timely publications on the topic of adult Irish language motivation and L2 use are also noted and analysed. Flynn (2020), elaborating upon his innovative doctoral findings, analysed attitudes towards target varieties amongst adult Irish L2 learners in Ireland. Walsh and O'Rourke's (2020) sociolinguistic study concentrated on *new speakers* who have achieved high levels of L2 proficiency in Irish. Flynn (2020) demonstrates that target L2 variety is important in understanding longer-term speech targets amongst L2 learners, sometimes provoking:

> ...a struggle between elements of learner's ideal and ought-to selves….many learners do, in fact, value highly the native speaker and the language varieties associated with the regions where most native speakers live. However, learners are realistic about what they can achieve in their language learning pursuits. - (p. 197).

Although the Ideal L2 self that learners aspire to might look/sound like a particular type of speaker, conflicts can arise in whether the learner feels that their L2 speech variety can plausibly match idealised targets. From a sociolinguistic perspective, Walsh and O'Rourke (2020) agree that "…linguistic insecurities are often involved in this process [note: acquiring Irish], linked to deeply-rooted beliefs around what the 'correct' way of speaking is and who can be considered a legitimate speaker" (pp. 17-18). Both works highlight that motivation to learn Irish is embedded in wider psychological and sociological concepts of how L2 learner self-perception, and what they seek to achieve. Few studies examine how self-image is mediated by both personal and social L2 ownership (see Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie, 2017, p. 465), and further elaboration is required, focusing on elements of identity, self-concept and broader L2 selves, to reflect the diversity of adult Irish L2 learners globally.

2.5 Adult non-formal language learning motivation

The final element considered are pertinent psychological elements regarding the adult non-formal language learner. An underexplored area within LLM is where learning occurs in non-formal contexts (Chik, 2020, p. 17), with valid questions to be asked regarding how to define sometimes confusing terms such as “non-formal” or “informal” learning. Livingstone (2001) writes that the simplest definition of informal learning is that which occurs “without the presence of externally imposed curricular criteria” (p.4). Schugurensky and Myers (2003) critique the limited focus a related concept, “lifelong learning” receives, given that:

> …the concept of lifelong learning calls the attention of researchers to a reality that is often unrecognized by our tendency to identify learning with schools, formal curricula and diplomas: we learn from cradle to grave in multiple spaces, both inside and outside educational institutions. - (p. 330).

Separating **informal** from **non-formal learning** is a particular challenge, and an issue on which there is limited consensus (see Council of Europe, No date, and OECD, 2007). The distinction may be one of intentionality (non-formal learning being somewhat so, informal learning largely unintentional), but defining and delineating these categories of learning is not easy. If anything, they are increasingly blurred, across both online and offline modalities and spaces (Brown, 2021a, pp. 120-121). Eschewing a categorical approach, Dron and Anderson (2022, pp. 3-4) argue that a useful way is to view forms of learning is as occurring on a spectrum, from (though not limited to):

- Formal to informal,
- Intentional to incidental,
- Dependent to self-directed.

In an L2 context, non-formal learning in various forms does not always arise from desires to increase L2 fluency, but instead can also be a by-product of L2-related interests (e.g. a lecturer learning Korean phrases while listening to K-Pop supergroup BTS). In contrast, non-formal language learning tends to be scaffolded while remaining self-directed (see Cotterall and Murray, 2009). Non-formal learning in L2 contexts can include new technologies, discussed below, but is not especially novel; indeed, learners have long used television, CDs and sticky notes “to create their own learning space...” (Pemberton, Fallahkhair and Masthoff, 2005, p. 54), and there is a rich history of distance learning using tapes and radio broadcasting in an Irish L2 context (Devitt et al., 1983, cited in Flynn, forthcoming, p. 11).

One could watch YouTube videos to hear authentic L2 usage and read forum posts, while simultaneously attending structured, voluntary non-formal face-to-face classes. This could relate to a relatively-formal goal, such as to obtain certification of a specific proficiency level.

Many resources also blur; although a casual, face-to-face class could be informal, lacking an intentional structure, it may have loosely defined learning objectives, following a specific book/learning resource. A danger noted by Reinders and Benson (2017, p. 561) is incoherence in such terminology, where distinct domains of informal learning are not distinguished.

As Ushioda (2013b) writes, an interesting question relevant when describing the motivational impact of language learning is whether i) more-structured resources, designed for particular pathways, or ii) more self-directed ones are preferable for students seeking to pursue longer-term L2 competency? (p. 2) Dron and Anderson (2022) argue that the "darker sides of digital technologies" are that they can "be overwhelming and threatening rather than inviting participation in informal learning" (p. 5). Millions learn languages in blended, personalised ways, and though exemplars of self-directed, determined and (by definition) motivated (Wenden, 1981), their personal intentions can be unclear. Language learning autonomy found its genesis amongst self-directed adult language learning (Holec, 1981), but the role of LLM - and in particular, self and identity perspectives - is underexamined. L2 engagement can occur over many years, including bursts of intense activity, and periods of total inactivity (Tasker, 2017). Outside of formal instruction[6], adult learners have diverse reasons to learn a language, and may do so with some persistence, without expectations of communication with L2 speakers, presenting challenges in conceptualising their psychological motivations.

2.5.1 Motivational salience – the non-formal adult language learner

Understanding the motivations of adult non-formal language learners therefore requires further examination, particularly in how it varies across the lifespan, as different pedagogical interventions might support such learners (including transitionary phases from one life phase to the next, see Chik and Ho, 2017, p. 163). To give an example, Kormos, Kiddle and Czisér (2011), in a comparative study of English L2 learners in Chile, contrasted three sub-samples; second-level (n=201), university (n=174) and adult language institute (n=143) students. The mean age of adult learners was 31 (p. 501), and results indicated most respondents were oriented towards instrumental, professional goals (p. 507). As respondents were relatively young adults, these findings may reflect their life-stage contexts, and lack an examination of the true heterogeneity of adult learners.

[6] Clíona Nic Lochlainn (BA, MA), an experienced language learner across formal contexts, raised an important point when proof-reading this thesis; many of the issues raised here regarding diversity of motivation are also present in formal instructional contexts (e.g. those learning for pleasure and intrinsic interest). As such, the neglect of this reasoning may be more pervasive than just within informal or non-formal contexts.

2.5.1.1 Age – an element in the room?

There are reasons to suspect diversity amongst adult learners is considerable, not merely from younger learners (Ryan and Dörnyei, 2013, p. 93-95), but dependent on previous L2 experience and motivations to learn as an adult, frequently contextual and specific (Shoaib and Dörnyei, 2005, pp. 35-36). Lanvers (2016) notes that "…there are few empirical L2MSS studies with a developmental focus" (p. 82); studies where Anglophone learners are the subject of inquiry (rather than where English is the L2 of study) being rare (ibid, p. 89). Murray (2011) contends that several aspects of LLM neglect gerontological diversity, with older learners generally ignored. Ramírez Gómez (2016) supports a "critical geragogy" in L2 learning, positing that approaches better-suited to older adult learners should be considered, given affective challenges that older learners face (p. 140-141). Many older learners have intrinsic motivations but may also have uses to which they wish to put the language to, though questioning their ability to do so (ibid, p. 142). Neigert (2019, p. 16) writes that affective dynamics amongst older learners are "the elephant in the room" in understanding lifelong language learning, as increasing numbers are learning using non-formal means. Eguz (2019, pp. 704-705) suggests inadequately tailored learning materials and limited consideration of older learners can also exclude or disempower. Kim and Kim (2014) report that amongst older Korean EFL learners, self-actualisation at present, rather than a particular future L2 self, motivated (p. 130), and added that an Ideal self may be demotivating, if too challenging to achieve (ibid, p. 132).

2.5.1.2 What is the goal?

One enigma confronting researchers is defining what "success" looks like to the adult informal or non-formal language learner; Margarita Johnson (2015) writes that fluency is not always the purpose of learning informally, and may not be considered realistic. Lanvers' (2012) qualitative study of British adult L2 learners is instructive of this point. Interviewees often related their motivations to other aspects of self, like desires to be a more-knowledgeable person, and to respect diversity, elements which "…are, at least in part, not linguistic, hence the need to view the projected ideals much more broadly than in purely linguistic terms" (p. 170). In an Irish L2 context, Ó Laoire (2018) lists detailed examples of how goals in attending immersive experiences in the *Gaeltacht* can include linguistic and non-linguistic aspects (p. 150). Both suggest that non-formal adult learners can seek broader identity-enhancement, and self-actualisation than that found in pragmatic, functional language learning contexts.

2.5.2 Technology and LLM – From Chalk to Click

As argued in **Section 2.2**, the non-formal learner using newer technologies has not been well considered within LLM. Henry and Lamb (2019) write that:

> It would also be reasonable to assume that motivation research would have played a key role in mapping the affordances associated with digital technologies, and in the conceptualization of learner responses to these innovations. However, this has not been the case. – (p. 613)

The field is "lagging behind these developments" (Al-Hoorie, 2017, p. 8). In a theoretical piece addressing non-formal students of English, Stockwell (2013) introduces a distinction between those using technology to further existing interest in language learning, and those who are primarily interested in technology, who happen to stumble upon its utility in aiding LL (cited and described in Ushioda, 2013b, p. 1). Such distinctions imply that online spaces can be highly heterogenous and may have both benefits and drawbacks in fostering and inhibiting LL.

2.5.2.1 Online language learning – "safe spaces"?

Within LLM, the "learner" is sometimes considered in narrow terms (see Reinders and Benson, 2017), rarely incorporating life beyond language classrooms, despite the vibrant experiences learners can have using online modalities to learn languages (see Henry and Thorsen, 2020). Non-classroom learning contexts vary hugely, being, tellingly, defined negatively (*not* "in the classroom", see Reinders and Benson, 2017, p. 563). Relevant contexts include cultural activities, pastimes and workplaces, amongst others (demonstrated persuasively by Norton Peirce, 1995). Few studies consider what (for example) an integrative orientation looks like for those learning using resources furthering identification with L2 speakers through digital contact (Thorne, Sauro and Smith, 2015). As Ushioda (2011c) argues, network technologies "offer interesting possibilities for learning and communicating in the L2 in ways that are creative, individual and exploratory, yet without posing a threat to students' real-world identities and private selves" (p. 207). Learners can therefore use learning online as "safe spaces", developing proficiencies, which they can later practice in face-to-face environments, in addition to observing and navigating complex spaces (Darvin and Norton, 2015, p. 48). This can encompass "trying-on" identity labels which they may not yet feel comfortable expressing in face-to-face environments. An element to consider here is the importance of boundaries; as Dörnyei (2020) emphasises, learners "do not always appreciate language instruction invading their digital world" (p. 65). Adolphs et al. (2018) go further, noting that digital technologies can enable learners to see virtual representations of their possible future selves (p. 175), providing examples of what such a self might (literally) look like. Reviewing this work, Henry and Lamb (2019) argue that three specific elements utilised through technology may be supportive of LLM, through i) enhancing vision, but also ii) expanding *verisimilitude* (the perceived "realness" of online interaction, ibid, 610), and iii) social validation (ibid, p. 611-612).

The potential power of such resources for language learners is compelling, so as "learners feel increased interest and engagement in learning tasks" (ibid, 601). Additionally, using such resources in an exploratory manner may empower learners to revise what they perceive as possible (Murray, 2013, pp. 384-387), and therefore sustain L2 interest over time, by allowing learners to envision novel versions of a potential self.

The range of available technologies is growing at a rapid rate, particularly in non-formal domains (see Motterham, 2019, for an ELT-focused review). A salient trend is the development of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), and in particular Language MOOCs (LMOOCs) (Martín-Montje and Borthwick, 2021), which provide learners opportunities and resources to practice L2 skills at scale (Sokolik, 2014). Some critique that these technologies have not seen the introduction of new pedagogical approaches (but use a general "drill-and-skill" method, see Teske, 2017, pp. 397-398), but they have arguably expanded possibilities for language learners to develop their L2 competence in new contexts (Williams, 2014).

2.5.3 Empirical study of adult non-formal LLM

Few studies have used frameworks from LLM to study learners engaging in non-formal and distance learning. Bodnar et al. (2016) argue that Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), though theoretically related to LLM, has largely failed to reflect shifts towards a self-and-identity perspective, particularly how it could enrichen understanding of the intentions and motivations of online learners (pp. 206-207). Studies such as Hurd (2006, 2008), consider the broader notion of "affect" when learning a language at a distance using technological means, finding that many students felt isolated, and had difficulty applying their learning to their immediate environments (2006, p. 304). Similarly, Beirne's (2020) pathbreaking thesis using data from this learning context (*Irish 101*) analysed the emotional experiences of learners. These studies do not, however, incorporate wider literature on LLM.

Murphy's (2011) study of British distance L2 modern language learners, using the L2MSS (and self-determination theory) is an exception. Murphy highlights that negative motivational experiences learning languages online particularly isolation, are common, exacerbated through limited control over pacing (pp. 113-15). This suggests online courses may, where not structured appropriately, *reduce* autonomy. Interestingly, learners also struggled to articulate a sense of growing competence, likely key in sustained L2 learning (Ushioda, 2013a, p. 136). Absent or negative feedback may also reduce initial enthusiasm, through challenging efficacy beliefs in one's ability to learn the L2 to a reasonable proficiency. Murphy also reported on positive factors, including confirmation of the importance of social interaction. This extended not simply to in-course interaction, but also sharing with friends, family and social others about ones learning (Murphy, 2011, p. 117). Murphy's analysis suggests that the three aspects of

the L2MSS were present, with the learning context a strong mediator and in keeping with Ushioda (2011a, p. 227), that learning using any one resource is a single aspect of one's life as a complex social being (Murphy, 2011, p. 119-121). Extensive recommendations for future course design were presented, including that empowering learners to assess their progress might be critical, in addition to supporting a wider range of interaction with different types of L2 learners and speakers, to foster confidence and belonging (Murphy, 2011, p. 123).

To our knowledge, just a handful of studies have analysed motivational elements on LMOOCs, none using the L2MSS or socio-educational model. Beaven, Condreaneu and Creuzé (2014) analysed the motivations/affective aspects of (French L2) LMOOC learners, focusing primarily on course design, using self-determination theory. They reported intrinsic motivations were prominent, and that learners viewed their learning as useful, linking to future goals (p. 63). More recently, Bárkányi (2021) found that intrinsic motivations predominated amongst (Spanish L2) learners. Although self-efficacy beliefs were higher amongst course completers than non-completers, L2 anxiety levels remained the same (p. 153-154). Mac Lochlainn, Nic Giolla Mhichíl and Beirne (2021), drawing on data from this context, found a sample of Irish 101 respondents were motivated, but emphasised content absorption over participation, raising questions regarding scaffolding for self-directed learners who may not actively seek to use the L2. Friðriksdóttir (2021), describing factors aiding retention on LMOOCs, found those who completed in a range of courses studied tended to endorse specific factors more highly non-completers, most strongly "gradual and scaffolded presentation of input" (p. 137), suggesting that course design plays some role in completion. Each of these studies presents useful data on LMOOC participation and motivation, but are rather specific, and do not link to LLM theory.

Lastly, Loewen et al (2019), examining Duolingo, is highlighted for its innovative design, following 9 ab-initio mobile-using learners of Turkish longitudinally (1-year). The authors reported variation in engagement levels and motivation (pp. 304-305). Demonstrating the limited consideration the social elements of motivation receives, however, Turkish was selected to ensure learners started from an equal footing (ibid). The authors write that "Consequently, learning gains might be better if learners have a choice in the target language…" (ibid, p.309), indicating that social-psychological elements are ignored, on occasion, for experimental validity. To return to Bodnar et al's (2016) note, closer study is needed so as:

> ….to stimulate the use of evaluation methods that provide a more fine-grained account of practice that perhaps do a better job of explaining the process leading to motivational and L2 learning outcomes. - (p. 208).

2.6 Conclusion

> If you do not know where you come from, then you don't know where you are, and if you don't know where you are, then you don't know where you're going. And if you don't know where you're going, you're probably going wrong. – Terry Pratchett, "I shall wear midnight."

This review synthesises the literature relating to theories of self within LLM, moving from general exploration of work considering the L2MSS, a frame widely used within the field, to specific consideration of the three elements, the - i) L2, ii) type of learner, and iii) study context - making this study unusual within global literature. In the spirit of Pratchett's advice, we have outlined the relevant historical and theoretical context (where we "come from"), highlighted outstanding questions regarding these frameworks (where we "are"), and assessed what requires further scrutiny (where we "are going").

2.6.1 A view from the clouds

In general, the L2MSS has generated a formidable body of work, using diverse methods, and affirms the utility of a self-based perspective within LLM. At the same time, ambiguities exist regarding why the constructs measured are impactful, and the links between the constructs and intended effort leave many points unanswered (Dörnyei, 2019a; Csizér, 2019). Quantitative research utilising the framework is, in general, over-reliant on intended, hypothetical effort, and there are not many examples of studies which use L2 behavioural use/achievement as outcome variables (Hiver and Al-Hoorie, 2020). Few studies explore the L2MSS as a *relational* system, encompassing both current self-concept, and future self-states (Thorsen, Cliffordson and Henry, 2020), though self-discrepancy is implicitly dynamic, relative to L2 experience. Similarly, the weak construct validity and impact of the Ought-to L2 Self has led some (e.g. Papi et al., 2019; Teimouri, 2017; Tseng, Cheng and Gao, 2020) to argue for a '*2x2*' model of the L2MSS, despite some reservations from others (Al-Hoorie, 2018). Qualitative data analysed using the theory also demonstrates flux; when learners are asked to describe future L2 selves, large variation is found (Lanvers, 2016), linking learning to wider lives and selves. In spite of methodological diversity, there is also limited study of the contents of self-images, how they might evolve both in context, and in particular frames of use (Nakamura, 2019), compounded by a dearth of longitudinal research more generally.

2.6.2 Zooming in

When elements closer to the present context are considered, there are clear weaknesses in this literature, including a bias towards English as an L2 (Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie, 2017), and focus on learners in formal contexts, especially tertiary level (Mahmood and Yousefi, 2021). Studies of both older and younger learners are rare. LOTEs form a small fraction of the overall body of work utilising the L2MSS, and repeated calls for research of a broader palette of L2s

(Duff, 2017; Csizér, 2019; Al-Hoorie, 2018) is an important trend of this literature. Within this slimmer, LOTE-centred literature, what research exists tends to be of national/international languages (Mendoza and Phung, 2019), and studies from minority, heritage, and indigenous language learning contexts are very rare. A small literature focusing on informal language learners demonstrates that they tend to be driven by intrinsic interest in LL, but this study context raises both issues, in:

- The L2 under study, Irish, as minority and heritage language, factors neglected in general theories of LLM, and,
- The non-formal adult language-learning context, presenting a somewhat novel and ambiguous study context.

These two elements have been considered in turn within the literature review, and present a rather large gap in research worthy of deeper exploration. As is noted in the study's introduction, this framing of the literature also links closely to the RQs, ranging from general, to specific:

Figure 10: Synthesis of Literature Review – Questions Raised

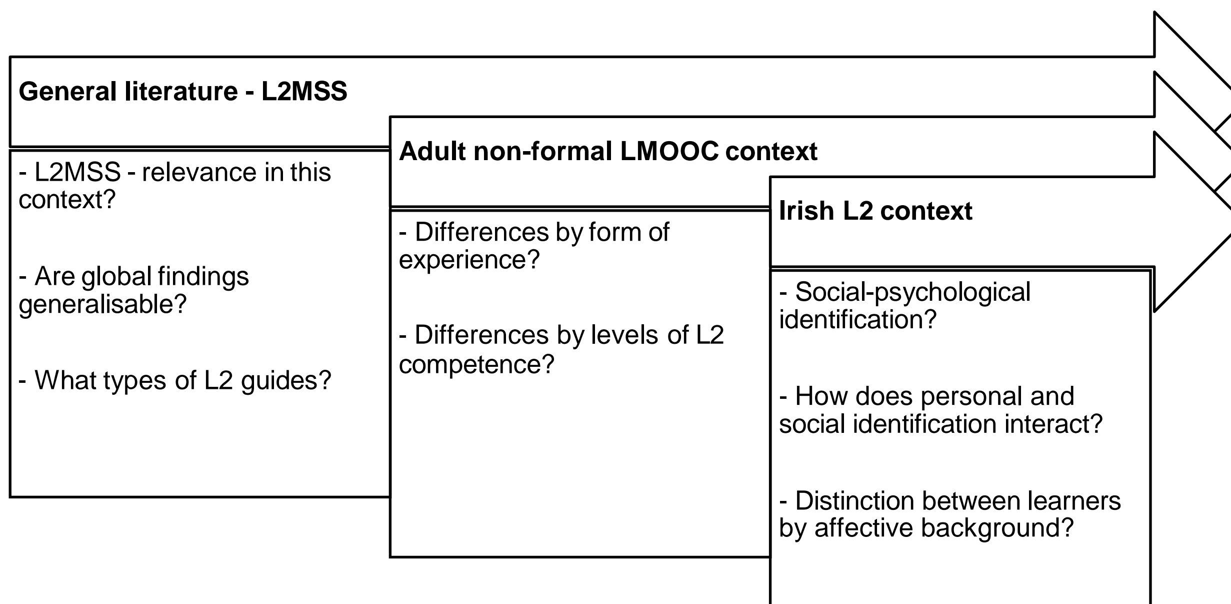


Figure 10 demonstrates that the study is focused simultaneously on questions linking closely to global literature (the validity/utility of the L2MSS), and questions particular to this context (differences by social-psychological and L2 experiences). In the following chapter, the specific methods and means by which these questions were operationalised within the study context, are introduced.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the framing research questions, and study design are detailed. We reintroduce the study's over-arching questions, as well as the methodology adopted to answer them: a multimethod, partially mixed concurrent equal design (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2009), following which the two branches of this design are described in turn. Firstly, an iterative, validated survey instrument (final n=638), developing scales for use in this context, measuring both L2 learning and the L2MSS, is outlined. Secondly, narrative interviews with a second group of learners (n=42) are detailed, exploring motivation as contextual and self-interpretive (Ushioda, 2009, p. 215), rather than as quantified variables. Challenges posed by the methodologies employed, including data analysis, are discussed, using both variance-based (primarily quantitative) and process-based (primarily qualitative) (adopted from Maxwell and Mittalpapi, 2010) frames. Integration of branches is considered relating to **RQs**, and how each method answers sub-elements of these **RQs**. Lastly, methodological limitations are explored, particularly the use of self-report data, and how using distinct methods is valuable in considering the complex phenomenon of adult language learner motivation.

3.2 Study Objectives and Research Questions

As articulated, this study answers three primary research questions:

- How well do existing theoretical frameworks within the field of LLM (primarily the L2MSS and SEM) describe the motivations of those learning Irish using non-formal means? Are these theories in tension, complementary, or contrastive in this study context?

- Are differences observable between those who report having more experience than others, having learned by different means (formal/informal/both/none), or higher self-reported L2 proficiency? How do learners of differing levels of L2 learning experience conceptualise and describe their motivation, and the impact these experiences have upon future L2 self-concept?

- How are issues of L2 identity, heritage, personal and social identification with Irish as a language implicated in the possession (or absence) of these constructs? Are differences observable in this regard between Irish nationals, learners of Irish heritage, and non-Irish learners?

To analyse briefly, the justification and structure of each **RQ** is presented here:

RQ1, the most general, considers whether the self-guide components of the L2MSS are useful in understanding the motivations of the learners in this context. Though studies have examined Irish L2 adult non-formal learners, from both applied and sociolinguistic perspectives (e.g., Flynn, 2020; Walsh and O'Rourke, 2020), no study has assessed comparatively the diversity of these learners. The primary issue analysed in **RQ1** is whether i) the self-guides described in the L2MSS are correlated with, and predictive of, an array of L2 use and effort-based variables, as per global findings, and ii) whether the theoretical mechanisms posited (such as self-discrepancy, and specific possible selves) are visible in learner narratives and accounts.

RQ2 considers an under-analysed aspect of the literature on Irish L2 adult learners more generally (excepting Flynn, 2020); whether, given the diverse backgrounds of learners on these courses, the distinction between ab-initio learners and those with varying levels of previous experience impacts motivation. As noted in the literature review, few studies stratify learners by perceived self-competence or prior experience (Al-Hoorie, 2018, p. 730). Differences between learners could be significant in an Irish LMOOC context, with participants ranging from those who have learned Irish formally in the educational system, to those who may never have heard of the language prior to joining a particular LMOOC. Beyond measuring this quantitatively, the cumulative impact and interpretation of the L2 learning experience (see Dörnyei, 2019a) was explored through semi-structured interviews.

RQ3 assesses how learners conceive of themselves in a social-psychological sense when learning Irish; do they identify with Irish speakers, wishing to become like them? This implicates Gardner's social-educational model, and its central construct: the integrative orientation (Gardner, 1985). The intersection explored here is how these theories, the L2MSS and SEM, relate to questions of L2 identity, heritage, and national origin, and the dynamic relationships, and differences, between self-identification, and identification with L2 speakers. As limited research assesses the explanatory potential of the L2MSS in minority or heritage language contexts, where dynamics of community and social identity membership may be distinct, querying the theory on this social-psychological basis warranted exploration.

3.3 Research Methodology

All models are wrong, but some are useful.

- Scientific Aphorism.

The research methodology adopted is a multiple[7] method design, with two branches: i) a quantitative survey instrument, measuring constructs statistically, and ii) narrative interviews, exploring L2 selves/identity in a contextual manner. Mixed-methods research, where multiple sources of data are utilised “for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration” (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner, 2007, p. 123), has become a staple of applied linguistics research (see Hashemi and Babaii, 2013). While mixed methods imply the use of multiple methods and/or instruments of data collection within a single study (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, pp. 69-72), no universal definition exists. Indeed, many theoretical and methodological perspectives are possible, to a confusing degree (Guest, 2013, p. 143). Though some are critical of the applied practice of mixed methods in social science (e.g., Giddings, 2006), the potentially additive nature of utilising multiple methodological perspectives within LLM has been partially accepted (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 47). Agreement with this perspective is a central premise of the research design employed within this study, as a topic as complex as LLM is best approached using a holistic stance.

Methodological issues, including concerns regarding stances, philosophical position, and analysis, have shaped the field, in theoretical (Ryan, 2019, p. 170) and practical (Boo, Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, p. 153) senses. An array of theoretical perspectives has led to arguments that the field is fragmenting (MacIntyre, Noels and Moore, 2010, p. 4), though a longstanding tradition is the use of survey-based measurement, which:

> …usually comprise scales of items asking respondents to rate their agreement with certain statements such as “Studying English will help me to get a good job” (Ryan, 2009a, p. 140), with the content of these multi-item scales designed to operationalize hypothetical motivational constructs such as (in this example) instrumentality.
> - (Ushioda, 2019b, p. 663)

Other approaches, including qualitative and mixed/multi-methods perspectives, have become common, reflecting different ways of studying LLM (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, p. 90). Innovative

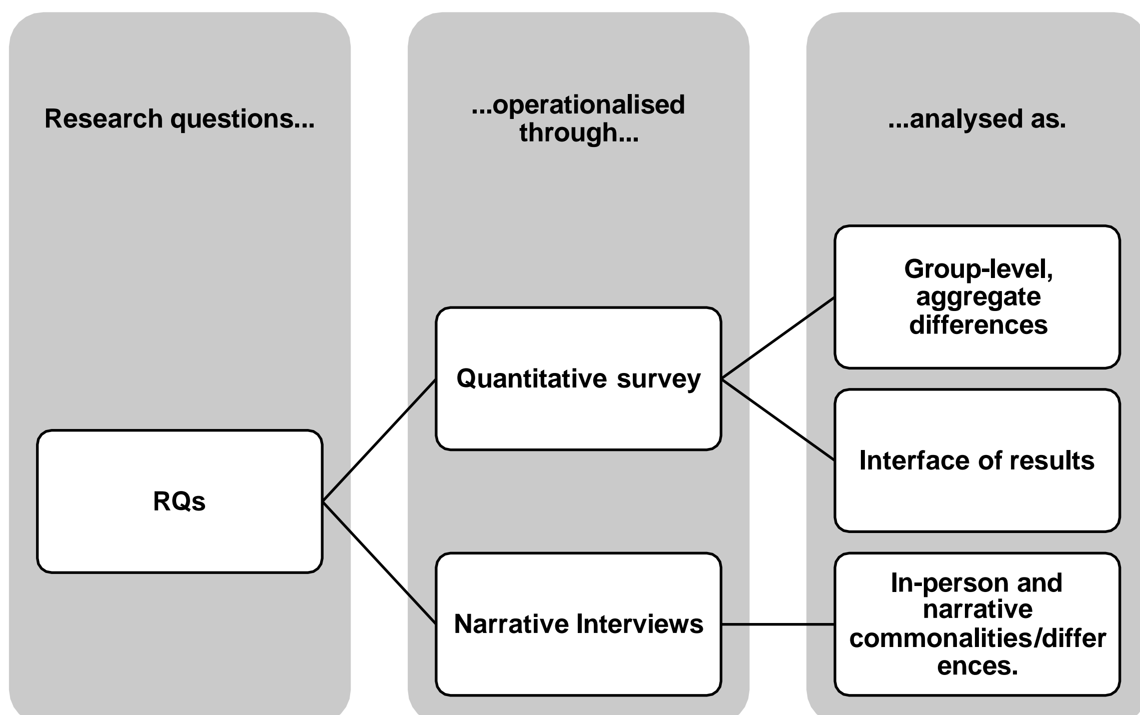
[7] This term is used in contrast to “mixed methods”, due to the analytical decisions described throughout the chapter. The term “mixed methods” is used for simplicity when describing texts.

qualitative approaches, such as Chan, Dörnyei and Henry's (2015) "Retrodictive qualitative modelling", where researchers generate (alongside L2 instructors) archetypes of behaviour and trace behavioural explanations for observed individuals within learning contexts, were devised. Others, like MacIntyre and Legatto's (2011) "idiodynamic" method, explore affective changes to the scale of seconds within specific L2 learning interactions/classes. Murray's (2011) narrative exploration of adult English L2 learners in a self-access learning centre in Japan is an example of the often highly detailed data generated using qualitative perspectives, focusing upon the evolving nature of motivation, within individual learners.

Regarding specific designs, many forms of mixed method are possible; in a review of 232 studies in the social sciences, Bryman (2006) outlines a dizzying 16 variations. Designs range from those in which one strand of a research study provides supplemental evidence to another (what Ivankova, Creswell and Stick (2006) describe as a "sequential explanatory/exploratory design", for example), to ones in which triangulated or concurrent designs are employed (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). The study design utilised here is grounded in the tradition of utilising diverse methods to examine distinct facets of a research question as complementary and additive.

3.3.1 Research Design employed in study

Figure 11: Methodology and RQs, mapped



The study consisted of two methods of data generation: The first was an iterative survey instrument, which compared participants on aggregate across a range of constructs and

scales. The second was narrative interviews, conducting using a specific methodological and theoretical stance, Ushioda's (2009) relational person-in-context perspective, using a modified narrative methodological approach (Murray, 2009).

The first branch queried L2MSS concepts at group-level through cross-sectional comparison. Several domains of L2 use and motivation were quantified and analysed, including the prevalence and distribution of constructs amongst learners. Survey development was cyclical, across successive runs of the instrument:

Table 3: Primary survey iterations

Iteration	**Course launches**	**Analysis**
S1	**September-December, 2018**	Initial iteration analysed utilising QUAN + QUAL responses.
S2	**March-May 2019**	Scales reflecting variables of both L2 learning, and use, and a 4-guide L2MSS.
S3	**January-April, 2021**	Final iteration – reduction to core variables.

These iterations are analysed in **Section 3.4**, and for reporting purposes, S3 is analysed in the next chapter. In the second branch, a series of semi-structured narrative interviews (n=42) were conducted with a cross-section of learners recruited over the length of the project, from diverse backgrounds and L2 learning experiences. These interviews generally occurred online and explored the interpretive and contextual nature of Irish LLM over time.

Both branches answer separate elements, reflecting i) group-level differences, and ii) the idiosyncratic, self-based ways learners might differ, from each other, and over time, respectively. A distinction highlighted is a relative focus on **inter-person** and **intra-person** differences. This is critical in much social research and are one difference between broadly "quantitative" and "qualitative" ways of exploring research phenomena. As noted by Dörnyei and Ryan (2015, describing Kluckhohn and Murray, 1948), "...people differ from but also have things in common with each other, and the fundamental duality of similarity versus difference permeates the whole domain of ID research" (p.13). The survey instruments measured **inter-person** differences between learners (see Ryan, 2019, pp. 168-170). From this perspective, motivation is abstracted to a quantified measure one might be "high" or "low" in at any point in time. Aggregating responses allows researchers to assess group-level differences using other

variables (learner heritage or learning experience) to consider whether certain characteristics (e.g., being Irish, with formal L2 experience) are more/less related to the possession of constructs under study than others. In contrast, learner interviews primarily queried **intra-person** differences accepting each learner as “located in specific socio-historical as well as cultural and physical contexts, who have complex social and personal histories contributing to their current motivations and aspirations for the future” (Ushioda, 2019b, p. 667). This branch also contains a clear, if secondary, inter-person focus, in comparing narrative accounts of learners to see what was similar and distinct. These two perspectives are a useful heuristic by which methodological distinctions can be understood. Bringing them into dialogue was the primary purpose of this choice, explored next.

3.3.2 Overall aims of methodology

In utilising a mixed or multi-method approach, it is important to identify the utility of each method; clarifying not only the “what”, but also points of interface in combining multiple approaches (Morse and Niehaus, 2016, p. 26). A multi-method approach can be a complementary means of exploring the RQs within this study context. Neither method is viewed as superior; both are different “ways of making sense of the social world” (Greene, 2007, p. 20, in Bliss, 2008, p. 190). As argued by MacIntyre, Noels and Moore (2010), in an LLM context:

> Whenever the conclusions drawn from one method are different than the conclusions drawn from another method, scholars should avoid the temptation to ask “which one is correct?” and instead ask themselves “why are the conclusions different?” - (p. 7)

Drawing upon Schoonenboom and Burke-Johnson’s (2017) analysis of Greene, Carcinelli and Graham’s (1989, p. 259) taxonomy, this study utilises multiple methods with an “Expansion” purpose, “to extend the breadth and range of inquiry by using different methods for different inquiry components” (p.110). Though guided by three primary questions, the means of generating evidence concerning these questions were operationalised distinctly (the “different inquiry components”) in each branch of the study, illustrated in **Tables 4,** and **5**, respectively**.**

3.3.2.1 Quantitative Surveys

Viewing motivation, particularly future L2 self-representations, as measurable, is unquestionably useful (see Dörnyei, 2007), in that it enables cross-context comparison (through meta-analyses like Al-Hoorie, 2018) and assessment across cases (Maxwell and Mittalpapi, 2010, p. 54), of the impact of other variables on these constructs. The core advantage of the cross-sectional quantitative survey as a methodological choice is that of falsifiable, validated instruments, measuring the prevalence of abstracted behavioural constructs (Dörnyei and Csizér, 2012, pp. 74-75). An iterative survey approach was adopted with this purpose in mind; to develop a standardised, replicable instrument, adaptable to other

Irish, and perhaps even minority language, L2 contexts, linking to findings in other Irish L2 research contexts (Flynn, 2020; Petit, 2016, as examples). A series of branch-specific objectives were identified in this branch of the study, detailed below:

Table 4: RQ operationalisation (QUANT)

Research Question	**Operationalisation (Quantitative Survey)**
1. How well do existing theoretical frameworks within the field of LLM (primarily the L2MSS and SEM) describe the motivations of those learning Irish using non-formal means? Are these theories in tension, complementary, or contrastive, in this study context?	• Do selected constructs display **internal and external forms of validity**? • Are constructs **correlated with, and predictive of, a series of L2** learning and usage variables, as the theory would imply? • Are magnitudes **comparable** with those reported in a wider global literature?
2. Are differences observable between those who have more experience than others, and between those who have learned by different means (formal/informal)? How do learners of differing levels of L2 learning experience conceptualise and describe their motivations, and the impact these experiences have had upon the same?	• Do learners with i) different forms of L2 experience, and ii) differing self-reported subjective competence, **differ statistically significantly as regards to the possession of the variables?**
3. How are issues of L2 identity, heritage, personal and social identification with Irish as a language implicated in the possession (or absence) of these constructs? Are differences observable in this regard between Irish nationals, learners of Irish heritage, and non-Irish learners?	• Are **statistically significant differences** observable between learners who were i) Irish nationals, ii) those of Irish Heritage, and ii) those who had no ancestral/national links with Ireland? • Do learners of recent (i.e., parent/grandparent), and more distant (i.e., great-grandparent) heritage **differ, as regards to the possession of these variables**?

Within this frame, **RQs** were operationalised using a largely deductive focus (Morgan, 2007, p. 70). To what degree are L2 guides present amongst learners, how did they relate to motivated behaviour, and did learners of certain backgrounds and experiences possess these constructs more than others? Considering whether a theory is "valid", the types of evidence

that are meaningful from a statistical perspective are those demonstrating some predictive and theoretical validity (see Gardner, 2010, p. 219 for an extension of this point).

3.3.2.2 Narrative interviews

Though quantitative methods have many strengths, and link to global research trends using replicable instruments, thoughtful critiques can be employed against overreliance on cross-sectional research. These include tendencies to reduce complex lives to "…averages and aggregates…" (Ushioda, 2009, p. 215) which deemphasise the variation inherent in all human beings (Larsen-Freeman, 2006). Ushioda persuasively argues:

> …relying on the statistical principles of averaging and probability, quantitative research cannot of course shed light on individual motivational perspectives or experiences, or offer detailed insights into how these evolve in dynamic interaction with surrounding social-environmental factors. - (2019b, p. 665).

Although cross-sectional data provides baselines for comparative research and potential for generalisation, a single-instance collection point is inherently limited because respondents typically answer items worded by a researcher (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2021, p. 198), often batched into abstracted factors (Irie, 2014, p. 16). When exploring something as personal as one's desires in using a second language, highlighting idiosyncratic self-representations can complement a statistical, deductive approach (Ushioda, 2019a, p. 200).

Ranges of potential methods were possible, with the final selection being a semi-structured narrative interview format with a selection of learners. The purpose of this method was to explore respondents' self-understanding and development learning Irish while taking a holistic approach, premised on the assumption that exploring heritage, cultural identity, and desired forms of L2 use in depth with participants could enrich analysis:

Table 5: RQ operationalisation (QUAL)

Research Question	Operationalisation (Qualitative branch of study)
1. How well do existing theoretical frameworks within the field of LLM (primarily the L2MSS and SEM) describe the motivations of those learning Irish using non-formal means? Are these theories in tension, complementary, or contrastive, in this study context?	• How do learners **frame their learning** from a self-narrative perspective? • What **types of future L2 selves** do learners describe and do these imagined future selves fit well with the Ideal/Ought-to, and stances (Own/Other) implied by the L2MSS? • What **types of self-discrepancies** do learners describe in narrative, and is there evidence that some are more adaptive than others in supporting L2 learning?
2. Are differences observable between those who have more experience than others, and between those who have learned by different means (formal/informal)? How do learners of differing levels of L2 learning experience conceptualise and describe their motivations, and the impact these experiences have had upon the same?	• What types of different L2 learning experiences do learners describe, and what **impact have these experiences on their abilities to envision themselves as Irish speakers?** • How do social others impact motivation within learning experiences?
3. How are issues of L2 identity, heritage, personal and social identification with Irish as a language implicated in the possession (or absence) of these constructs? Are differences observable in this regard between Irish nationals, learners of Irish heritage, and non-Irish learners?	• If relevant to social identity, how do learners narratively describe their **social connections to Irish**, such as through family? • How do learners perceive relationships **between themselves and Irish as a personal identity**, and how do these perceptions impact self-described possible L2 selves? • Are there particular enablers and inhibitors, based on the distinction, including possible conflict, between social and personal identity, in learning Irish?

The aims of this branch were reflexive and interpretive, focusing on situated motivation. Interviewees were asked about interpretations of their learning, providing a process-based way of conceptualising LLM, rather than the somewhat linear mechanics considered in the quantitative surveys. Regarding validity in analysing narrative data, interviews are co-constructed experiences, shaped by interviewer and interviewee, in frequently unpredictable ways (Consoli and Aoyama, 2020, pp. 183-84). While statistical validity can be interpreted through confirmation/disconfirmation of particular hypotheses (within limitations, see Plonsky

and Oswald, 2014, pp. 879-880), the concept of validity can be problematic when utilising qualitative approaches. Perhaps because of this:

> It is expected that qualitative studies be conducted with extreme rigor because of the potential of subjectivity that is inherent in this type of research. This is a more difficult task when dealing with narratives and people than numbers and statistics. – Cypress (2017, p. 254).

Rigour is an essential quality in qualitative analysis and was conceptualised here through using clearly structured elements to guide analysis, and link to wider RQs of the study (see **Appendix E3**). In this, the study is one where, as per Sandelowski (1993) theory is "entering from the outside" (cited in Bradbury-Jones, Taylor and Herber, 2014, p. 136), serving as an analytical guide during analysis. This type of research is sometimes labelled "theory-driven" (Mitchell and Cody, 1993, p. 170), as opposed to more inductive processes that were, for example, a grounded theory-based methodological approach employed, with implications for analysis summarised in **Section 3.5**.

3.3.3 Integrated analysis – thinking dialectically

Adopting a form of dialectical analysis (see Greene and Hall, 2010, p. 124), branches explored **RQs** using the distinctions outlined, concerning i) prevalence, distribution, and comparative strength of constructs under study, and through ii) thematic, inductive analysis, focusing on the development of motivation, as described by specific learners. Analysis considered both the general (in the first instance) and what is specific, and contextual (in the second) as complementarily perspectives (Mason, 2006).

Integration, reaching "meaningful and defensible conclusions..." (Plano Clark, 2019, p. 107), is a central plank of any multimethod project, given dangers that methods can be isolated or mixed in a superficial manner (Bazeley and Kemp, 2012, p. 58). Freshwater (2007, cited in Greene and Hall, 2010, p. 131) cautions against approaches to "adopt MMR [mixed methods research] as a mindless mantra" (p. 135), raising questions as to what specifically is "multiple" in a multi-method approach – data, interpretations, analysis, or all the above? Schoonenboom and Johnson (2017, p. 116) describe various integration strategies, from merging data, connecting analysis from one portion of a study and another, embedding data, and/or to using a unified framework to "bind" results together (citing Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p. 76).

Criticising needless complexity in taxonomy, which "forces researchers to fit an entire study design into an inadequate classification system", Guest (2013, p. 146) recommends articulating both points of interface, and difference. A useful framework, by Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2009), was used, consisting of three dimensions (pp. 267-268):

- Level of mixing (partially vs. fully mixed)
- Time orientation (concurrent vs. sequential)
- Emphasis of approaches (equal vs. dominant)

This study is a **partially mixed, concurrent, equal status study,** as the two branches of the study were sequenced, sampled, and analysed separately, using the same RQs as the conceptual glue in binding results:

Table 6: Study description, using Leech and Onwuegbuzie's (2009) criteria

Criteria	**Level of Mixing**	**Time Orientation**	**Emphasis**
Study	Partially mixed, at point of analysis: methods assessed using separate criteria, and results contrasted following these analyses.	Concurrent, and largely segregated: iterations of survey instrument, and narrative interviews conducted over an 18-month period.	Equal: neither dominant, but distinct ways of viewing LLM, as both **inter-person** and **intra-person** phenomena.

The intention of using multiple perspectives to consider unified RQs was to provide contrasting - not merely converging - views, reflecting the complexity of LLM, focusing on differing emphasises. The basic logic underpinning this comparison was triangulation – to "obtain different but complementary data on the same topic" (Morse, 1991, p. 122, cited in Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007, p. 62). For purposes of integration, however, insights were considered related to the overall RQs (the "same topic)", using differing means of assessment:

Table 7: Analytical criteria of study

Phase	Sampling	Logic of analysis	Outcomes are...	Ultimate purpose
Survey instrument	Larger, some generalisation beyond study context.	Group-based, inter-individual comparison.	General, what is "typical".	Does the L2MSS help us **explain** differences between learners?
Narrative Interviews	Smaller, assumption that many elements of experience are ungeneralisable.	In-individual, cross-case comparison of similarities and differences.	Contextual, regarding both typicality and uniqueness.	Does the L2MSS help us **understand** experiences of learners?
Integration	Both	Comparison and Contrast of two approaches.	Exploration of what is both similar, and distinct, regarding the findings of the two approaches.	What commonalities/differences, are found using these two perspectives?

Distinctions are visible regarding sampling, with branches generally separate; as outlined below, interviewees were not selected as typical/outlier cases based on survey responses, as might be done using a sequential, explanatory design (for example). Rather, diverse interviewees were sampled on a non-predetermined basis, on the assumption that each had interacted with course materials, and represented, in some sense, a sample of one, an individual with unique experiences. This dualistic study form creates challenges, relying heavily on the maintenance of a central theoretical framework through which distinct data can be interpreted. It was important to maintain a balance, between a) remaining conceptually coherent and b) not being blind to the substantial role theory plays in shaping analysis of underlying data (see Hammersley, 1995, p. 61). A quote kept in mind was that "If all you have is a hammer, everything starts to look like a nail"[8], and given critiques of the dominant, even hegemonic role of the L2MSS in present LLM research (Oga-Baldwin, Fryer and Larson-Hall, 2019; MacIntyre, 2022), data which could not be well-explained from this perspective were particularly useful to consider. This was seen as remaining faithful to the "mess and complexity" (Uprichard and Dawney, 2016, p. 19) inherent in the application of a mixed/ multimethod design, seeking new insights.

[8] Formulations of this concept and quote are attributed to many, from Abraham Maslow to Abraham Kaplan, but it is likely traditional, referred to as **the law of the instrument** (see Wikipedia, no date).

3.3.4 Study context, sampling, and conceptualising participants

The study context is a series of Irish language and culture Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). A MOOC is an online course on which unlimited numbers of participants can register ('Massive') with no pre-registration requirements ('Open'), as defined by McAuley et al. (2010):

> Although it may share in some of the conventions of an ordinary course, such as a predefined timeline and weekly topics for consideration, a MOOC generally carries no fees, no prerequisites other than Internet access and interest, no predefined expectations for participation, and no formal accreditation. – (p. 4)

MOOCs have operated for approximately a decade, and debate continues regarding many issues, including optimal pedagogical approaches, with no categorical guidance forthcoming (Bali, 2014, p. 45). MOOCs have expanded somewhat beyond the above definition, towards formal pathways, and, in some instances, accreditation (Sandeen, 2013, pp. 35-36). Within this study context, MOOCs are defined as free to enrol, non-formal learning environments, structured and designed, but with no compulsory objectives for learners.

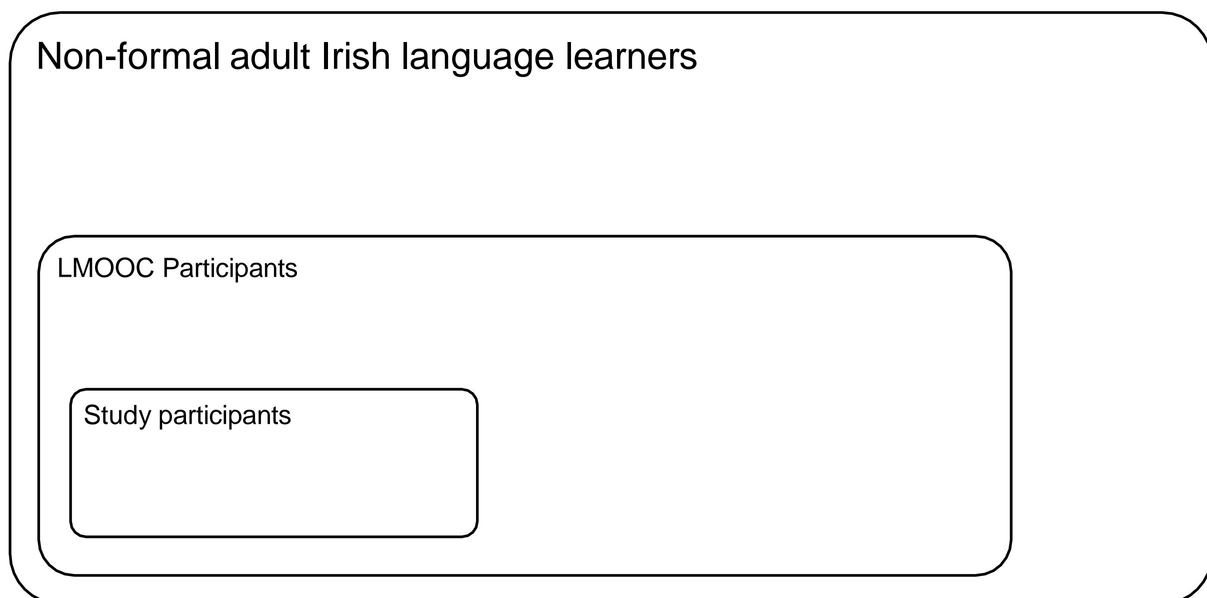
Four introductory courses, *Irish 101-104: an introduction to Irish language and culture*, formed the primary study context (example here)[9]. Designed for ab-initio learners (increasing in difficulty sequentially), these courses contain activities, forums, quizzes, and multimedia for learners to engage with. They are delivered via the **FutureLearn** platform, a MOOC provider with an emphasis on social-constructivist pedagogies (see Laurillard, 2002). Each course contains a mixture of cultural content and language learning activities, across units of Week, Activity, and Step, respectively (an overview of the course content for *Irish 101* is available in **Appendix F1**). There are no summative forms of assessment on the courses, nor does participation lead to a recognised qualification. Completion can be validated with a certificate of achievement, available to learners who both complete course activities and pay a fee. Given the large number of learners who have registered on the courses, it is likely that the motivations of these learners are heterogenous and can range from an interest in Irish cultural artefacts such as music or dance, to committed language learners who view the course as an explicit opportunity to learn Irish and/or build upon existing experience. Course activities, similarly, include both explicit language instruction and practice, but also exploration of Irish folklore, sport, and placenames, amongst other topics.

More broadly, much research has been conducted into the general motivations of MOOC learners (see Kizilcec and Schneider, 2015; Jordan, 2015; Barak, Watted, and Haick, 2016), including interventions to increase engagement, with mixed results, possibly due to diversity amongst participants (see Kizilcec et al., 2020). Relatively few studies explore LMOOC

[9] Irish 108 was utilised to recruit initial interviewees, see section 3.5.1.

learners, however, particularly reflecting psychological theories of LLM, as outlined in the literature review. General MOOC research suggests many, if not most, MOOC learners are educated adult learners, Western, and comparatively wealthy (Emanuel, 2013), with primarily intrinsic motivation (Alario-Hoyos et al., 2017, p. 132). Regarding completion, and behavioural persistence, both effective goal setting and task value have been determined critical (Reparaz et al., 2020, p. 6), though some evidence suggests that situated activity mediates wider value and interest (De Barba et al., 2016, p. 226). Rabin et al. (2020), for example, reported complex patterns impact learner satisfaction, with efficacy beliefs, age, and lack of knowledge all relevant in differing outcomes (p. 124).

Figure 12: Conceptualising study sample



As demonstrated in **Figure 12,** participants were those who responded to any prompts, as sub-samples of a wider population (LMOOC participants). For the purposes of this study, each learner was defined as belonging to a second, wider population: non-formal Irish L2 learners. This category includes LMOOC participants, but also learners who could be considered conceptually similar, though using different resources, such as learners using Duolingo, online forums, and many other non-formal means of learning Irish. An open question beyond the scope of the study, returned to in the concluding chapter, is the degree to which study participants can be taken as representative of this population. Considering the above discussion regarding participant diversity, it is also important to reiterate that this study is concerned primarily with language learners and their experiences in their wider lives. Thus, the courses served as a means of participant recruitment, and the study did not concern itself with the activities of participants within the LMOOC courses, specifically.

3.3.5 Research Ethics

The project received two primary ethical approvals: the first, for survey data collection, was granted in June 2018 (DCUREC/2018_106), and second, for interviews, granted in January 2019 (DCUREC/2019_014). Letters of approval from DCU's Research Ethics Committee, as well as accompanying participant information, are available in **Appendixes A** and **B**. In both cases, reflexive stances were adopted, justifying data collection, outlining what was expected of participants and steps being taken to both ensure informed consent, safeguard data, and protect participant anonymity, to the greatest degrees possible. Approvals were extended in March 2020, to allow continued collection for the rest of the calendar year. A second extension for both was attained in December 2020, allowing for a confirmatory run of the survey, conducted between January-April 2021.

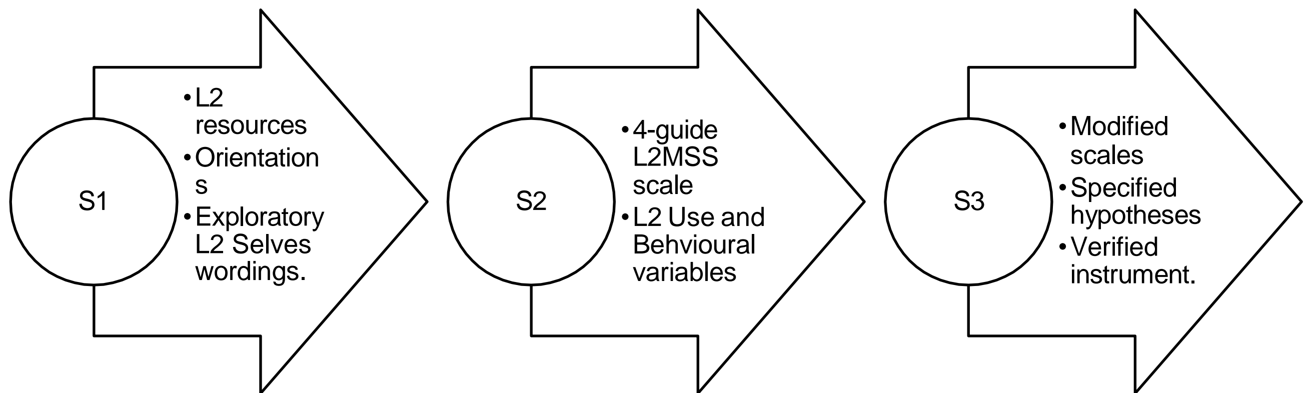
Online environments present certain ethical challenges, as noted by Selwyn (2014a, pp. 74-5). Supplemental information is often accessible online, blurring what is considered public, or not (themselves debatable terms, see Rosenberg, 2010, pp. 26-27). Distinctions between overt and covert research can be problematic in online contexts, given that a researcher can (perhaps problematically) assume some information is voluntary provided by respondents for research purposes (Murthy, 2008, p. 840). This is especially relevant in a LL context, given the large corpus of speech and text, often personal, that learners generate in online instructional contexts (Ortega and Zyzik, 2008, p. 344). While many projects involve a relatively linear sequence of formulation and data collection, online researchers can be "swimming" in data from commencement and need to avoid "death by data asphyxiation" (Pettigrew, 1990, cited in Langley 1999, p. 693).

A cautious approach was adopted throughout the study; though often publicly available through forum interactions (for example), supplemental data were avoided (beyond impact on analytical reasoning). Anonymisation was implemented throughout data collection, including pseudonymisation of interview respondents. When storing data, guidelines relating to reasonable protection were maintained. These involved accessing personal data (for example, email addresses) using only the researcher's primary work devices, and when used at home (generally during the COVID-19 pandemic), through protected hard-drive. All respondent data was aggregated in reporting. Ethics are broader than fulfilling the criteria expected of a researcher institutionally: Dörnyei (2007, p. 66) cogently argues that one must act with integrity and self-reflection, given that research ethics are both guidelines, but further, principles and values; not merely regulations to satisfy. This is true at both micro, and macro levels of a research project (Consoli and Aoyami, 2020, p. 182), and guided the researcher's reflective and methodological practice.

3.4 Quantitative survey instruments

Over the course of the study, three primary iterations of a quantitative instrument were developed, reflecting sharpening focus as study progressed:

Figure 13: Primary survey development



In many instances, scales from other studies (e.g., Flynn, 2020; Thorsen, Cliffordson and Henry 2020; Papi et. al. 2019), were adopted to context, but novel items/scales were developed where required. The process of distributing surveys was identical – a hyperlink was placed in a specific introductory step, ("**Step 1.2 – Getting Started**") on runs of various ab-initio courses (e.g., Irish 101, 102, 103 and 104). This was to ensure a large portion of participants would view it. It was expected, in keeping with a large body of MOOC research, that placing a link elsewhere (towards the end of a Week, for example), would lead to "survivor's bias" within samples (see Shermer, 2014). Distinguishing participation and completion (see Henderikx, Kreijn and Kalz, 2017, p. 354), completers would likely demonstrate atypical levels of motivation in comparison to a wider sample. This branch was concerned with comparing as broad a cross-section of learners as possible, regardless of their persistence in completing courses.

3.4.1 S1 – Setting the scene

The first runs contained measured various open-ended and closed items, including initial Ideal and Ought-to L2 Self scales (items are listed in **Appendix C4**). Quantitative scales were analysed for internal consistency and reliability, while open-ended responses were collated using an exploratory thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006), focusing upon orientations learners described. An obvious concern was the limited number of studies utilising the L2MSS in minority, heritage, or indigenous language contexts available (outlined in literature review). In ensuring appropriate items for this context, this lacuna gave pause for thought. Consider

the following Ideal L2 self items (from Taguchi, Magid and Papi, 2009, p. 91, one of the most-cited studies utilising the L2MSS):

- Whenever I think of my future career, I imagine myself using English.
- The things I want to do in the future require me to use English.
- I can imagine myself living abroad and having a discussion in English.

Each (from a broader 10-item scale) contains assumptions regarding L2 selves, specifically that it might *require* using the L2, referencing domains (living abroad, employment) less relevant for non-formal minority language L2 learners (Olsen, 2018), particularly those who rarely contact L2 speakers or use the language. Critiques of these item wordings include viewing them as unidimensional (Hessel, 2015) and/or subjective (MacIntyre, MacKinnon and Clément, 2009). More global items were initially utilised to measure these abstract self-representations:

Ideal L2 Self – exploratory items

- I can imagine myself using Irish in many contexts
- I have a picture of myself as an Irish speaker
- I think about becoming an Irish speaker a lot

Ought-to L2 Self – exploratory items

- I feel I should become an Irish speaker
- I would be disappointed if I never learned Irish
- I feel I have an obligation to become an Irish speaker
- I am expected to become an Irish speaker

Three primary criterion variables were measured: following aspects of Hessel (2015, pp. 105-106), what was here termed an L2 Speaker Self-Concept scale, measuring four facets - plausibility, desire, importance, and anticipated effort - (identified in Dörnyei, 2009, p. 32) important in fostering an L2 Self. Two measures of L2 target were measured, using four-item scales. Questions relating to resource use (Books, Apps etc.) and an 11-item motivational orientation scale were measured. These examined online and offline L2 use and whether learners used differing methods of language learning, and reasons typically underpinning learners' desires on the course. Several open-ended items were also added, to give learners space to articulate and explain their responses.

3.4.2 S2 – Clarifying parameters

S2 runs, reflecting these insights, expanded focus somewhat (items listed in **Appendix C3**). An insight from S1 was that Ideal and Ought-to L2 Selves scales did not segregate into distinct constructs, raising questions of how distinct an Ideal and Ought-to L2 self are in this context. The single item with an "Other"-wording had an extremely low mean, indicating that though personal obligation is often relevant, social obligation is functionally non-existent. In keeping with identified limitations of the Ought-to L2 Self construct (Csizér, 2019, p. 76), theoretical developments regarding L2 stances (Papi et al. 2019; Teimouri, 2017) were incorporated. It was hypothesised that a four-guide, rather than two-guide, L2MSS, might further explanatory potential. The primary independent variables (posited as predictive of LLM) were:

Table 8: Independent (Explanatory) Variables (S2)

Scales (Posited)	No. of Items	Sample
Ideal Own L2 Self	4	I can imagine a day when I speak Irish fluently.
Ought-to Own L2 Self	4	If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will be disappointed.
Ideal Other L2 Self	4	My friends will be proud of me If one day I learn to speak Irish fluently.
Ought-to Other L2 Self	4	My family will be disappointed if I don't learn Irish.
Current L2 Self	4	I feel comfortable using Irish at the moment.
Integrative Orientation	4	Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to take part in cultural activities.

Phrasing reflected a prevention/promotion split; items reflecting obligation (Ought-to) were phrased in a prevention-oriented manner (e.g "If I don't do X, then Y…") and items reflecting an idealised elements were phrased promotionally ("My family will be proud if X…"), in line with Higgins' (1987, 1998) distinction. Each construct was a potential explanatory construct for understanding motivated L2 learning behaviour. More diverse criterion variables were also measured, consisting of two broad categories: Learning Effort and L2 Use.

Table 9: Posited dependent variables (S2)

Scale	Items
Learning Effort (phrasings adopted from Papi et al., 2019)	5
L2 Speaker Self-Concept Items (maintained from pilot)	4
Attitudes towards L2 Community (maintained from pilot)	8
Eager L2 Use (online and offline, new scale)	8 (4 F2F/4 Online)
Vigilant L2 Use (online and offline, new scale)	8 (4 F2F/4 Online)
Prevention and Promotion general orientations (adopted from Papi et al., 2019).	10 (5 each)
Motivational battery (expanded from pilot)	18

The purpose of these variables was to distinguish generic notions of effort, measured through subjective intentions. It was hypothesised that measuring both self-described levels of learning, and L2 use, as argued by Al-Hoorie, 2018 (pp. 740-741), would prove useful as comparisons (though note that both forms are self-report, rather than observational, see section on methodological limitations below). These scales measured the degree to which a common phenomenon regarding Irish - discrepancies between desired and reported L2 use (Flynn, 2020, pp. 121-22) - were present. Scales measuring general prevention/promotion orientations were exploratorily included to assess whether Ideals/Ought-to were discriminant from more general aspects.

3.4.3 S3 – Confirmation

The final runs, described in the following chapter, validated findings at a distance removed from S2's implementation. This iteration was conducted in early 2021, with two primary purposes: replication and refinement.

3.4.3.1 Replication

The first instance, replication, entailed utilising an abridged version of S2, at a differing point in time, examining whether findings were broadly consistent. Such confirmatory findings can be useful to examine item distribution and analysis.

3.4.3.2 Refinement

Refinement had three major points: i) improving scale validity, ii) reducing items, and iii) confirming issues uncovered during S2 analysis. While scales in S2 demonstrated reasonable reliability, several variables failed to maintain optimal construct validity when analysed through factor analysis. Of note, the Ought-to Own items stratified into two constructs by degree of

internalisation. Additionally, analysis also revealed that L2 use better encompassed three factors: **Current F2F**, **Current Online Use**, and **L2 Anxiety** (vigilant items, whether online or face-to-face, loaded into a single factor, with others reflecting ambivalence or avoidance, forming a separate one).

In the final survey run, 12 scales were measured (totalling 52 items). Six were posited as explanatory (4 future L2 Selves scales, a Current L2 Self measure, and Integrative orientation), and six as posited outcome variables:

Table 10: Finalised scales (S3)

Scale	Initial items	Explanatory or Outcome?
1. Ideal Own L2 Self	4	Explanatory
2. Ideal Other L2 Self	4	Explanatory
3. Ought-to Own L2 Self	4	Explanatory
4. Ought-to Other L2 Self	4	Explanatory
5. Current L2 Self	4	Explanatory
6. Integrative Orientation	6	Explanatory
7. Learning Effort	5	Outcome
8. Current F2F Use	4	Outcome
9. Current Online Use	4	Outcome
10. L2 Anxiety	5	Outcome
11. L2 Target (by skill)	4	Outcome
12. L2 Speaker Self-Concept	4	Outcome

The next chapter draws upon S3's results, highlighting the value of replication and iterative redesign, to replicate findings, validate instruments (following Hiver and Al-Hoorie, 2020), and ensure findings are robust.

3.4.4 Data Analysis

In each instance, a similar analytical process was followed. Survey responses were downloaded from Qualtrics into MS Excel and imported into SPSS (from V.24 – V.28 were utilised over the course of the study). Recoding was conducted in Excel, with each variable then coded in SPSS. An array of techniques were utilised in analysis, including descriptive (means, distributions) and inferential (correlational, regression, and comparative) statistics, with several saved outputs attached as appendixes. Specific statistical decisions which emerged are also outlined briefly below.

3.4.4.1 Assessing validity

It was critical to assess that scales displayed adequate internal consistency (Bannigan and Watson, 2009, p. 3239). For S3, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted, assessing relational structures of primary scales (the six posited independent variables, and Learning Effort scale). The purpose of this analysis was to measure whether constructs demonstrated adequate discriminant validity. Learning Effort was included given concerns that criterion scales often fail to display such validity (Al-Hoorie, 2018, p. 733). Additional scales reflecting other outcome variables measured, such as L2 Use and Target, were distinct, as they were generally not subject to relational debate (as in the case of L2 self scales) and were analysed separately.

When assessing, “Exploratory factor analysis is used to gain insight into the structure or underlying processes that explain a collection of variables” (Pohlmann, 2004, p. 14). As noted, criticisms of studies utilising the L2MSS (Al-Hoorie, 2018, p. 733) emphasise the need for validation of the underlying structure of scales, given that “In L2 research, reliability has usually been emphasized, while validity considerations have been somewhat overlooked” (Al-Hoorie and Vitta, 2018, p. 729). Given the novel nature of several scales these issues were assessed statistically.

3.4.4.2 Comparing groups

When comparing more than two groups, two tests – ANOVA or Kruskal-Wallis - were utilised, depending on whether group means were skewed or relatively normally distributed across variable. The latter test is distribution and sample size assumption-free (see McKight and Najab, 2010, for review), reducing error risks (see Rusticus and Lovato’s (2014) simulation study on this issue). Findings of non-normal group distributions are common within psychological research, where non-equality of variance is “a realistic assumption” (Delacre, Lakens and Leys, 2017, p. 94), but appropriate statistical reasoning was used to ensure an appropriate test was selected, as noted within the body of the chapter.

3.4.4.3 Multiple comparisons

In comparisons, unadjusted significance tests for multiple comparisons are reported. Al-Hoorie and Vitta (2018) recommend applying the Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons (arguing failure to do so is one of “the seven sins of quantitative research” (p. 731)), but this is contestable. There are compelling philosophical reasons for the avoidance of corrections (Armstrong, 2014, p. 505; Rothman, 1990, p. 44)). Unadjusted comparisons are therefore reported, but effect sizes are always used in interpretation (per Larsen-Hall and Plonsky’s (2015, p. 135) council).

3.5 Narrative Interviews (n=42)

The purpose of utilising narrative methods was to draw upon a contextual perspective of how individual learners described their behaviour and desires. The power of narrative is to consider not simply what we believe, but what attributions we attach to these beliefs and emphasise in our telling. Self-narrative is one's "story of self", and exploring narrative is useful in analysing how "people attempt to understand events, the meanings they ascribe to various experiences, and the ways by which they organize and structure them through storied arcs" (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, p. 199). This approach is "based on the premise that we understand or make sense of our life through narrative" (Murray, 2009, p. 46, citing Bruner, 1990), and consequently entails asking learners to define their motivations using their own words to describe their own contexts. "Story" refers not merely to narrative structure - where past, present, and future are temporally ordered - but also how and why we emphasise particular identities, stories and events over others (Benson, 2004, pp. 17-18).

The term "narrative research" can be used in many senses, and in ways which can confuse. Some, such as Barkhuizen (2014), go so far as to argue that the term has been "…appropriated by researchers who exhibit various degrees of commitment to narrative…" (p. 450). As such, it is important to clarify the specific stance adopted here, of a more generalised nature. This approach links with wider conceptualisations of psychological narrative in LLM (e.g., Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015), drawing upon work such as McAdams and McLean (2013). Hiver et al., (2019) note that this view is premised upon the notion that:

> People explain who they are, how they came to be, and where they believe their lives may be going by formulating, telling, and revising stories to consciously legitimize their personal past and their imagined futures (Bruner, 1990) – (pp. 88-89).

The approach considered LLM in the process-based, temporal manner outlined above, not simply as something in which one might be "low" or "high" in, but a relational process (Ushioda, 2009), capable of partial understanding through "producing holistic descriptions of individual learners over time" (Lamb, 2011, p. 180). Participants were co-constructors, and emphasis was placed on how they described the ways that learning Irish fit (or did not fit) into a wider sense of self. This approach suited the study context: as adult learners, learners were expected to have complex histories (Ryan and Dörnyei, 2013, pp. 94-96). Some return to Irish after many years, having intermittent patterns of L2 engagement, while others may have never studied Irish before. A semi-structured approach provided space for learners to self-define their language learning while remaining within study parameters.

Thus, narrative reasoning framed both data collection (through a protocol with an implicitly temporal framing) and certain analyses (through the collation of narrative themes such as self-understanding/self-expression, rooted in how learners perceived of their learning within a wider self). Narrative structure was not utilised as the mode or medium of analysis itself, as can be the case in studies which adopt a critical and discourse analysis-aligned approach (e.g., Pavlenko, 2003). Relatedly, though narrative approaches are often utilised for prolonged, "thick" description (Murray, 2009, p. 57), this was also not the case here; the approach adopted focused upon larger questions within the research project and a single interview design was employed, rather than a multi-interview design, as might be more typical in an extended narrative project, focusing on an often quite small number of participants.

3.5.1 Interviewee recruitment

Interviewees were recruited through three means. A first group from respondents to a survey prompt at the end of the course **Irish 108** (see **Appendix E1**), ran in April 2019. These learners were asked a series of open-ended questions regarding their motivations to learn and to provide an email address through which they could be contacted to arrange an interview. The logic for placing this prompt at the end of the course was, initially, to attract more committed learners. As the aims were to explore contextual experience, whether learners differed in underlying commitment was less important within this frame. Following n=12 such interviews, n=25 learners were recruited as sub-samples of responses to a prompt included in quantitative surveys, to broaden participant pools. The third, convenience-based mechanism was through certain respondents who informally contacted the researcher through email regarding desires to participate in further research. N=5 such learners were interviewed, the majority over the course of 2020. Due to their openness to extended participation, interviewees are likely non-representative of respondents within quantitative branches, but their (a)typicality in this regard was not the primary lens of analysis; rather, exploration of their experience, yielding "rich understandings of how language learning motivation can be deeply intertwined with a person's life experience and learning history..." (Ushioda, 2019a, p. 198), is an inquiry valuable on its own merits.

3.5.2 Practice and protocol

A semi-structured approach was adopted, meaning that interviews were conducted using a predesigned protocol (see **Appendix E2**), but with the flexibility to explore specific questions dependent upon circumstances/context (see Galleta, 2013, for a detailed account of the semi-structured approach). The protocol focused on the following broad elements:

- **Family background and heritage** – was the respondent raised in an Irish/Irish heritage family?
- **Learning experiences** – what is their history learning the language to this point, and challenges they have faced in doing so?
- **Methods utilised –** how had they engaged with the language?
- **Temporal change** – had desires and motivation to learn Irish changed over time, and if so, how?
- **Future goals and envisioned uses** – what did/does the learner hope to achieve in the longer term? Is there a point at which they would be satisfied?
- **Importance and reflection** – what does learning Irish ultimately mean to them?

Data were analysed within the frame of **RQs**, allowing learners to recount their experiences holistically, including difficulties faced in learning Irish over time. When referencing future goals and language use, terminology referring to the constructs under study (L2 selves, an Integrative orientation) were generally avoided, to ensure respondents were not primed with terminology salient to the study.

3.5.3 Medium of Interview

Interviews were primarily conducted via Skype (n=33), with others via mobile phone call (n=2), ZOOM (n=1) and WhatsApp audio (n=1). N=5 F2F interviews were conducted in Dublin over the course of the project: three at Dublin City University, and two at locations in Dublin convenient for interviewees. Interviewing online presents certain challenges, some of which are less relevant in F2F interviews (Deakin and Wakefield, 2014, p. 605). Several interviews were recorded in multiple parts due to technical difficulties (such as frozen Wi-Fi), but none were completed at two separate points in time.

3.5.4 Positional elements

Ushioda (2019a, p. 206) argues that interviewing is a fundamentally dynamic and relational process, aspects which were apparent when generating, processing, and analysing data. Using interpretive approaches, a researcher must be conscious of their role not as neutral observer, but co-constructor, in the interview itself and during subsequent analysis (see Lamb, 2018, pp. 361-363; Finlay, 2002, p. 212). An empathetic listening approach was followed, as outlined by Seidman (2006), and an open, conversational tone was maintained within interviews. Patton's (2015, cited in Prior, 2018, p. 489) useful advice regarding a need to always be "conveying empathy and understanding without judgement" (p. 458) was followed, given the age and life differences between the researcher and interviewees. Ethical and

reflective elements are important considerations, in that the researcher and his positional perspectives shape the process of analysis.

3.5.5 Transcription procedures

The researcher transcribed interviews with the help of an initial auto-transcribing AI programme. The nature of transcription, including the degree of detail one should include, is debated (see Davidson, 2009). Here, a simplified approach was adopted, where learner accounts were annotated with special characters only for breaks in conversation, such as where the respondent laughed or placed emphasis on a particular word. Given concern was not analysis of micro-interaction (as in discourse analysis approaches, see Pavlenko, 2007, p. 169), a more-detailed approach was not warranted. Generally, participants were emailed a draft of the transcript via email, and several learners demonstrated sustained interest in the research, encouraged by the researcher, aiding with further analytical reasoning.

3.5.6 Data Analysis and interpretation

Data analysis was conducted in a sequential manner, encompassing a variety of analytical methods at specific points of data generation and analysis:

Table 11: Iterations of Qualitative Coding

Phase of analysis	Description of activity	Method
1. Annotation	Researcher notes and comments generating during transcription.	Track-changes (MS Word) during process of transcription and editing.
2. Generation of formalised coding structure	Systemic coding of transcripts, and generation of individualised codes.	NVIVO (v.24 + v.25)
3. Synthesis, utilising research questions as guiding foci.	Mapping of codes into a framework of understanding, response to RQs, while challenging assumptions.	NVIVO (v.25), Microsoft Excel, and note-taking process.

Bazeley (2013, p. 139) distinguishes “theory-driven” coding approaches, where a researcher has extensive *a priori* conceptualisations regarding theory and data, from more exploratory inquiry, in which the researcher attempts to generate new insights inductively. This project is more aligned to the former, which, as MacFarlane and O’Reilly-De Brún (2011) note, “…can be useful to sensitize researchers to concepts and processes that they might not necessarily identify through inductive processes” (in abstract). While the study context is somewhat novel, LLM includes mature theoretical constructs, and indeed, criticism focuses more on the limited practical application of said theories (Al-Hoorie et al. 2021, pp. 137-38). Although existing

theory shaped understanding of qualitative data, it was not the case that a naïve or simplistic understanding were adopted (see **Section 3.3.3**, and Pavlenko, 2007, describing autobiographical narrative):

> In other words, in the absence of a theoretical framework and a clear methodological procedure, content analysis may result in a laundry list of observations, factors, or categories, illustrated by quotes from participants, that misses the links between the categories, essentializes particular descriptions, and fails to describe the larger picture where they may fit. - (p. 167).

Every attempt was made to identify commonalities within learner accounts, while maintaining the idiosyncratic or unique, for purposes of deeper understanding of why and how learners differed.

For example, see below extract, from Interview No. 25 (Celia[10]):

> Um I have, like, I think I've done really well with like children's like, dictionaries and like children's materials, better than I've done with like kind of adult material. I actually read, like I'm terrible at speaking like, I'm horrific at it, like horrific at it. And I'm also embarrassed to try to speak, so that probably is a lot of that comes into it, but I'm much better at reading than I am at like being able to speak because I have a hard time with, like, retrieving words for what I want to say…. – Interview 25.

Four codes were applied to this extract; **1. Easier to use children's resources than adult, 2. Low levels of confidence, 3. Lack of confidence in speaking (personality),** and **4. L2 Use – Anxiety.** The first two are largely semantic and descriptive; the latter two more latent, linking to analytical reasoning. An interpretation was that reasons/attributions learners gave for reticence at communicating through Irish (common in an Irish L2 learning context, see Nic Fhlannchadha and Hickey, 2018; Flynn, 2020) varied; here, Celia articulated both her embarrassment speaking Irish and her perceived lack of success doing so (being "horrific" at it) as being entwined. Analytically, this draws attention to the embodied nature of an L2 self; an image of oneself speaking Irish is personal, as Ushioda (2019b) notes:

> …L2 learners who are classified as motivated by an ideal L2 self will have uniquely individual visions of their future possible selves, and these personal visions cannot be defined in a generic way… - (p. 667).

Celia's reticence is individualised, rooted in beliefs that she's "terrible at speaking" and avoids learning interactions where she might have to do so. As explored within the interview, it has roots in the interplay of beliefs with her social context, constituting what Kalaja et al. (2011) term "an ambiguous and dynamic relationship between an object and its context" (p.47). Self-consciousness regarding accent, social judgement, and viewing expressive outlets as limited were all explored. A latent factor referenced through preference for reading to writing is that Celia's L2 self is, to a point, shaped by her broader self-perception. It may be less likely that

[10] In all instances referring to interviewees, pseudonyms are utilised.

Celia would envision herself using Irish at a party with friends than she would reading an Irish language book, for example.

Coding was used to account for these analytical distinctions, resulting initially in over one thousand unique codes. A process of data reduction was then followed, compiling themes drawing on both base codes and **RQs**. As explained by Braun and Clarke (2019):

> Themes are creative and interpretive *stories* about the data, produced at the intersection of the researcher's theoretical assumptions, their analytic resources and skill, and the data themselves. - (p. 594, emphasis in original)

Codes were merged, paired, and collapsed, utilising **RQs** as analytical guides (each of the conceptual models, alongside explanatory notes, can be found at **Appendix E3**). Answering these questions proceeded through development of specific themes, responsive to study inquiry.

3.6 Methodological limitations

Lastly, all research must account for the limitations of the methodological choices selected. Maxwell and Loomis (2004) caution that researchers should consider "how might the conclusions of the study be wrong?" (p. 247). A premise underpinning this warning is the fallibility of every method. In accepting multiple perspectives there are inevitable trade-offs in using one over another. None provide a complete picture of social reality, and all are partial glimpses. Three shared limitations are reflected upon:

- Self-report data
- Non-longitudinal
- The COVID-19 pandemic

These are not the sole limitations, but are foundational, and consequently are considered in turn. Examples more method-specific (e.g., the ambiguity of statistical analysis, delineating internal from external context in qualitative accounts) are considered within their respective empirical chapters.

3.6.1 Self-report data

Although this study draws upon substantial data, both methods (survey/interview) are self-report and thus narrow exploration to a) what respondent believes about themselves, and b) what they *can* know/express about themselves (Paulhus and Vazire, 2007, p. 232). Self-report methods have colourfully been described as "psychology's four-letter word" (Haeffel and Howard, 2010), assessing their overuse in many domains of psychological research.

Appreciation of context (e.g., Ushioda, 2015), including unconscious motivation, has led to criticism of these approaches within LLM:

> However, research on learners' attitudes toward L2 speakers has generally focused on explicit attitudes, as evident from the reliance on self-report questionnaires and interviews. It is plausible that another, implicit dimension also plays a role in language motivation. – (Al-Hoorie, 2016, p. 427).

Al-Hoorie (2016) reported that L2 referents only proved relevant to developing Ideal L2 Selves when *both* implicit and explicit attitudes towards L2 speakers were positive (ibid, p. 442), implying discrepancies between self-reported, and subconscious, beliefs. While this promising trend should not be discounted, two defences of the use of self-report data can be mustered. The first is that, as Ushioda (2009) notes, researchers are often explicitly interested in the self-understandings of respondents (p. 217). Narrative methods are premised on an inherent value of personal reflection as an appropriate means of analysis, "letting the participant's voice be heard" (Murray, 2009, p. 60), of valuing what they say as reflections of their perceptions, rather than questioning the veracity of their stories (ibid, p.58).

Secondly, accepting that a core limitation of cross-sectional research is ambiguity as to respondent interpretation, practical elements must be balanced. Though critiqued, it is unclear how specifically an interfacing subconscious/unconscious element can be incorporated within many study designs. The value and importance of well-designed, replicated instruments should be affirmed. Although the limitations of self-report data should be noted, and the unknown, in this context, of subconscious motivation, it may also be that "As a method for accurate personality assessment, self-report is dreadful – yet, overall, more effective than any alternative" (Paulhus and Vazire, 2007, p. 235).

3.6.2 Non-longitudinal data

A second concern is what Dörnyei, MacIntyre and Henry (2015) refer to as the "dynamic turn" in LLM; the shift from conceptualising motivation as a trait-like construct, in which learners are higher or lower in, to a dynamic, evolving, and fluid property (e.g., Hiver and Papi, 2019). If the latter perspective is accepted, measures capturing this dynamism, either quantitatively or qualitatively (such as Waninge, Dörnyei and De Bot, 2014), are useful, and add a significant contribution to the field.

Both methods adopted here are single-instance collection. They are non-longitudinal, where learners are observed or queried for/over extended periods. As such, it was not possible to consider the degree to which learner motivation fluctuated over time. Two corresponding elements are noted. Firstly, although not longitudinal, and data generated within interviews were single instance, learners often reflected on temporal development, giving insight into how they perceived their own motivation over time. Secondly, recognising the limitations of single-

instance collection can be reconciled fruitfully with the focus here; while understanding change is critical, the **RQs** considered within the thesis assess the correlational strength and theoretical validity of the L2MSS, a somewhat different focus (see Ryan, 2019). Further longitudinal inquiry could assess the relations observed here, both quantitively and qualitatively, and would be a logical next step to further findings.

3.6.3 COVID-19 pandemic

Le vent se lève! ...il faut tenter de vivre!

[The wind is rising! . . . We must try to live!] – Paul Valéry (trans: C. Day Lewis)

The COVID-19 pandemic was in some senses transformational for this project but in others had little impact, and while not in a conventional sense a "limitation", should certainly be considered. From inception, this study focused on non-formal and primarily online language learning, and therefore the pandemic was not disruptive to data collection. Except for a handful of pre-pandemic interviews conducted F2F, data was collected online, meaning the researcher was ahead (through blissful ignorance) of the unknown curve which led to a global lockdown in 2020. S3 was collected in early 2021, and as such, that data should be contextualised as emerging from what was a fluid global context. Arguably, the pandemic made this research topic more relevant, "…when most of the world has to suddenly switch on digitally" (Chik and Benson, 2020, p. 1), as well as opening both opportunities and challenges for language teachers and learners (Dutton, 2021). It was also inspirational to see the power of language, as communities and individuals turned to the spoken and written word to foster connection and community (Howley, 2020).

Perhaps the more important reframing the pandemic brought to this project was perspective. Despite initial surges in online learning, there is evidence that the pandemic "…has rendered social inequalities…more visible and piercing" (James and Thériault (2020, p. 129), being "a twisted tale of two cities" (Brown, 2021b, p. 16). At micro-level, it unquestionably impacted the reflective practice of the researcher, who remained healthy but was not immune to the stresses of prolonged lockdowns. This undoubtedly provoked empathy when analysing the accounts of learners who described isolation or disconnection in the rather different context of their language learning. It also highlighted the shared humanity and commonality that became an important thread in analysis and should not be ignored or left unsaid (Kharchenko, 2021).

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter outlines the study design of the thesis, including how two contrasting methods of data generation consider differing aspects of the three overarching RQs. Justification for methodological choices, including how multiple methods are additive for exploring complexity of learner motivation, has been presented. The use of multiple theoretical perspectives, in respectful dialogue with each other (Greene and Hall, 2010), is affirmed, and the challenging questions of integrating diverse forms of data in a theoretically coherent frame outlined. The limitations of methodological choices have been considered, including both the non-longitudinal study design and the self-report data utilised. In the next chapter, the first branch - findings of a survey instrument comparing the self-based concepts of study across a wide cross-section of non-formal adult learners of Irish- is reported and analysed.

4. Quantitative survey (n=638)

This chapter reports specifically on the results of S3, the primary survey instrument. A of summary of findings and general overview of participants are presented before analysis. As noted within the previous chapter, the link to the survey was placed on four ab-initio courses from January to April 2021: Irish 101 (twice), Irish 102, and Irish 103. All completed survey responses (n=638) were downloaded from Qualtrics, placed in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, and imported into SPSS (v.27), where primary analysis was conducted. Outputs were saved and utilised for creation of tables and graphs. Certain responses contained missing data, but the number was single digit; representing a small fraction of overall responses, these are considered random, and reported within the body of text/tables as appropriate.

4.1 Participant Overview and Profile

Given that few studies explore the underlying demographic profiles of LMOOC learners, the sample was analysed regarding an array of background variables (e.g., age, nationality, and learning experiences).

Table 12: Demographical data regarding survey participants (n=638)

Variable (valid n)	Option	Valid n	% Valid respondents
Course (n=637)	*Irish 101*	580	91.1%
	Irish 102	42	6.6%
	Irish 103	15	2.4%
Age[11] (n=636)	18-34	196	30.8%
	35-54	186	29.2%
	55+	254	39.9%
Gender (n=637)	Male	181	28.4%
	Female	431	67.7%
	Other	18	2.8%
	Prefer Not to say	7	1.1%
Nationality (n=632)	Irish	140	22.2%
	American	187	29.6%
	British	136	21.5%
	Canadian	20	3.2%
	Australian	22	3.5%

[11] Categories regarding age are collapsed for clarity's sake. Categories 1 and 2 consist of the cumulative n of two options (18-24, 25-34, and 35-44, 45-54, respectively). Category 3 is the cumulative n of four options (55-64, 65-74, 75-84, and 85+).

	New Zealander	7	1.1%
	Other	120	18.9%
Are you of Irish heritage? (n=605)	Yes	420	69.4%
	No	156	25.8%
	I don't know	29	4.8%
Have you ever encountered Irish before? (n=636)	Yes, definitely + Yes	483	76.0%
	I might or might not have	31	4.9%
	No + Definitely not	122	19.2%
Have you ever studied Irish before? (n=637)	Yes, formally	91	14.3%
	Yes, informally	179	28.1%
	Yes, both formally and informally	35	5.5%
	No	308	48.4%
	Other (please specify)	24	3.8%
Were the questions on this survey clear? (n= 604)	Yes, very + Yes	510	83.9%
	Somewhat	84	13.3%
	Not very + Not at all	18	2.8%

Table 11 presents respondent demographics. The large majority (91.1%) answered via the *Irish 101* course. This is not surprising; the course is by far the most popular, and two runs were recorded. Participants were relatively mature (40% being 55 or older) and two-thirds of respondents self-identified as female, while three-in-ten self-identified as male. Small numbers self-identified as "Other" or preferred not to state their gender identity. A substantial majority, 69.4%, reported Irish nationality or heritage, with approximately equal numbers of Irish, British, and American learners found. One-in-five learners reported non-Anglophone nationality, indicating that the participant sample was diverse (also inferable from the 25.8% of learners without Irish heritage).

Learners reported diverse levels of experiences with Irish; as might be expected, a minority had never encountered Irish before (19.2%), though the large majority (76.0%) had. Learners were split into those who had (cumulative % = 47.9%) and had not (48.4%) studied Irish

before. Learners who had done so reported informal over formal experience by a two-to-one margin (a small number reported both formal and informal experience). Although much research on adult Irish L2 learners focuses on those learning in formal contexts, large numbers clearly engage with Irish primarily on an informal basis using online resources and assessing differences between these learners is considered in **RQ2**.

A final item assessed clarity. The large majority (83.9%) indicated that they found survey questions to be clear, with a minority finding them somewhat clear (13.9%), and a small minority (2.8%) indicating that they were unclear. This item was included to reflect critically on whether respondents understood the questions asked.

4.1.2 Summary of findings

Figure 14, represented below, highlights key findings regarding each question. Elaborations of these points are also presented, to guide the reader on the most important issues raised.

Figure 14: Summary of survey findings

RQ1

Sample level L2MSS analysis (General)

- Scales demonstrate internal/external validity,
- Strong links between L2 guides and motivated behaviour,
- Gaps regarding aspirational and actual L2 use,
- "Own" guides and Integrative scale central to learning outcomes.

RQ2

L2 learning experiences (Specific)

- Sample split regarding previous L2 experience,
- Large differences by whether a learner had experience, but form of experience (e.g. formal, informal) less meaningful,
- Level of self-reported L2 competence impact L2 selves,
- Correlations with learning effort lower where SRP is higher.

RQ3

Heritage and social identity (Specfic)

- Irish learners report higher L2 selves, but with small effects,
- Ought-to Own scale particularly strong amongst Irish and LIH learners,
- Distance of heritage not relevant regarding variables,
- Correlations with learning effort lower amongst Irish learners.

4.1.2.1 RQ1: Sample level L2MSS analysis

RQ1 asked whether the four-guide L2MSS, Current L2 Self, and Integrative Orientation measured are useful in analysing the motivations of the learners surveyed. Learners were as likely to possess an Ideal Own ($M = 4.61$, $SD = 1.50$) as Ideal Other ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 1.42$), somewhat less likely to identify an Ought-to Own ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 1.78$), and more rarely the Ought-to Other ($M = 2.04$, $SD = 1.09$). This supports a four-guide model, as many felt personal obligation, but no external pressure, to learn Irish. Others could be seen as supportive of possible success while not expectant that respondents *should* learn Irish and they were very positive regarding the Integrative scale ($M = 5.41$, $SD = 1.13$), confirming its relevance. The Current L2 Self was low ($M = 2.13$, $SD = 1.08$), suggesting many feel discrepancy between desired future L2 targets and present proficiencies.

Correlated with effort, strong relationships with the Ideal Own ($r = .64^{**}$), Ought-to Own ($r = .55^{**}$) and Integrative ($.52^{**}$) scales were found. Weaker relationships with the Ideal Other ($r = .39^{**}$), Current L2 Self ($r = .35^{**}$), and Ought-to Other ($r = .30^{**}$) were uncovered. A multiple regression confirmed that the Ideal Own was the most substantial predictor of effort ($\beta = .36$, $t = 7.97^{**}$), while the Integrative orientation ($\beta = .18$, $t = 4.84^{**}$) and Ought-to Own ($\beta = .19$, $t = 4.57^{**}$) were weaker predictors (though independently substantial).

The final portion of **RQ1** considers L2 use-related variables. Learners report lower levels of Current L2 use, either face-to-face ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 1.39$) or online ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 1.32$), than effort expended on learning, illustrating an effort-use gap. Generally, correlations with future L2 guides were also lower when use-related variables were analysed. While there is a distinction between effort learning a language and desires to communicate using the L2 (reported more broadly, see Yashima, 2002, p. 62)) these discrepancies suggest learners struggle to identify L2 uses, even when motivated at learning Irish.

4.1.2.2 RQ2: L2 learning experiences

RQ2 examined whether the constructs measured differed significantly by two assessments of L2 experience: i) **form of experience** (i.e., formal, informal, both, none) and ii) **self-reported proficiency** (SRP) speaking Irish.

Learners with both formal and non-formal experience (n=35) reported higher motivation across nearly all variables, while learners with no learning experience (n=308) reported lower. Learners with either formal (n=91) or informal (n=179) experience generally ranked equivalent; form itself is not especially important in this context. Magnitudes of differences across scales varied considerably. “Own” L2 guides, both Ideal and Ought-to Own had far larger effects than “Other” L2 guides, whether Ideal or Ought-to. This implies that social context varies less amongst learner, and that internal self-concept, not a supportive social milieu, that is substantially higher amongst more-experienced learners. Analysing L2 use, learners differed most in Current Online Use scale, providing further evidence that constraints are present for many learners, and online learning is more accessible than F2F, in most cases.

Learners with higher **SRP** also report higher levels of motivation, and links between SRP and L2 use were larger than by form of L2 experience. Internalised, “Own” L2 guides varied more than “Other” ones, and learners differed substantially based on the array of L2 use variables. This was most notable regarding L2 Target and Current Online Use, and more modestly regarding both Current F2F Use and L2 Anxiety.

Learners were contrasted by scales to answer whether general findings of **RQ1** were constant amongst sub-groups. Correlational comparisons assessed strength and rank order, with relationships stable across sub-sample by experience (though correlations were higher where learners were ab-initio). When **SRP** was the grouping variable, a clear trend was visible, that higher **SRP** linked to lower correlations between L2 guides and effort (though not, interestingly, L2 Target). This decline could reflect lessening self-discrepancy, indicating learners with higher levels of L2 competency feel less motivated to expend additional effort learning Irish. For learners at ab-initio level, the close relationship with L2 learning behaviour would indicate a need for effort to achieve the goals the learner has in mind, less salient as levels of self-assessed competency increase and goals may be satiated quite quickly.

4.1.2.3 RQ3: Heritage and social identity

RQ3 considered whether learners differ by heritage and nationality, proxies for affective/social-psychological links to Irish (L2). Disparities between three groups - Irish learners (n=140), Learners of Irish Heritage (LIHs) (n=285) and non-Irish identifying learners (NILs) (n=154) - are explored, in addition to assessing distance of heritage. Irish learners generally reported the highest L2 selves, and L2 use with large effects on the Current L2 Self and the Ought-to Own scales. Across other scales, differences are small, and there is limited evidence that these social-psychological categories are determinative of motivation levels and self-concept. Two significant behavioural findings relate to Learning Effort and L2 Target. Learning Effort differed modestly across categories ($F(2,576) = 6.16$, $p = .00$, $eta^2 = .021$), while L2 Targets had a larger effect ($F(2,576) = 17.58$, $p = .00$, $eta^2 = .058$).

Comparing whether a learner had L2 experience mediated these effects revealed learners with experience differed significantly by heritage category, while ab-initio learners did not, across most variables (excepting Ought-to Own). Given its unique significance across contexts, the Ought-to Own scale is the clearest indication of where Irish and LIH learners might differ from NILs, in feeling personalised obligations to learn Irish. Significant differences were observed, although the effect size was twice as high where learners had experience ($eta^2 = .071$) as when they did not ($eta^2 = .035$), reinforcing this distinction.

Irish learners reported weaker correlations between L2 guides and learning effort than either other group, likely reflecting the lower correlations found in **RQ2**. Irish learners were more likely to have learned the language, and reported higher levels of L2 competency, plausibly explaining this finding. A high correlation between the Ought-to Own and Learning Effort amongst LIHs (r = .64**) suggests that personal obligation is a powerful motivator amongst such learners.

The final section examined whether genealogical distance of a learner's heritage from Ireland was impactful. Across most variables, non-significant differences were found and no clear pattern was visible. The conclusion is that the generational distance of Irish heritage is not a meaningful distinguisher of the levels of motivation reported within this sample.

4.2 RQ1 - How well do existing theories of LLM explain the motivations of non-formal adult Irish L2 learners?

Table 13: RQ1 Restatement

Research Question	**Operationalisation (Quantitative Survey)**
4. How well do existing theoretical frameworks within the field of LLM (primarily the L2MSS and SEM) describe the motivations of those learning Irish using non-formal means? Are these theories in tension, complementary, or contrastive, in this study context?	• Do selected constructs display **internal and external forms of validity**? • Are constructs **correlated with, and predictive of, a series of L2** learning and usage variables, as the theory would imply? • Are magnitudes **comparable** with those reported in a wider global literature?

As outlined above, **RQ1** considers whether constructs displayed adequate statistical validity, being correlated with, and predictive of, the range of motivated and L2-use oriented variables. This focused on two sub-questions:

- What was the distribution and frequencies of various L2 self-related and outcome constructs?
- How strong were relationships between these constructs and the outcome variables relating to Learning Effort, L2 Target, and L2 Use?

The analysis ascertained whether the well-developed theoretical frameworks, and in particular four-guide L2MSS, were generalisable to this context. Though studies have focused on this question in a broader sense, no study to date has queried the relationships between these constructs as statistically operationalised, particularly amongst a sample containing this level of diversity with Irish as the L2.

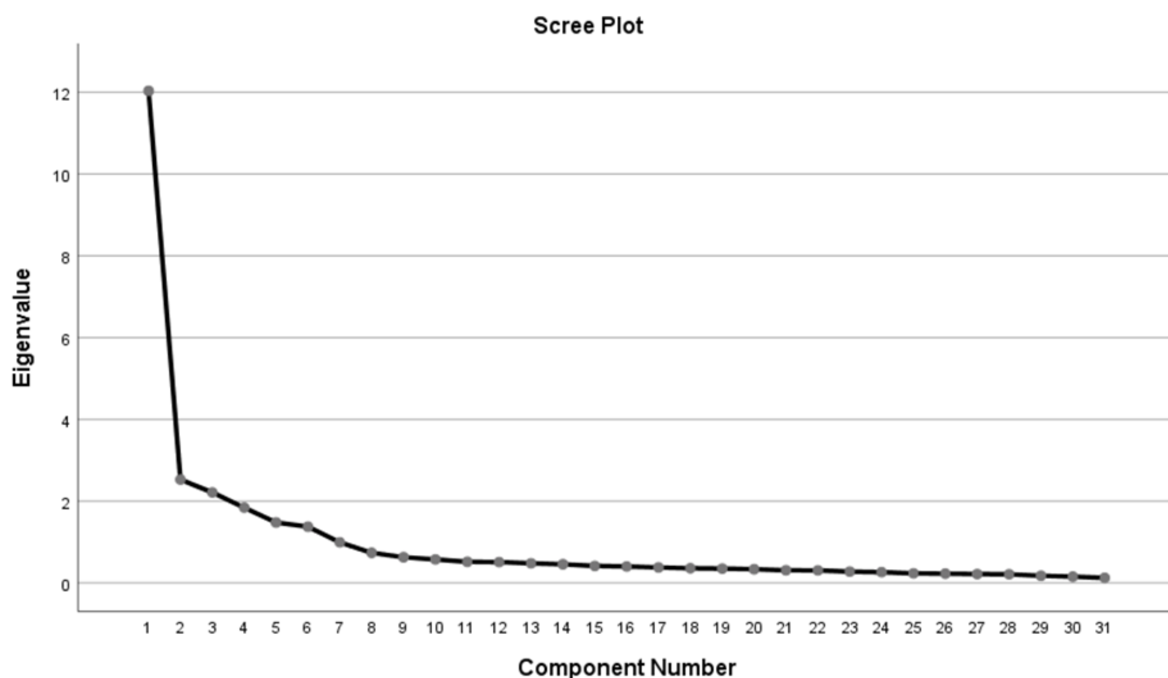
4.2.1 Factor Analysis

A principal components analysis was conducted, using all responses where the 31 items were answered (n=618). A direct oblimin method was implemented, with a cut-off point of <.40 used as minimum for factor loadings, to allow for factor intercorrelation. Kaiser-Melkin-Olkin's test was significant, with excellent loading (p = .00, KMO = .942) (criteria from Williams, Onsman and Brown, 2010, p. 5). Criteria for judging the number of factors to extract is a weakness of factor analysis, given that there are no universally accepted guidelines for doing so (Henson and Roberts, 2006, p. 396). Common heuristics range from the Kaiser-Guttman rule, in which factors with an eigenvalue < 1 are maintained (Guttman, 1954; Kaiser, 1960), to Cattell's Scree

test, where factor loadings are examined visually for an "elbow" at which additionally factors no longer appear significant (Cattell, 1966).

Given that i) factors were assumed correlated, and that ii) the primary purpose was to assess scale validity, scree analysis and the Kaiser-Guttman rule were utilised in conjunction (following Henson and Roberts' advice (2006) that more than one criteria should be used (p. 410)). Analysis of both the Pattern and Structure Matrixes for item inter-correlations was also conducted. Using the first criteria (Kaiser-Guttman) lead to an initial extraction of six factors, but a seventh factor with an eigenvalue of .99 was also identified and subsequently extracted.[12]

Figure 15: Scree Plot (L2 Selves factor analysis)



This latter model, represented above, contained factors representing each scale – given the seventh lay on the edge of the criteria, it was maintained. Although both methods can result in factor over extraction (see Hoyle and Duvall, 2004, pp. 304-305), heed was taken of Tabachnick and Fidell's (1996) council that "The final choice amongst alternatives depends on the researcher's assessment of its interpretability and scientific utility" (p. 636, cited in Henson and Roberts, 2006, p. 396). Hair et al's (2014) suggestion that a researcher must balance differing concerns – conceptual reasoning and what is supportable within a dataset (p. 107) - also guided.

[12] Contrasting models are included in **Appendix 4A.**

Item-level analysis

Demonstrating the utility of this process, three items proved problematic in extraction:

Table 14: Items with significant cross-load (EFA)

Item	Posited scale	Issue
"I constantly think about my Irish learning activities."	Learning Effort	Failed to load against factor unidimensionally.
"I want to become similar to the people who speak Irish."	Integrative	Failed to load against factor unidimensionally.
"Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to speak to different people."	Integrative	Loaded against several factors.

The first two, on the Learning Effort, and Integrative Scales, both failed to load unitarily into their respective factors in the Pattern Matrix, cross loading significantly:

Table 15: Item cross-loadings (EFA)

Item/Factor[13]	1. IO	2. OTOth	3. IOth	4. CL2S	5. LE	6. INT	7. OTO
I constantly think about my Irish learning activities.	.506				-.642		.611
I want to become similar to the people who speak Irish.	.484		-.426			.579	.493
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to speak to different people.	.701		-.471			.651	

The first suggests that thinking frequently about learning Irish links not only with effort, but also to an Ideal and (interestingly) Ought-to Own. The second item - desiring to become like people who speak Irish, an Integrative item - loaded meaningfully across *four* factors. One explanation, linking to Claro (2019), is that distinguishing "similarity" to other speakers/learners is difficult, in that it relates to both externalised identification with social others, and internalised self-concept. The third item, that learning was important in allowing a learner to speak to others, was curious, loading most strongly with the Ideal Own scale and Integrative scale, but also the Ideal Other. An explanation is that in referencing different persons, this item tapped

[13] Factor codes – 1. Ideal Own, 2. Ought-to Other, 3. Ideal Other, 4. Current L2 Self, 5. Learning Effort, 6. Integrative, 7. Ought-to Own.

into idealised imagery of L2 use with L2 referents, rather than the cultural identification tapped by other items on the Integrative scale.

These items were removed from further analysis for clarity's sake, as cross-load made it difficult to justify inclusion on one scale (over others), which would limit relational validity. The final number of items on each scale was 4, a reasonable number for assessing each construct (Dörnyei and Csizér, 2012, p. 76).

4.2.2 Descriptive Analysis

4.2.1.1 L2 Selves

Table 16: Descriptive statistics (L2 Guides and Integrative Orientation)

Scale	Items	α	N	Mean	SD
Ideal Own	4	.89	638	**4.61**	**1.50**
Ideal Other	4	.86	638	**4.47**	**1.42**
Ought-to Own	4	.93	638	**3.91**	**1.78**
Ought-to Other	4	.89	638	**2.04**	**1.09**
Integrative	4	.80	637	**5.41**	**1.13**
Current L2 Self	4	.77	637	**2.13**	**1.08**

Reliability was next assessed, using Cronbach's Alpha to measure internal consistency, as well as means and SDs. Ideal guides had equivalent means, while the Ought-to Own, (measuring personal obligation), was far higher than the Ought-to Other, (the expectations of others). Although learners do not feel social pressure to learn Irish, many feel an internalised responsibility to do so. Limited social obligation could link to the voluntary nature of this learning, but personal responsibility ratings mean that the lack of compulsion does not mean learners do not feel a responsibility to learn. As noted in other studies (Flynn and Harris, 2016; Petit, 2016) adult Irish L2 learners often display complex motivations, cultural, social, personal, and incorporating efforts to preserve the language (see also Lasagabaster and Ó Laoire, 2004). These complexities are present here, suggesting the dynamics of a two-guide, Ideal (implied Own) and Ought-to (implied Other) distinction fails to capture this nuance. Further supporting this proposition, a majority agree with statements that friends and family members will be proud if they learn Irish but would not be disappointed were they to fail to do so. Possible success was perceived as valued by those around respondents, but possible failure was not expected to lead to judgement:

Table 17: Responses to specific items – Ideal and Ought-to Other scales

Item	Percentage agreeing	Neutral	Disagreeing
Ideal Other items			
My family will be proud of me if one day I learn to speak Irish fluently.	**59.2%**	**22.3%**	**18.5%**
My friends will be proud of me if one day I learn Irish fluently.	**54.5%**	**24.6%**	**20.9%**
Ought-to Other items			
My family would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.	**4.8%**	**15.2%**	**80.1%**
My friends would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.	**3.2%**	**14.9%**	**82.0%**

This asymmetry exists regardless of background or heritage, as explored below. That many feel self-imposed responsibilities to learn the language is also in keeping with the limited literature examining this question (Xie, 2014; MacIntyre, Moore and Sparling, 2017, are examples). Consider the below item from the Ought-to Own scale, contrasting with the Ought-to Other items; a narrow majority of respondents agreed they would feel disappointed in themselves, though others would not be disappointed in them.

Table 18: Responses to item – Ought-to Own

Item	Percentage agreeing	Neutral	Disagreeing
Ought-to Own			
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will be disappointed in myself.	**53.7%**	**13.0%**	**33.2%**

This item bifurcated more than the "Other" guide. Given that a third of respondents *disagreed* with the item, the Ought-to Own was more varied within the sample than the other guides (also demonstrated through the higher SD, = 1.78).

The Integrative scale recorded a higher mean than L2 guides, affirming its' importance. As explored below, this higher mean might suggest the construct is dispositional, reflecting attitudes rather than experience. This point is emphasised by Ushioda (2019b; 666); positive attitudes towards L2 culture can be expected from L2 learners regardless of whether they

envision themselves becoming L2 speakers. L2 guides, in contrast, can reflect depth of vision, and consequences, both positive and negative, attached by a learner to their learning.

The Current L2 Self was, alongside the Ought-to Other, very low. This is unsurprising, as it measures the degree to which respondents felt speaking Irish well was part of present self-concept (e.g. ‘I see myself as someone who is good at speaking Irish at present’). Findings denote discrepancy was present on aggregate, given gaps between the degree to which learners felt comfortable speaking Irish at present, and the degree they desired to, and could envision themselves, doing so in future.

4.2.2.2 L2 Use and Learning variables – descriptive statistics

Behavioural variables were then analysed. Three L2 use scales were measured: **Current F2F Use, Current Online Use,** and **L2 Anxiety**. **Learning Effort,** the central criterion variable, measured the effort learners reported expending presently, while a longer-term outcome was **L2 Target**, a five-point Likert-like scale, with descriptive statements utilised to describe subjective competence levels. These scales allow for comparison of various learning behaviours, both in F2F contexts and online.

Table 19: Descriptive statistics (L2 Use)

Scale	Items	α	Valid N	Mean	SD
Learning Effort	4	.92	638	**4.54**	**1.34**
Current F2F Use	3[14]	.81	637	**2.99**	**1.39**
Current Online Use	4	.77	638	**3.44**	**1.32**
L2 Anxiety	5	.87	638	**4.48**	**1.53**
L2 Target*	4	.95	638	**3.92**	**.94**

*Measured using a five-point scale, with one item per skill (e.g., reading, writing)

Learning Effort leaned positive, demonstrating strong internal consistency. Learners were less likely to report *using* Irish, and somewhat more likely to do so online than in F2F contexts. Data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic, but similar findings were found in S2 (conducted over a year before), suggesting (echoing Flynn’s (2020) findings) that learners struggle to identify F2F uses. L2 Anxiety, measuring discomfort learners felt at the prospect of using Irish, both online and face-to-face, was higher than present L2 use, indicating negative affect contemplating L2 use was common. The scale measuring future L2 targets, including

[14] One item was removed due to a substantially higher mean than others, see p. 101.

distinct L2 skills, illustrated that learners possessed a moderate level of desired proficiency (elaborated upon below). This can be contrasted with how learners described their limited competence at present (M = 2.10, SD = .95), indicating a large gap between targets and present levels of self-described proficiency.

4.2.3 Correlational analysis – relations and predictions

The wider utility of statistical methods lies not solely in descriptive analysis, but in examining construct relations, such as through correlation (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 223). Multiple analyses were conducted, commencing with L2 Selves scales. Plonsky and Oswald's (2014) domain-specific criteria[15] regarding magnitude of effect sizes were utilised.

4.2.3.1 L2 Selves – correlations

Table 20: Correlations (L2 Selves) (n=638)

Scale	**1.**	**2.**	**3.**	**4.**	**5.**
1. Ideal Own	-				
2. Ideal Other	**.53****	-			
3. Ought-to Own	**.63****	**.40****	**-**		
4. Ought-to Other	**.35****	**.34****	**.49****	**-**	
5. Integrative	**.59****	**.44****	**.51****	**.29****	**-**
6. Current L2 Self	**.42****	**.24****	**.38****	**.29****	**.26****

All guides were significantly correlated, though strengths differed. Ideal guides were robustly correlated, as were the Ought-to scales. This validates distinctions between "Ideal" and "Ought-to" elements, given that they were higher than correlations between their inverses, the Ideal Own/Ought-to Other (r = .35**) and Ought-to Own/Ideal Other (r = .40**). Own scales (Ideal and Ought-to) were strongly correlated (r = .63**), supporting connections between an image of oneself speaking Irish and personal responsibility to do so (and Dörnyei and Ushioda's note (2009, p. 352) regarding difficulty distinguishing these elements).

Relationships with the Current L2 Self scale were of interest, and the strongest links between it and future guides was both Ideal and Ought-to Own. These moderate correlations make sense within the L2MSS, as future states would naturally correlate with present subjective self-competence. Whether the Integrative scale is a sub-construct of the Ideal (Own) L2 self (as Dörnyei (2010, pp. 78-80) argues), or maintained as a separate construct, as Claro (2019),

[15] Correlation lower than r = .25 is "small", one of r = .40-.60 is "medium", and r = .60 or higher is "large" (p. 889).

Gearing and Roger (2019) and Kwok and Carson (2018) have variously suggested, was also considered. Correlations between the two were strong (r = .59**), but this does not imply unidimensionality (Claro, 2019, p. 243). The Integrative scale demonstrated additional moderate-to-strong correlations with the Ideal Other (r = .44**) and Ought-to Own (r = .51**) scales, and it appears reasonable to assume that the Integrative orientation is related to, but distinct from, L2 guides in question.

4.2.3.2. Relationships with Learning Effort

A four-item scale measured present effort learning Irish. As noted, this was the primary criterion variable, representing learner motivation and effort at present:

Table 21: Correlations – L2 Guides/Learning Effort (n = 638)

Scale	Ideal Own	Ideal Other	Ought-to Own	Ought-to Other	Integrative	Current L2 Self
Learning Effort	**.64****	**.39****	**.55****	**.30****	**.52****	**.35****

While the Ideal scales demonstrated higher means, the strongest correlations with Learning Effort were the “Own”, and Integrative, scales. The Ideal Other scale was only moderately correlated with effort; correlation with the Ought-to Other scale was weak. Self-determination theory, which suggests whether one is motivated depends on the degree to which an activity is endorsed by the self (Noels et al., 2019, p. 98), predicts similar, with externally oriented motivations less impactful. The Integrative scale proved as correlated with effort as the Ought-to Own, indicating its influential role explored below.

On aggregate, findings are comparable to global literature, despite novel samples and contextualised scales. Al-Hoorie’s (2018) meta-analysis reporting average correlations between Ideal L2 Self/intended effort of r = .61** and Ought-to L2 Self/intended effort of r = .38** (p. 731), are in line with results here. This suggests that the central elements of the L2MSS are comparable in this context. Validating the implicit temporal dimension of the theory, the Current L2 Self is more weakly correlated with effort than the future-oriented “Own” guides. Although a higher Current L2 Self is, as will be discussed, correlated with several important variables relating to L2 use, present learning effort appears more influenced by *future* expectations than present L2 self-concept.

4.2.3.3 Multiple regression

A Multiple regression (MR) was calculated to consider magnitude of impact across scales. As all scales were correlated significantly at zero-order, comparing effects helped to understand whether certain variables prove more central than others do predictively. The Enter method, with each of the six posited independent variables entered simultaneously as predictors, was utilised. In each instance the tests regarding multicollinearity (both VIF and tolerance values) implied scales were not correlated to a problematic degree.[16] Examination of P-Plots suggested relatively linear relationships between observed and expected counts (see **Appendix D2**). Residual plots did display a pattern indicative of some homoscedasticity, but this is generally more problematic where sample size is small (Pek, Wong and Wong, 2018, p. 4; Knief and Forstmeier, 2021, p. 2578).

Table 22: Multiple Regression: Learning Effort (n= 637)

	Equation		**Coef.**				
Independent Variable	**Adj R²**	**F**	**β**	**t**	**r**	**pr.**	**sr.**
Model	.46**	90.76					
Ideal Own			.36	7.97**	.63	.30	.23
Ideal Other			.04	1.05	.40	.04	.03
Ought-to Own			.19	4.57**	.55	.18	.13
Ought-to Other			-.01	-.24	.30	-.01	-.01
Integrative			.18	4.84**	.52	.19	.14
Current L2 Self			.08	2.27*	.35	.09	.07

**significant to p = .00, *significant to p = >.05

Model fit was good, accounting for approximately 46% of variance (R^2). Four of the six scales were significantly predictive; the strongest was the Ideal Own (β= .36), but Ought-to Own (β= .19), and Integrative (β= .18) were also independently predictive. The Current L2 Self had a weak effect, and neither "Other" guide significantly predicted levels of effort.

[16] VIF (variance inflation index) calculates intercorrelation between variable effects within a regression model. A score of one (minimum) indicates no relationship between variables. Identifying problematic levels is a matter of debate (Thompson et al., 2017, p. 83); Daoud (2017) relates that a score of one is non-correlated, anywhere from one to five should be considered moderately correlated, and a VIF over five as highly correlated (p. 4). VIF values were typically below two. The highest VIF recorded was for the Ideal Own, approaching 2.5, acceptable under these conventions.

Given their relative independence, we can infer that the three strongest constructs explored - Ideal Own, Ought-to Own, and Integrative orientation - are a) structurally distinct, but b) related, to answer the first aspect of **RQ1**. Although correlated, the independent impact of each variable upon learning effort means they could be considered a motivational "meta-construct", encompassing self-determined and positive L2 affect (theorising regarding such constructs can be found in Sugita McEown, Noels and Chaffee, 2014, p. 30). Supporting Hiver and Al-Hoorie's (2020) recent argument, however, viewing the impact of self-guides upon motivation as the antecedent to effort may be naïve; rather, there is a bidirectional relationship, as expending effort also raises internalised future representations. This lends empirical support to the theory that L2 experiences closely shape possible L2 Selves, explored in answering **RQ2.**

4.2.3.4 Correlations with Behavioural/Use variables

Correlations between the L2 guides and the behavioural variables were then assessed. These moved beyond whether learners reported expending effort learning Irish at present to specific forms of L2 Use and outcomes L2 guides might influence.

L2 Speaker Self-Concept Items

The purpose of including these items was to incorporate arguments made by both Hessel (2015) and Tseng, Cheng and Gao (2020, p. 5) regarding flaws in wordings of L2 selves, failing to account for qualitative dimensions of L2 self-images. Four items, measuring plausibility, desirability, anticipated effort, and importance, were included:

Table 23: Descriptive statistics (L2 Speaker Self-Concept)

Item	N	Mean	SD
I believe I can become an Irish speaker.	637	**5.39**	**1.43**
I will work hard at becoming an Irish speaker.	635	**5.49**	**1.27**
I want to become an Irish speaker.	637	**5.87**	**1.23**
Becoming an Irish speaker is important to me.	637	**5.38**	**1.47**

The items demonstrate strong reliability (a = .92). The highest-rated statement related to desire, while lower means were found regarding both importance and belief learners had in their abilities. Correlations with L2 guides were as follows:

Table 24: Correlations – L2 Guides/Speaker Self-Concept

Item/scale	Ideal Own	Ideal Other	Ought-to Own	Ought-to Other	Integrative	Current L2 Self
I believe I can….	**.74****	**.41****	**.49****	**.23****	**.51****	**.31****
I will work hard…	**.65****	**.43****	**.54****	**.27****	**.55****	**.32****
I want to become…	**.72****	**.46****	**.55****	**.21****	**.58****	**.31****
Becoming...is important to me	**.75****	**.50****	**.66****	**.32****	**.62****	**.37****

Correlations with future effort were equivalent to present effort; unsurprisingly, present and future anticipated effort were viewed similarly. The Ideal Own L2 Self was strongly correlated with all items, and its relative strength vis-à-vis other L2 guides regarding belief is particularly emphasised. Although there is some overlap in wording, the magnitude suggests a unique role for the Ideal Own, reflecting positive self-efficacy and personal agency, as reported elsewhere (Kormos, Kiddle and Csizér, 2011, p. 511). This affirms the complexity of the Ideal Own, implicating both self-efficacy and personal importance. L2 guides in general were each most-correlated with personal importance. This was particularly observable regarding the Ought-to Own, strongly correlated with the item (r = .66**). An interesting element is the weak influence of the Current L2 Self scale, including on the item measuring belief. This suggests present self-concept is not a primary determinant of whether a learner believes they can, or desires to, become an Irish speaker in the future.

L2 Use Scales

The three L2 Use scales, measuring Current F2F Use, Current Online Use, and L2 Anxiety, were then also correlated with L2 Guides.

Table 25: Correlations – L2 Use Scales/L2 Guides

Scale	Ideal Own	Ideal Other	Ought-to Own	Ought-to Other	Integrative	Current L2 Self
Current F2F Use	**.43****	**.26****	**.27****	**.30****	**.30****	**.43****
Current Online Use	**.52****	**.29****	**.48****	**.28****	**.41****	**.43****
L2 Anxiety	**.19****	**.14****	**.30****	**.17****	**.22****	**.08**

Current F2F Use was moderately correlated with the Ideal Own and Current L2 Self, but weakly correlated with other guides. Current Online Use differed somewhat, as correlations were equivalent for "Other" guides and Current L2 Self, but more-correlated with both Owns, and the Integrative element (the Ought-to Own increasing from r = .27**, rather weak, to r = .48**). Learners with a strong Own L2 self may identify more outlets for using Irish online than in F2F contexts. Supporting this, the initial fourth item in the Current F2F Use scale - phrased "I want to use my Irish in face-to-face situations" - had a far-higher mean (M = 5.52, SD = 1.30). This effect was evident in correlations:

Table 26: Correlations– Current F2F/L2 guides (n=638)

Item/Scale	Ideal Own	Ideal Other	Ought-to Own	Ought-to Other	Integrative	Current L2 Self
'I want to use my Irish in face-to-face situations.'	**.59****	**.39****	**.42****	**.15****	**.51****	**.22****
Current F2F	**.43****	**.26****	**.27****	**.30****	**.30****	**.43****

Large increases were visible when desired, rather than current, F2F use was considered, though the link was *weaker* between the Current L2 Self and Ought-to Other. The extent this is attributable to COVID-19 is difficult to measure. Given Irish's minority status, and the difficulties many learners may have accessing interlocutors, it is likely a factor regardless of such unusual circumstances. L2 Anxiety was weakly correlated with guides, excepting the Current L2 Self. The strongest correlation was with the Ought-to Own; while still relatively weak, it is supportive of Higgins' (1998) regulatory stance theory, that there are links between personal obligation and experience of L2 anxiety (Papi et al., 2019, p. 355).

A final point is the strength of relationships between the L2 Guides and L2 *use*, on the one hand, versus self-reported *effort* on the other (generally stronger in the latter case). Al-Hoorie's (2018) argument that studies over rely on single criterions appears supported in this distinction. As outlined in the literature review, it can be difficult to articulate an appropriate criterion variable when examining adult non-formal learning contexts; self-reported effort is a behaviourally useful measure, but additional measures of active or attempted L2 use may ultimately correlate more strongly with proficiency-based outcomes, once one moves beyond ab-initio learning (Hiver and Al-Hoorie, 2020).

Future L2 Targets

On this note, the final scale measured desired levels of proficiency. Qualitative descriptors of five levels of proficiency (from "a few words" to "Become like a native speaker") were used. L2 Skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) were measured as discrete items:

Table 27: Descriptive statistics – Future L2 Target items

Item	N	Mean	SD
I would like to speak…	637	**3.84**	**.99**
I would like to read…	633	**3.99**	**1.02**
I would like to write…	632	**3.78**	**1.11**
I would like to listen…	634	**4.09**	**.89**

Each scored similarly, but learners most agreed with the item regarding listening. It is well established that traditional Irish music is popular amongst both learners of Irish (Walsh and Ní Dhúda, 2015; Flynn and Harris, 2016), and other Celtic languages (MacIntyre, Moore and Sparling, 2017); listening skills might therefore prove more useful than other skills. Conversely, writing was the lowest rated. At scale level, most learners wanted to establish a moderate proficiency (M = 3.91, SD = .94). Those wishing to achieve native-like fluency in Irish were a (relatively substantial) minority:

Table 28: "Become like a native speaker" selection, by item

Item	N selecting	Valid Percentage
I would like to speak…	185	**29.0%**
I would like to read…	241	**38.1%**
I would like to write…	200	**31.6%**
I would like to listen…	235	**37.1%**

The lowest proportion pertained to speaking the language; like behavioural variables above, learners may find it difficult to conceive of themselves practicing spoken and written Irish, but this would require further validation to confirm.

Table 29: Correlations – Future L2 Target/L2 Guides (n=638)

Item/scale	**Ideal Own**	**Ideal Other**	**Ought-to Own**	**Ought-to Other**	**Integrative**	**Current L2 Self**
Future L2 Target	**.68****	**.35****	**.55****	**.20****	**.49****	**.33****

When correlated with L2 Guides, relationships were also like the Learning Effort scale. The Ideal Own was substantially correlated with higher desired levels of L2 proficiency, while the Ought-to Own and Integrative scales were equivalents. The Other guides were lower, with a particular reduction on the Ought-to Other (from r = .30** to r = .20**). This provides evidence for the power of an Ideal Own L2 self, finding that it is correlated equivalently for both near-term (the level of effort expended learning Irish) and longer-term (future desired proficiencies) targets.

4.3 RQ2 - What is the impact of previous learning experience and SRP on the possession of specific L2 Guides?

Table 30: RQ2 Restatement

Research Question	Operationalisation (Quantitative Survey)
2. Are differences observable between those who have more experience than others, and between those who have learned by different means (formal/informal)? How do learners of differing levels of L2 learning experience conceptualise and describe their motivations, and the impact these experiences have had upon the same?	• Do learners with i) different forms of L2 experience and ii) distinct self-reported subjective competence, **differ statistically significantly as regards to the possession of the variables?**

In **RQ2**, the role of i) previous L2 learning experience and ii) self-reported L2 proficiency are assessed as mediating both guides and use. A premise, given diversity of respondents, is examining these differences clarifies generality of findings. It cannot be assumed that an ab-initio learner is psychologically analogous to a learner with a longstanding pattern of Irish L2 learning experiences. Exploring whether the varying theoretical constructs considered in **RQ1** were comparable, or varied, at different experience levels, was an important task.

The two sub-questions relating to L2 experience analysed were whether learners differed by:

- type of previous L2 experience reported (formal, informal, both, and/or none)
- level of self-assessed L2 competence reported

These elements are related, but distinct, and understanding the impact of both was a means of deepening findings and controlling for a rarely assessed covariate.

4.3.1 Differences by previous experience

Learners were asked whether they had learned Irish before, i) **formally**, ii) **informally**, iii) **both formally and informally**, or iv) **no.** These categories are broad, and a follow-up item asked whether if they had studied Irish formally to what level, to assess answers learners provided.

Table 31: Frequencies - "Have you ever studied Irish before?"

Option	N=	% of valid respondents
Yes, formally	91	**14.3%**
Yes, informally	179	**28.1%**
Yes, both formally and informally	35	**5.5%**
No	308	**48.4%**
Other	24	**3.8%**

As noted in **Section 4.1**, the sample was closely divided; 47.9% reported some previous L2 experience, while 48.4% reported none. Informal experience was the most common amongst those with experience. The learning population on the courses was diverse, ranging from those with substantial previous experience learning Irish, to entirely ab-initio. Ambiguities were found when responses to the item asking highest level of formal experience was examined:

Table 32: Frequencies – Level of formal experience

Option	N=223	% of valid respondents
Primary-school	23	**10.3%**
Secondary-school	75	**33.6%**
College	4	**1.8%**
Post-college	3	**1.3%**
Other	118	**52.9%**

Of those selecting a specific option, secondary school was most common; a minority had learned Irish to the level of primary school, while handfuls reported college or post-college experience. The ambiguity relates to the proportion of learners who selected "Other", raising the number reporting some type of formal experience well beyond its reported levels.

One interpretation would be that many respondents with informal experience wished to qualify this by ticking "Other", and open-ended items following typically referred to summer trips to a *Gaeltacht* region, participation in online courses, or face-to-face non-formal classes. When these "Other" responses were analysed, they had a similar profile to the overall sample, however, including a majority of those who reported both formal and informal experience (18/35), and n=22 learners who indicated they had no experience:

Table 33: Frequencies - "Other" by type of experience

Option	N=	% of valid respondents
Yes, formally	14	**11.9%**
Yes, informally	54	**45.8%**
Yes, both formally and informally	18	**15.3%**
No	22	**18.6%**
Other/Blank	10	**8.5%**

Respondents were maintained in their initially selected categories, given the exploratory nature of this question. Further differences between these groups are also explored below, to assess whether they can be considered discrete categories.

4.3.1.1 Cross-group comparison – Kruskal-Wallis Tests

The initial step to compare groups was an exploratory Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test to measure "…the significance of the differences in the means of two or more groups" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 218). However, groups sizes were very unequal (ranging from n=308 to just n=35), introducing a danger that Levene's test for equal assumptions of variance (Gastwirth, Gel and Miao, 2009) would be violated:

Table 34: MANOVA - Form of experience (Levene test)

Scale	Levene	Df1	Df2	Sig
Ideal Own	7.97	3	607	.00**
Ideal Other	2.58	3	607	.05*
Ought-to Own	1.94	3	607	.12
Ought-to Other	1.94	3	607	.12
Current L2 Self	11.60	3	607	00**
Integrative	1.89	3	607	.13
Learning Effort	2.62	3	607	.05*
L2 Target	18.48	3	607	.00**
Current F2F Use	2.97	3	607	.03*
Current Online Use	4.10	3	607	.01**
L2 Anxiety	3.47	3	607	.01**

Distribution is non-equivalent across groups, where significant ($p = < .05$). A fairer comparison in such instances is the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test. The largest skews related to the

Current L2 Self, and L2 Target, are indicative of this point; learners with L2 experience could vary regarding these two constructs, but those without L2 experience would likely sit at the lower end of the scale. In implementing Kruskal-Wallis analysis, pairwise comparisons were also conducted:

Table 35: Kruskal-Wallis - form of experience

Scale	**Test statistic -$X^2(2)$**	**Effect size (eta^2)**	**df**	**N**	**Group ranking**
L2 Selves					
Ideal Own	62.78	.098	3	613	3 > 1,2 > 4
Ideal Other	19.08	.026	3	613	3,1, 2 > 4
Ought-to Own	73.03	.115	3	613	3 > 1,2 > 4
Ought-to Other	18.76	.026	3	613	3,2,1 > 4
Current L2 Self	78.79	.124	3	613	3,1 > 2 > 4
Integrative	26.51	.039	3	613	3,1,2 > 4
Criterion Variables					
Learning Effort	34.40	.052	3	613	3,2 > 1 > 4
L2 Target	63.09	.099	3	613	3,2,1 > 4
Current F2F Use	25.64	.037	3	612	3,1,2 > 4
Current Online Use	55.81	.087	3	613	3,2,1 > 4
L2 Anxiety	28.33	.042	3	613	2,3,1 > 4

Though all test-level differences were significant to p = .00, certain scales differed far more than others (using eta^2). The two largest effects were the Current L2 Self (H(3)= 78.79, eta^2 = .124) and Ought-to Own (H(3)= 73.03, eta^2 = .115); across scales, those with formal and non-formal experience (n=35) consistently reported higher values, followed by both formal and informal learners (generally equivalent) and, much lower, those with no L2 experience. Across most variables learners with formal or informal L2 experience did not differ significantly, an interesting finding, given these groups might be distinct. Although L2 experience was associated with much higher "Own"-oriented L2 selves, differences between "Other" L2 selves were smaller (H(3)= 18.76, eta^2 = .026 and 19.08, eta^2 = .026, respectively). Differences relating to the Integrative scale were also modest (H(3)= 26.51, eta^2 = .039), providing further evidence that it is less malleable than the two Own-based L2 selves and Current L2 Self.

L2 Use scales had fairly small effect sizes (excepting the Current Online Use scale ($H(3)= 55.81$, $eta^2 = .087$)). Current F2F Use and L2 Anxiety differed modestly; the former likely due to both the COVID-19 pandemic and learning context; learners differed more regarding online use than F2F, indicating greater availing of opportunities to use Irish online. Although learners with any L2 experience reported higher anxiety than ab-initio learners did, they did not differ significantly from each other. L2 Target ($H(3)= 63.08$, $eta^2 = .099$) had a much larger effect than effort ($H(3)= 34.40$, $eta^2 = .052$). Learners with L2 experience were comparable regarding future goals, but informal learners (Mdn. = 362.45) scored higher than formal learners (Mdn. = 307.49, pairwise p = .02) when effort was considered.

4.3.1.2 Sub-comparison – Formal or Informal experience

An interesting finding was that learners with either formal or informal experience learning Irish did not differ significantly across most variables. To explore more closely, these two groups were contrasted demographically, firstly using three life context variables: heritage, age, and gender.

Table 36: Crosstab - Nationality/Heritage by Formal/Informal Experience

Nationality and Heritage	Formal/Nationality (n=90)	Informal/Nationality (n=162)
Irish	73	22
Non-Irish with Irish Heritage	16	106
Non-Irish, no Heritage	1	34
*Pearson chi-squared = 113.59, p = .00, r = .62***		

There was a strong relationship between heritage being in the informal or formal group (r = .62**). The vast majority (81.1%) of those with formal experience were Irish, with smaller portions of Irish heritage, and just a single non-Irish learner without such heritage. Amongst informal learners, a large majority (65.4%) were of Irish heritage, with a minority being either Irish nationals or non-Irish.

Table 37: Crosstab - Age by Formal/Informal Experience

Element – Age	Formal (n=91)	Informal (n=177)
18-34	27.5%	32.8%
35-54	23.1%	31.6%
55+	49.5%	35.6%
Pearson chi-squared = 4.94, p = .09, r = -.11		

Table 38: Crosstab - Gender by Formal/Informal Experience

Element – Gender	**Formal (n=91)**	**Informal (n=178)**
Male	37.4%	24.7%
Female	60.4%	68.0%
Other	1.1%	6.2%
Prefer not to say	1.1%	1.1%
Pearson chi-squared = 7.33, p = .06, r = .15		

Weak relationships with age and gender were revealed. Learners with formal experience tended to be older and were more likely to self-identify as male. Learners with non-formal experience were more often younger and female. Both results lay on the edge of significance.

With these differences in mind, the two groups were directly compared, through an independent samples t-test. Means proved equivalently distributed across most scales, excepting the Current L2 Self, Current Online Use, and Learning Effort, negating the need for non-parametric tests.

Table 39: Independent samples t-test – Formal/Informal Comparison

Scale	**Formal mean**	**Informal mean**	**Formal SD**	**Informal SD**	**t**	**p**
Ideal Own	**5.06**	**4.91**	1.30	1.35	.832	.41
Ideal Other	**4.89**	**4.58**	1.23	1.36	1.842	.07
Ought-to Own	**4.46**	**4.29**	1.68	1.66	.753	.45
Ought-to Other	**2.30**	**2.11**	1.08	1.19	1.233	.22
Current L2 Self*	**2.76**	**2.18**	1.31	.99	**3.718**	.00**
Integrative	**5.62**	**5.54**	1.15	1.06	.549	.58
Learning Effort*	**4.52**	**4.94**	1.39	1.15	**-2.521**	.01*
L2 Target	**4.26**	**4.17**	.67	.79	.911	.36
Current F2F Use	**3.49**	**3.09**	1.50	1.44	**2.170**	.03*
Current Online Use*	**3.60**	**3.86**	1.50	1.25	-1.448	.15
L2 Anxiety	**4.62**	**4.92**	1.30	1.41	-1.675	.10

*Adjusted t-value reported for non-equal mean distribution.

The lack of significant differences, despite contrasting demographics, suggests that whether learners possessed a future L2 guide could not be generalised based on whether they reported either formal or informal experiences. The two groups did differ in certain cases. Firstly, learners with formal experience reported a higher Current L2 Self, with a moderate effect size (t = 3.718, p = .000, d = .49). To validate this finding, the item regarding self-described levels of competency was also measured, differing even more clearly:

Table 40: Independent samples t-test – SRP by Formal/Informal

Item	Formal mean	Informal mean	Formal Learner SD	Informal Learner SD	t	p
Self-reported L2 proficiency	**3.08**	**2.44**	.76	.73	6.675	.00

The large effect size (t = 6.675, d = .85), demonstrates that learners with formal experience rate their present Irish L2 abilities higher than learners with informal experience. There are many interpretations for this, such as formal experiences cementing greater confidence or validation that those without formal experiences might lack in comparison. Fundamentally, learners with formal L2 experiences have likely spent more time learning Irish than those with informal experiences (in schooling contexts, for example). What makes this finding more interesting is the *lack* of differences regarding future-facing "Own" guides: learners with formal experience did not, despite greater present self-concept and self-described levels of competence, have higher Ideal or Ought-to images of future L2 use (or future L2 targets).

Most behavioural differences were modest, although informal learners reported higher L2 Anxiety and Current Online Use indicating more negative affect at the prospect of using Irish. Informal learners also expended significantly more effort than formal ones at present, with a moderate effect size (t = -2.521, p = .01, d = .32).

4.3.2 Differences by self-reported proficiency (SRP)

Following this comparison, self-described levels of L2 proficiency (SRP) were analysed as a further proxy for L2 experience. This six-option item presented various descriptive phrases, represented in **Table 41**. Though self-assessed, it creates a useful categorisation to compare how learners perceive their L2 competence, and how differing levels might impact affective variables:

Table 41: Frequencies– "How would you describe your current level of Irish? I can speak…"

Option	N=	% of valid responses
No Irish	199	31.2%
A few words	230	36.1%
A few simple sentences	158	24.8%
Parts of conversations	45	7.1%
Most conversations	5	.8%
Like a native speaker	0	0%

If treated as a scale, the item (M = 2.10, SD = .95) demonstrates that learners report modest levels of present L2 proficiency. None described having native speaker ability at present, and the five learners who indicated they could understand "Most conversations" - a small percentage - were removed from comparative analysis. A chi-squared test confirmed a substantial relationship between the measures assessing SRP and previous learning experiences (Pearson chi-squared = 337.33, p = .00, r = .57**):

Table 42: Crosstab - Learner Experience by SRP

Learner experience	No Irish	A few words	A few simple sentences	Parts of conversations
Yes, formally (n= 87)	0%	21.8%	57.5%	20.7%
Yes, informally (n=179)	7.8%	46.4%	39.7%	6.1%
Yes, both formally and informally (n=34)	5.9%	20.6%	35.3%	38.2%
No (n=307)	58.0%	36.2%	5.5%	0.3%
Other (n=24)	20.8%	41.7%	29.2%	8.3%

Learners with both formal and informal experiences reported higher levels of L2 proficiency that other groups. Although most learners who had never studied Irish before reported having "No Irish", a substantial minority had "A few words", indicating some familiarity with the language.

4.3.2.1 Cross-group comparison – proficiency – Kruskal-Wallis Test

Unsurprisingly, the four levels of L2 competency also violated Levene's assumptions for equal means across several scales. In this light, a second Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted:

Table 43: Kruskal-Wallis – SRP

Scale	Test statistic - $X^2(2)$	Effect size (eta^2)	Df	N	Group ranking
L2 Selves					
Ideal Own	73.97	.113	3	632	4 > 3 > 2 > 1
Ideal Other	24.50	.034	3	632	4,3,2 > 1
Ought-to Own	99.17	.153	3	632	4 > 3 > 2 > 1
Ought-to Other	19.96	.027	3	632	4 > 3,2 > 1
Current L2 Self	128.44	.200	3	631	4 > 3, 2 > 2, 1
Integrative	27.00	.038	3	631	4,3 > 3,2 > 1
Criterion Variables					
Learning Effort	64.60	.098	3	632	4,3 > 2 > 1
L2 Target	82.85	.127	3	631	4 > 3 > 2 > 1
Current F2F Use	49.97	.074	3	631	4 > 3 > 2,1
Current Online Use	97.44	.151	3	631	4 > 3 > 2 > 1
L2 Anxiety	16.06	.021	3	632	4,3,2 > 1

*All tests significant to p = .000

As results are in keeping with the first comparison, only specific differences are highlighted here. The Ought-to Own scale had a more substantial effect vis-à-vis form of experience ($eta^2 = .153$, versus .115). The Current L2 demonstrated a very large effect size ($eta^2 = .20$), as might be expected. There was a larger effect regarding Current Online Use ($eta^2 = .151$, almost twice as large as for learning experience, .087), and on the effort ($eta^2 = .098$, versus .052) and Current F2F scales ($eta^2 = .074$, versus .037), although L2 Anxiety was weaker ($eta^2 = .021$, versus .042). This latter finding implies a salient fact regarding Irish L2 use: where learners described higher levels of L2 competence, levels of anxiety did not decline; indeed, the most anxious group by mean are those with the highest self-reported competence.

Differences are larger due to group spacing. When the type of L2 learning experience is considered, the distinctions between those with formal or informal experience are not especially large, as noted above. In contrast, when SRP is analysed, most scales are differentiated clearly, with a higher subjective competence associated with stronger motivation across category.

4.3.3 Correlational analysis – are relations constant across groups?

The last element considered was whether relations examined in **RQ1** were constant across differing levels of L2 experience/proficiency. Dörnyei (2007) notes that even when samples are large, as common in online research, it cannot be assumed that aggregate relationships hold across categories. One method to expand validity is to consider whether relationships are similar across sub-samples (pp. 122-123). Here, experience was explored as a mediating variable. Whether the relationship with Learning Effort/L2 Targets and L2 guides, as the studies central theoretical variables, would hold constant across each grouping, was scrutinised:

4.3.3.1 Relationships between L2 guides outcome variables – by form of experience

Table 44: Correlations- Learning Effort/L2 Guides (Form of Experience)

Learner experience	Ideal Own	Ideal Other	Ought-to Own	Ought-to Other	Integrative	Current L2 Self
Yes, formally (n= 90)	**.55****	**.21****	**.48****	**.33****	**.41****	**.36****
Yes, informally (n=179)	**.60****	**.49****	**.53****	**.21****	**.56****	**.33****
Yes, both formally and informally (n=35)	**.44****	**.05**	**.16**	**.09**	**.21**	**.14**
No (n=308)	**.66****	**.41****	**.56****	**.34****	**.57****	**.37****

In each instance rank orders are comparable, the strongest correlation being with the Ideal Own across sub-sample, and stronger relationships with the Own L2 guides and Integrative scale observed across groups. The Ideal Other and effort were quite correlated for learners with informal experience (r = .49**), while both informal and ab-initio learners reported higher correlations with the Integrative orientation (r = .56**/.57**). The same mechanisms therefore appeared to effect motivated learning behaviour across cases, though an outlier is learners with both formal and non-formal experience (n=35); correlations with learning effort were generally non-significant, excepting the Ideal Own scale.

Table 45: Correlations- L2 Target/L2 Guides (Form of Experience)

Learner experience	Ideal Own	Ideal Other	Ought-to Own	Ought-to Other	Integrative	Current L2 Self
Yes, formally (n= 91)	**.60****	**.15**	**.37****	**.07**	**.39****	**.21***
Yes, informally (n=179)	**.55****	**.38****	**.51****	**.25****	**.44****	**.26****
Yes, both formally and informally (n=35)	**.48****	**-.05**	**.32**	**.00**	**.50****	**.29**
No (n=308)	**.69****	**.34****	**.51****	**.13***	**.52****	**.26****

Considering L2 Target, similar trends were found; learners with no experience demonstrated higher correlations across constructs, but differences were modest across each scale. One finding which stands out is the much higher correlation between L2 target and the Integrative scale for the learners with both formal/informal experience, relative to effort.

4.3.3.2 Relationship between L2 guides and outcome variables – SRP

Table 46: Correlations - Learning Effort/L2 Guides (SRP)

Level of self-reported proficiency	Ideal Own	Ideal Other	Ought-to Own	Ought-to Other	Integrative	Current L2 Self
No Irish (n=199)	**.67****	**.46****	**.54****	**.37****	**.59****	**.36****
A few words (n=230)	**.63****	**.38****	**.56****	**.38****	**.56****	**.28****
A few simple sentences (n=157)	**.46****	**.11**	**.33****	**.04**	**.27****	**.21****
Parts of conversations (n=45)	**.42****	**.29**	**.32***	**.06**	**.38***	**.15**

A clearer trend was visible when level of proficiency was considered; as subjective competence increased, correlations between the constructs and learning effort consistently fell, particularly between groups 1 and 2, and groups 3 and 4, respectively.

Table 47: Correlations - L2 Target/L2 Guides (SRP)

Level of self-reported proficiency	Ideal Own	Ideal Other	Ought-to Own	Ought-to Other	Integrative	Current L2 Self
No Irish (n=199)	**.72****	**.37****	**.48****	**.14***	**.50****	**.28****
A few words (n=230)	**.58****	**.28****	**.53****	**.22****	**.49****	**.21****
A few simple sentences (n=158)	**.54****	**.11**	**.33****	**.09**	**.40****	**.16***
Parts of conversations (n=45)	**.64****	**.36****	**.56****	**.06**	**.27**	**.10**

As in form of experience, differences regarding L2 Target were weaker. Learners with no Irish demonstrated a strong correlation between targets and guides, which gradually fell, but rose again amongst learners who reported being able to speak to "Parts of conversations". One trend visible across groups was a falling correlation with the Integrative orientation (from r = .50** to r = .27).

At least two interpretations are possible. The first, relating to construct discrimination, is that ab-initio learners do not discriminate between constructs. If so, guides would demonstrate higher correlations, as an undifferentiated positive/negative orientation, maturing through the process of learning. The second possibility, grounded in recent theorising (Henry, Cliffordson and Thorsten, 2020), is that the motivational impact of L2 guides lessens as perceived L2 competence rises (results supporting this are reported by Henry and Cliffordson, 2015, p. 730, where self-discrepancies were not large enough to motivate teenaged Swedish EFL learners). In optimum situations, present and future L2 selves should rise together, but it is plausible that for many non-formal Irish L2 learners, a plateau is reached past which the effect of a future L2 guide becomes less correlated with additional effort. This would explain why links with L2 targets are more stable than with present effort; becoming a fluent Irish speaker is a distant goal for all these learners, but the amount of effort one expends learning Irish as a daily endeavour is more varied. This analysis is necessarily preliminary but presents interesting developmental questions regarding the L2MSS in an Irish L2 context.

4.4 RQ3 - Do learners of differing heritage and nationalities differ from one another?

Table 48: RQ3 Restatement

Research Question	**Operationalisation (Quantitative Survey)**
5. How are issues of L2 identity, heritage, personal and social identification with Irish as a language implicated in the possession (or absence) of these constructs? Are differences observable in this regard between Irish nationals, learners of Irish heritage, and non-Irish learners?	• Are **statistically significant differences** observable between learners who were i) Irish nationals, ii) those of Irish Heritage, and ii) those who had no ancestral/national links with Ireland? • Do learners of recent and more distant heritage **differ as regards to the possession of these variables**?

RQ3 asks whether learners of differing heritage/national backgrounds differ in their ability to generate L2 guides and in behaviour/L2 use. As noted within **RQ2**, learners formed a diverse sample; this was true not only of previous learning experience or self-reported L2 competence, but also of social and heritage backgrounds. Two sub-questions are considered within this analysis:

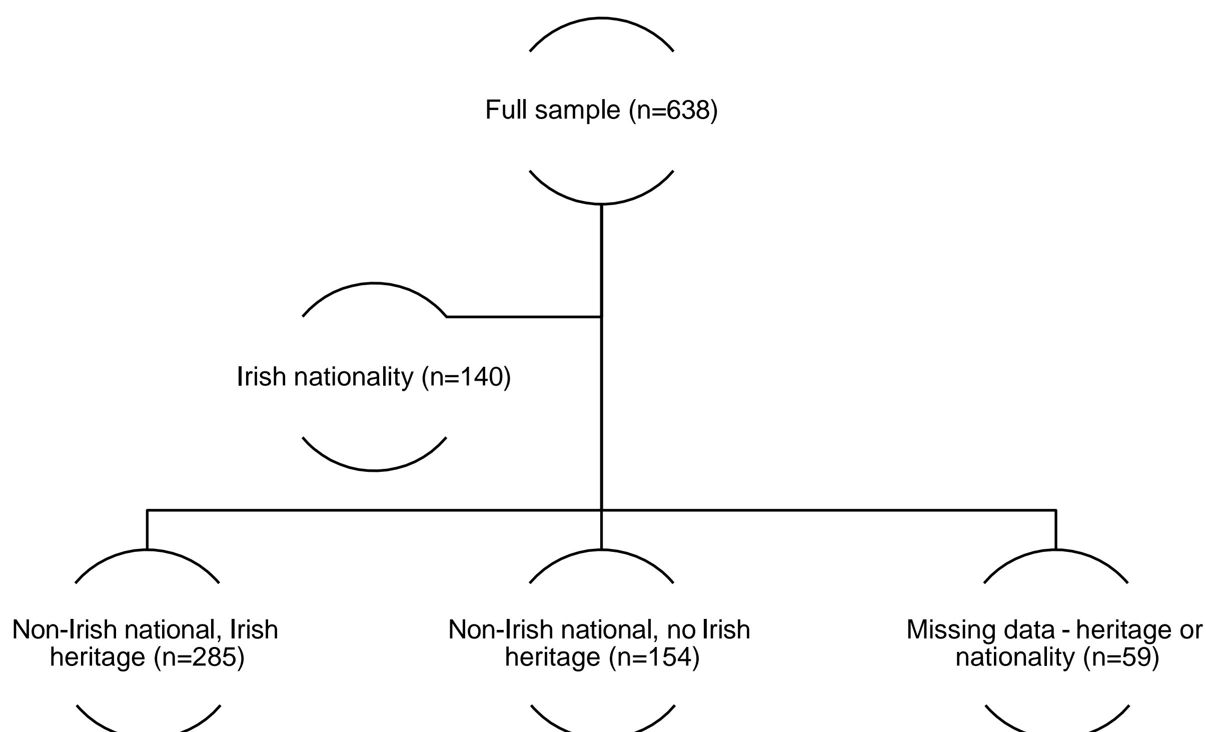
- Are significant differences visible in these constructs by learner category?
- Do learners of more-distant Irish heritage differ from those of more recent heritage?

The purpose is to analyse whether learners with closer affective/heritage links to Ireland reported higher levels of motivation, and whether the distance of a learner's heritage (genealogical distance) is a meaningful distinguisher, to examine whether this difference impacts L2 motivation.

4.4.1 Categorising Learners

As discussed in the literature review, "heritage" is a nebulous and subjective concept. The relationship between language, heritage, and L2 identity can be complex – especially in the case of a minority language like Irish. Defining social categories therefore required both coherent means of distinguishing learners and obvious principles in doing so.

Figure 16: Learner categorisation decision tree (n=638)



Learners were grouped based on two interacting variables: nationality and heritage. Those selecting "Republic of Ireland" as their nationality were considered a unitary category: **Irish learners** (n=140, 21.9% of the sample)**.** Learners selected a single nationality, and thus nuance is required in interpreting this figure, as it necessarily excludes dual nationals. Only 49.3% of Irish learners reported living in the Republic of Ireland at present; 35.1% lived in the United Kingdom, through which it might be inferred some live in Northern Ireland, in addition to members of the Irish diaspora who identify as Irish.[17] Smaller numbers of Irish (national) learners lived in other predominantly-Anglophone countries, like the United States (6%), Canada (3.8%) and Australia (2%).

Non-Irish nationals (n=498) were stratified by whether the learner reported being of Irish heritage. Learners indicating that they were of Irish heritage (n=285, 44.7% of the sample) were coded **Learners of Irish heritage (LIHs)**, a term chosen following discussion at review meetings.[18] The term "Irish heritage learner" is potentially misleading, and LIH is more respectful of the diverse heritage identities learners might possess. Learners reporting neither Irish nationality nor Irish heritage (n=154, 24.1% of the sample) were categorised **Non-Irish**

[17] This dynamic was also observed in interviews, as reported in the following chapter – several learners raised in the United Kingdom, but of Irish heritage, identified as Irish, not English, or British.

[18] Special thanks to Dr. Cóilín Ó Floinn and Dr. Gearóid Ó Cleircín, who both raised this important point.

identifying learners (NILs). These were grouped on the assumption that they, not having affective/familial links to Ireland, were distinct. N=59 (9.2%) learners chose not to declare either nationality and/or heritage and were excluded from this portion of the analysis.

4.4.2 Comparing learner heritage and nationality categories

This first question was whether the three groups differed significantly from each other. As in **RQ2**, Levene's equality of means was used to decide whether a parametric or non-parametric test was more appropriate:

Table 49: Heritage/National Category (Levene test)

Scale	Levene	Df1	Df2	Sig
Ideal Own	2.51	2	576	.08
Ideal Other	3.25	2	576	.04*
Ought-to Own	2.57	2	576	.08
Ought-to Other	.46	2	576	.63
Current L2 Self	8.28	2	575	.00**
Integrative	.02	2	575	.98
Learning Effort	.76	2	576	.47
L2 Target	6.01	2	576	.00**
Current F2F Use	.20	2	576	.82
Current Online Use	1.07	2	576	.34
L2 Anxiety	7.61	2	576	.00**

Levene's statistic were lower than L2 experience, differing significantly in four instances. The two largest divergences were visible for the Current L2 Self and L2 Anxiety; the former was non-normally distributed in general, but L2 Anxiety was more-skewed than other comparisons, indicating a possible social-psychological distinction. Given these lower values, ANOVA was the chosen method of analysis. Where results were significant, Scheffé's post-hoc test was utilised for comparisons, useful where, as here, group sizes are non-equal (Howell, 2010):

Table 50: ANOVA - Heritage/Nationality

Scale	p	Test statistic - F	Effect size (eta²)	Df	N	Group ranking[19]
L2 Selves						
Ideal Own	.00**	9.42	.032	2	576	1 < 2,3
Ideal Other*	.00**	8.50	.029	2	576	1 < 2,3
Ought-to Own	.00**	26.46	.084	2	576	1 < 2 < 3
Ought-to Other	.00**	5.58	.019	2	576	1,2 < 2,3
Current L2 Self*	.00**	30.15	.095	2	575	1 < 2,3
Integrative	.172	1.76	.006	2	575	
Criterion Variables						
Learning Effort	.00**	6.16	.021	2	576	2,1 < 1,3
L2 Target*	.00**	17.57	.058	2	576	1 < 2 < 3
Current F2F Use	.03*	3.60	.012	2	576	1,2 < 2,3
Current Online Use	.00**	6.33	.021	2	576	2,1 > 3
L2 Anxiety*	.00**	7.82	.026	2	576	1,2 > 3

*Scale violates assumption of equal variances (Levene's test).

Although learners differed, these were modest in comparison with **RQ2**. Irish learners reported a stronger Ideal Own (M = 5.02, SD = 1.32) than either LIHs (M = 4.52, SD = 1.53) or NILs (M = 4.29, SD = 1.49), but the effect was small ($eta^2 = .031$). LIHs and NILs did not differ from each other, contrastable with the influence of social identity on the Current L2 Self ($F(2,575) = 30.15$, $p = .00$, $eta^2 = .095$). Irish learners had a higher current Irish speaking self-concept, which did not generally translate directly into a higher ability to envision a future L2 self. One exception was the Ought-to Own scale; Irish learners (M = 4.59, SD = 1.61) recorded a stronger response than LIHs (M = 3.98, SD = 1.75), who in turn differed significantly from NILs (M = 3.16, SD = 1.68) ($eta^2 = 084$). In keeping with the small body of work on heritage-motivated learners (e.g., Noels, 2009), LIHs were more likely than NILs to view learning Irish as something they *should* do, and would feel themselves to be a failure, were they not to do so. This finding was furthered by examining the L2 speaker self-concept items:

[19] Note – 1= Irish learners (n=140), 2=LIH (n=285), 3=NIl (n=154).

Table 51: Kruskal-Wallis– L2 Self-Concept items (Heritage/Nationality)

Item	Test statistic - $X^2(2)$	Effect size (eta^2)	df	N	Group ranking
I believe I can become an Irish speaker.	15.24	.023	2	578	1,2 > 3
I will work hard at becoming an Irish speaker.	15.52	.024	2	578	1,2 > 3
I want to become an Irish speaker.	26.46	.043	2	578	1 < 2 < 3
Becoming an Irish speaker is important to me.	56.46	.095	2	578	1 < 2 < 3

*All tests significant to p = .00

The largest effect by far related to importance, while personal belief and anticipated effort registered small differences. It can be inferred that becoming an Irish speaker was more important to learners who were Irish (in particular) and LIH than for NILs.

Behaviourally, LIHs reported expending greater effort learning the L2, although they didn't differ significantly from Irish learners. Irish learners reported the highest future L2 Targets (M = 4.21, SD = .75), while LIHs (M = 3.93, SD = .94) reported higher targets than NILs (M = 3.58, SD = .98). The effect size of the latter ($F(2,576) = 17.58$, $p = .00$, $eta^2 = .058$) was much larger than the former ($F(2,576) = 6.16$, $p = .00$, $eta^2= .021$); learners differed more regarding future desired fluencies than effort expended at present. This could link to the elements above: learners of Irish affective backgrounds both wanted to learn Irish to a higher standard, and placed more importance on this learning, but did not expend higher levels of present effort, or anticipate spending far greater levels of future effort, in doing so.

4.4.2.1 Apples with Apples – L2 experience as a confounder

Considering heritage as a category, a caveat relating to an obvious confounding variable is noted. Irish learners were much more likely to report previous L2 learning experience than learners in the other groups were and, as demonstrated in **RQ2**, this is a substantial mediator of L2 guides. Controlling for this effect was important, to explore whether adjusting for L2 experience extinguished differences.

To do so, a dichotomous variable was created; learners with any form of L2 experience (n=305) were coded "0", and those with no experience (n=308) were coded "1". Although there were significant differences between the small number of learners with both formal and informal experience and the two other L2 experience groups, any form of L2 experience was collapsed to ensure a comparable number of respondents in each cell (additionally, differences were relatively small):

Table 52: Crosstab - L2 Learning Experience/Heritage/Nationality

Learner experience/heritage	Experience	No Experience
Irish learner (n=135)	83.0%	17.0%
LIH (n=275)	48.4%	51.6%
NIL (n=148)	24.3%	75.7%

A moderate correlation was observed (r = .42**, chi-squared = 97.97, p = .00); Irish learners had generally learned Irish before. Three-quarters of NILs had not, while LIHs were divided. To assess relative impact of L2 experiences and heritage, an ANCOVA (analysis of covariance) was conducted. ANCOVA "...statistically removes certain obscuring or confounding effects" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 223). Several assumptions must be met when utilising it, some present regarding an ANOVA (equal distribution of means, relatively equal observations, data normality), but also others, regarding regression slopes; namely, that the relationship between covariates is non-interacting (Levy, 1980, p. 835). The latter assumption was violated, raising the risk of type 1 errors (ibid, p. 840). Consequently, a more exploratory comparison is reported here: parallel ANOVAs for those with and without L2 learning experience, with heritage as the dependent variable in both cases. Treating groups as independent allows comparison of whether differences, and ranking, were equivalent:

Table 53: ANOVA - L2 Guides (Experience/Heritage/Nationality)

Scale	p	Test statistic - F	Effect size (eta²)	Df	N	Group ranking
L2 Selves						
Ideal Own – exp.	.08	2.54	.018	2	278	1,2 < 2,3
Ideal Own – No exp.	.80	.226	.001	2	274	
Ideal Other – exp.	.00**	9.93	.066	2	278	1,2 < 3
Ideal Other – No exp.	.91	.097	.000	2	274	
Ought-to Own – exp.	.00**	10.65	.071	2	278	1,2 < 3
Ought-to Own – no exp.	.01**	4.99	.035	2	274	1,2 < 2,3
Ought-to Other – exp.	.05*	3.14	.022	2	278	1,2 > 2,3
Ought-to Other – no exp.	.55	.598	.004	2	274	
Current L2 Self – exp.*	.00**	14.14	.093	2	277	1 > 2 > 3
Current L2 Self – no exp.*	.51	.671	.000	2	274	
Integrative – exp.	.78	.244	.000	2	277	
Integrative – no exp.	.72	.333	.000	2	274	

*Violates Levene's test for normalcy.

A consistent finding was that ab-initio learners did not differ significantly by background, but those with L2 experience generally did. The relationship between heritage and L2 selves is therefore complex, apparently subsumed within whether learners had L2 experience or not. A cautionary note is two sub-groups - Irish learners without experience (n=23) and NILs with L2 experience (n=35) - were much smaller than others. Although each comparison demonstrated equivalent distribution, these findings are exploratory.

LIHs and Irish nationals, with L2 learning experience, ranked similar. Both had higher Ideal Owns than other learners (Irish learners (M = 5.16, SD = 1.22) and LIHs (M = 5.02, SD = 1.36)). NILs scored somewhat lower, implying that L2 learning experience may interact with social-psychological identities in ways less relevant than for ab-initio learners. The L2 Speaker

Self-Concept items support this; comparing parallel Kruskal-Wallis tests, only one item - "Becoming an Irish speaker is important to me" - differed significantly, with an effect twice as strong when learners had L2 learning experience:

Table 54: Kruskal-Wallis - 'Becoming an Irish speaker is important to me' (Experience/Heritage)

Item	p	Test statistic -$X^2(2)$	Effect size (eta^2)	df	N	Group ranking
Becoming an Irish speaker is important to me. – Exp.	.00	14.189	.044	2	280	1,2 < 3
Becoming an Irish speaker is important to me. – No Exp.	.02	7.798	.021	2	277	1,2 < 2, 3

The guides with the largest effect were the Ought-to Own ($F(2,278) = 10.65$, $p = .00$, $eta^2 = .071$) and the Ideal Other ($F(2,278) = 9.93$, $p = .00$, $eta^2 = .066$), both higher for Irish learners and LIHs than for NILs, with the Ideal Own non-significantly different (n/s, $p = .08$). The Current L2 Self had a very large effect size ($F(2,277) = 14.14$, $p = .00$, $eta^2 = .093$), with significant differences between Irish learners, LIHs, and NILs. Amongst no group did the Integrative orientation significantly differ, indicating the scale was less malleable to whether the learner had either Irish heritage or learning experience.

In contrast, ab-initio learners differed significantly on just one scale, the Ought-to Own (with a small effect, $F(2,280) = 4.99$, $p = .01$, $eta^2 = .035$). It is possible that for ab-initio learners, heritage or nationality is not inherently relevant regarding generation of future L2 guides. Unlike in, for example, a Chinese or Spanish L2 heritage context, LIH learners of Irish may not have fostered a strong social-psychological identity in their immediate environment. This argument recognises Irish heritage is diffuse and contextual.

Table 55: ANOVA - L2 Use (Experience/Heritage/Nationality)

Scale	p	Test statistic - F	Effect size (eta^2)	Df	N	Group ranking
Criterion Variables						
Learning Effort- exp.	.00**	7.08	.048	2	278	2,3 < 3,1
Learning Effort – no exp.	.37	.990	.001	2	276	
L2 Target – exp.	.00**	11.16	.077	2	278	1,2 > 3
L2 Target – no exp.	.81	.217	.001	2	274	
Current F2F Face – exp.	.19	1.67	.012	2	278	
Current F2F Face – no exp.	.32	1.13	.008	2	274	
Current Online – exp.	.00**	5.97	.041	2	278	2,1 < 1,3
Current Online – no exp.	.74	.310	.002	2	274	
L2 Anxiety – Exp.	.03*	3.53	.025	2	278	2,1 < 1,3
L2 Anxiety – No Exp.	.08	2.52	.018	2	274	

Similar findings are reported regarding L2 use, significant where learners had L2 experience and non-significant where absent. The largest effect related to L2 Target ($F(2,278) = 11.16$, $p = .00$, eta^2 = .077); Irish learners (M = 4.30, SD = .65) and LIHs (M = 4.28, SD = .74) were higher than NILs (M = 3.67, SD = .81). Learning Effort also demonstrated this pattern, though a smaller effect (eta^2 = .048); here, LIHs (M = 5.07, SD = 1.19) were the highest grouping, followed by NILs (M = 4.64, SD = 1.08) and, interestingly, Irish learners (M = 4.48, SD = 1.34). While expending equivalent levels of effort learning, desired future fluencies were higher for Irish and LIH learners with experience. These learners, having a greater possible social-psychological identification with Irish, might desire to become *better* Irish speakers than those without social-psychological connections. This could explain why L2 Anxiety was higher amongst LIHs (M = 5.01, SD = 1.44) than both Irish learners (M = 4.68, SD = 1.22) and NILs

(M = 4.41, SD = 1.55), and why Irish and LIH learners attached more importance to their learning.

For learners without L2 experience, no use scale differed significantly, suggesting that the process of learning Irish magnifies social-psychological differences, but ab-initio learners cannot be assumed distinct by heritage background. This finding makes sense, as there is no inherent reason that LIHs would, absent the importance attached to identification, differ from an NIL who feels affection or closeness to Irish culture.

4.4.3 Correlational analysis – Are relations constant across heritage category?

Like **RQ2**, the validity of the relationships found in **RQ1** were explored through comparative correlational analyses, assessing whether learners in each of the three categories displayed similar levels of correlation against the two primary variables considered.

Table 56: Correlations - Learning Effort (by Heritage/Nationality)

Learner heritage	Ideal Own	Ideal Other	Ought-to Own	Ought-to Other	Integrative	Current L2 Self
Irish learner (n=139)	**.52****	**.26****	**.40****	**.22****	**.30****	**.29****
LIH (n=285)	**.67****	**.46****	**.64****	**.30****	**.58****	**.41****
NIL (n=154)	**.65****	**.43****	**.52****	**.38****	**.59****	**.32****

LIHs and NILs were similar, but Irish learners had lower correlations. As observed, nationality and L2 proficiency are correlated, and it is reasonable that Irish learners would be lower for many of the same reasons observed in **RQ2**; among those with higher levels of self-reported proficiency (more likely Irish), self-discrepancies are less motivating than learners with lower levels (less likely Irish). The correlation between the Ought-to Own and Learning Effort amongst LIHs (r = .64**), stronger than either other group, provides support for the construct's motivational power amongst LIHs. For Irish learners, this scale proved weaker than for the other groups (r = .40**).

Supporting the central validity of relationships more generally, L2 guides maintained their rank-order amongst all groups. One note is the much-weaker correlation between the Integrative orientation and Learning Effort amongst Irish learners (r = 29**); it is unclear why this would be the case, though Irish learners, having greater levels of possible L2 contact with speakers,

may view the Integrative element as less meaningful than learners without such possible immersion.

Table 57: Correlations – L2 Target (by Heritage/Nationality)

Learner heritage	Ideal Own	Ideal Other	Ought-to Own	Ought-to Other	Integrative	Current L2 Self
Irish learner (n=139)	**.64****	**.17***	**.42****	**.04**	**.37****	**.31****
LIH (n=285)	**.68****	**.43****	**.59****	**.23****	**.53****	**.33****
NIL (n=154)	**.64****	**.29****	**.43****	**.20****	**.47****	**.16***

Echoing **RQ2**, the link between L2 guides and targets were balanced across groupings. This implies that L2 Targets have clear links to specific L2 guides which varies less than does present levels of effort expended learning Irish. The only substantial exception was that the Ideal Other (r= .43**) and Ought-to Own (r=.58**) were stronger for LIHs than with either Irish learners or NILs.

4.4.4 Do learners of more distant heritage differ from those of more recent heritage?

The final element assessed was whether learners of more recent Irish heritage (e.g., Irish parent) differed from those of more distant heritage (e.g., grandparent or great-grandparent)?

Table 58: Frequencies – Most-Recent Heritage Link (LIH)

LIHs (n=275)[20]	Valid N	Valid %
Parent	58	21.1%
Grandparent	58	21.1%
Great-grandparent	75	27.3%
Further than great-grandparent	69	25.1%
I am not sure	15	5.5%

LIHs were evenly distributed across categories, enabling direct comparison. An ANOVA was conducted (those who selected unsure were removed from analysis):

[20] N=10 LIHs did not respond to this item.

Table 59: ANOVA – Distance of Irish Heritage

Scale	p	Test statistic - F	Effect size (eta^2)	Df	N	Group ranking
L2 Selves						
Ideal Own	.15	1.80	.021	3	256	
Ideal Other	.95	.11	.001	3	256	
Ought-to Own	.03*	2.99	.034	3	256	3,1,2,4
Ought-to Other	.32	1.19	.014	3	256	
Current L2 Self*	.64	.57	.006	3	256	
Integrative	.17	1.69	.019	3	256	
Criterion Variables						
Learning Effort	.04*	2.75	.031	3	256	3,1,2,4
L2 Target*	.04*	2.80	.032	3	256	3,4,2,1
Current F2F Use	.33	1.16	.013	3	256	
Current Online Use	.01*	3.43	.038	3	256	3,4,1 < 4,1,2
L2 Anxiety	.09	2.24	.026	3	256	

Differences were generally non-significant, and when significant, small. Learners who listed "Great-grandparent" as their closest link had the highest means, but this lack of significance indicates that distance of heritage is not predictive of motivation. The scales with significant differences were those suggesting intentional effort – Learning Effort, Current Online Use, and L2 Targets. Those of more distant heritage surveyed may seek to purposefully connect with heritage more actively, which could explain these higher means. More broadly, the central finding is that there is no generalisable trend regarding whether a learner's heritage being closer or more distant to Irish nationality links to clearer or higher self-concept or motivations in learning Irish amongst learners in this sub-sample.

4.5 Summary of findings and chapter conclusions

This chapter reports the findings of an iteratively developed quantitative instrument assessing the presence and correlational strength of 11 L2 self and use scales amongst learners on a series of Irish language/culture MOOCs, answering three questions, moving from the general (**RQ1**) to the specific (**RQ2 + RQ3**).

4.5.1 RQ1: General findings

In general, findings support a four-guide L2MSS in this context, validating the role of an Own L2 self for adult Irish language learners, both Ideal and Ought-to. These are in line with Al-Hoorie's (2018, p. 731) meta-analysis, and a promising way of explaining differences amongst L2 learners of Irish. The importance of internalisation, behaviour "willingly enacted and when he or she fully endorses the actions in which he or she is engaged and/or the values expressed by them" (Chirkov et al., 2003, p. 98), is also affirmed. One ambiguity within the L2MSS is degree of dichotomy between stances (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009, p. 352); data suggest that failing to distinguish internal expectation (Ought-to Own) from external affirmation (Ideal Other) presents an incomplete picture of LLM and layering in self-concept. Learners who imagine future L2 self-images *also* tend to attach negative consequences to possible failure. The Integrative orientation is relevant, demonstrating that learners value opportunities to use Irish with others, and members of L2 communities, where possible.[21] The argument which follows is that these three constructs - the two "Own" guides and Integrative orientation - are closely related, and each influence the outcome variables studied. Analysed closely, however, the question of directionality becomes relevant. Causal elements cannot be demonstrated using cross-sectional methodologies, but this aside, implications are clear. Learners who report expending more effort learning Irish and who have higher L2 learning targets are also more likely to have a future vision of themselves speaking Irish (Ideal Own), to identify failure as impacting their self-beliefs (Ought-to Own), and to identify with Irish speakers and culture (Integrative orientation). Social validation and expectations from those around them have modest impacts on future goals. These findings raise interesting questions about how to foster both valued L2 selves and self-relevant visions of L2 use.

Measuring additional behavioural scales proved beneficial, demonstrating that learners use Irish less frequently than expend effort learning it (true for those both with, and without, L2 experience). Correlations between L2 guides and L2 use were also lower than with learning effort, indicating L2 guides are more linked with effort at present, rather than L2 use. Why this

[21] Integrativeness is sometimes considered problematic in an Irish L2 context (see Ó Duibhir et al. 2017, p. 114), but respondents appear to value using Irish in cultural and communicative contexts, even where such opportunities are difficult to envision.

is the case could link to several causes, such as a lack of belief in viable L2 Use outlets, limited contact with L2 referents, and lack of confidence in abilities to do so. A finding highlighted however is the stark differences between whether learners do use (M = 2.99, SD = 1.39), or want to use, Irish in F2F situations (M = 5.52, SD = 1.30); many learners wish to use Irish much more than they might do at present, supporting Flynn (2020).

4.5.2 RQ2: Shaped, and shaping - The L2 learning experience

RQ2 contextualises where the L2MSS may have unusual elements in an Irish L2 learning context, in addition to raising questions regarding generalisability of the theory's motivational mechanisms. While not surprising that learners with previous L2 learning experience, and higher levels of SRP, displayed greater commitment, the two had differing effects. Where a learner reported either formal or informal experience was not meaningful across the bulk of variables. Given the large number of participants globally who make use of arrays of methods learning Irish, this finding is instructive. Although differing by background form of experience was not determinative of motivation. Instructors and course designers should be mindful that informal learners report a lower level of proficiency speaking Irish at present. As such, although learners in the two categories did not differ by future L2 target, learning effort, or any L2 Guide, these informal learners may have lower levels of confidence, requiring further support in achieving the aims they have internalised.

The diminishing correlation between L2 guides and learning effort as level of self-reported L2 competence increases raise questions. This finding is important and comparing learners of different experience levels in this manner is little examined globally (though see Lasagabaster and Ó Laoire, 2004). As will be explored in conclusions, the sample was unusually mixed, presenting an interesting hypothesis for further testing, whether informal learners are "satiated" at relatively low levels of L2 proficiency.

4.5.3 RQ3: More than labels – assessing social identity

Irish nationals reported higher L2 selves, but effects were generally small. LIHs were equivalent to NILs in most cases, except the Ought-to Own. Cross-considered with L2 experience, learners with experience differed significantly by heritage categorisation, while ab-initio learners did not. Analysing these findings is challenging, as limited comparable literature exists, but they caution against generalising regarding social identity and the Irish language. Although Irish (L2) appears very important to Irish respondents, the degree to which this importance links to actual L2 use/effort is unclear. Consider LIHs with L2 experience as a sub-sample (n=133); despite coming from non-Irish backgrounds, they are generally indistinguishable from Irish nationals with L2 experience (excepting Current L2 Self). They record equivalent L2 Targets, attach similar importance to becoming an Irish speaker, and expend *more* effort learning at present than Irish nationals. If, as Ní Chiobháin (2019)

memorably argues, Irish L2 learners range "from toddlers to drag queens", accounting for the interplay of diasporic and personal identities informing Irish L2 Selves is crucial. This is further emphasised as there is evidence here that a learner's heritage distance (genealogically) is not meaningful regarding levels of motivation, suggesting a much more personal relationships for most respondents than their heritage alone, elaborated further in narrative interviews.

4.5.4 Conclusion - Summing up the snapshot

As a cross-sectional, single-collection instrument, several of the most interesting observations within this chapter (such as links between learning experiences and L2 guides, and that learner heritage differed significantly only where learners report having L2 experience), are snapshots, reflecting generalised categories. These scales do not - indeed, cannot - do full justice to the relational and dynamic nature of LLM, and how this is multifaceted (Ushioda, 2013b, pp. 127-128). The abstract notion of whether a learner has or has not learned the language before, for example, provides limited understanding regarding *quality* of said experience. Equally, it does not allow for how different learners may interpret similar experiences distinctly, dependent on memories, beliefs, biases, and convictions, the self as a story, experienced phenomenologically and developing over time (Ryan and Irie, 2014). Relatedly, though this chapter has demonstrated the importance of an idealised L2 vision and the capacity to imagine oneself speaking Irish upon a range of variables, it says, and can say, rather less about the *type* of L2 speaker, and L2 uses, any learner might envision (see Ushioda, 2019b, p. 667). For deeper understanding and exploration of these relational and dynamic processes, a series of learners were interviewed using a semi-structured, narrative methodology, to which the study now turns.

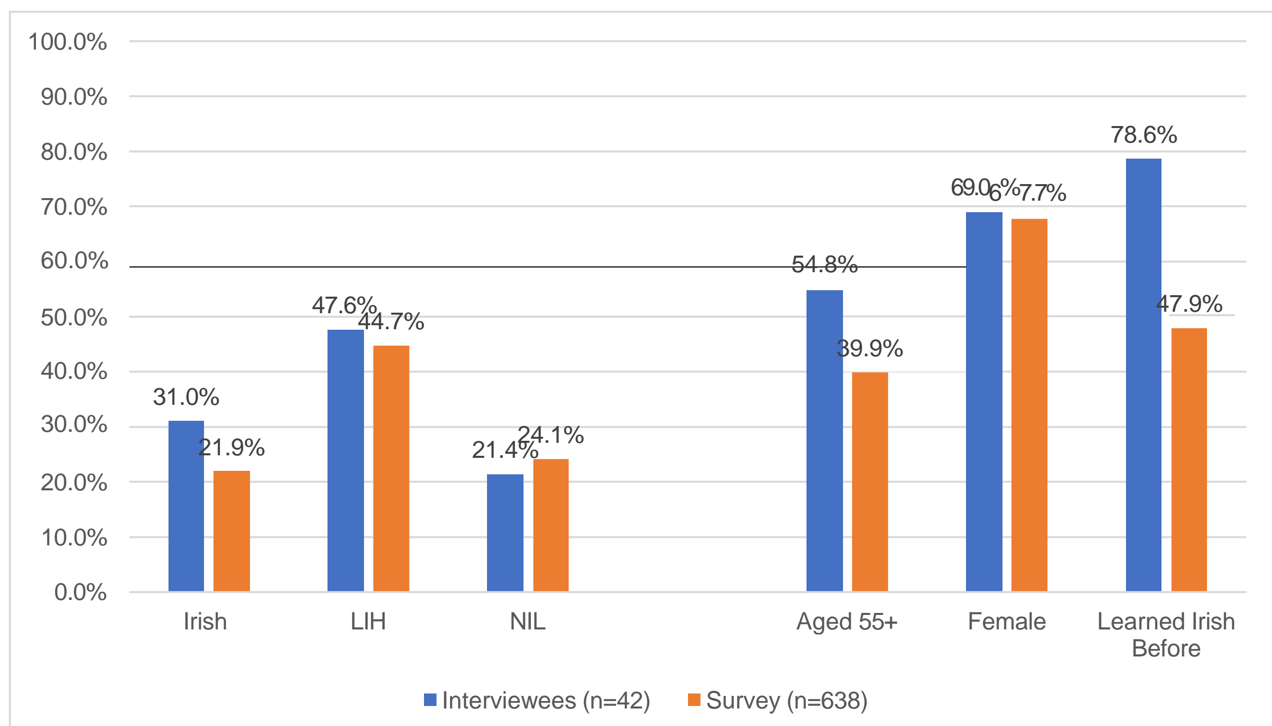
5 Semi-structured interviews (n=42)

This chapter draws upon Ushioda's (2009) theorising of language learners as persons in context to assess whether the L2MSS is useful in interpreting the experiences of adult Irish L2 learners. The sample consists of n=42 learners interviewed using a semi-structured protocol. The focus is (primarily) on motivational processes within learners, rather than motivational variation from each other. The chapter considers how learners describe their experiences in narrative, and the factors both empowering, and inhibiting, as pertains to learning Irish. The types of possible future L2-speaking selves learners described are considered in detail, but care is taken to place these images in context, social and relational. In the following chapter, findings will be linked to the **RQ**s studied and the quantitative findings reported in the prior chapter.

5.1.1 Participants – overview (n=42)

Interviewees varying in age, nationality, gender, and levels of experience learning Irish were recruited through the *Fáilte ar Líne* LMOOC Courses. Given variation across survey instruments, every attempt was made to ensure that interviewees reflected this diversity while maintaining a focus on their individuality.

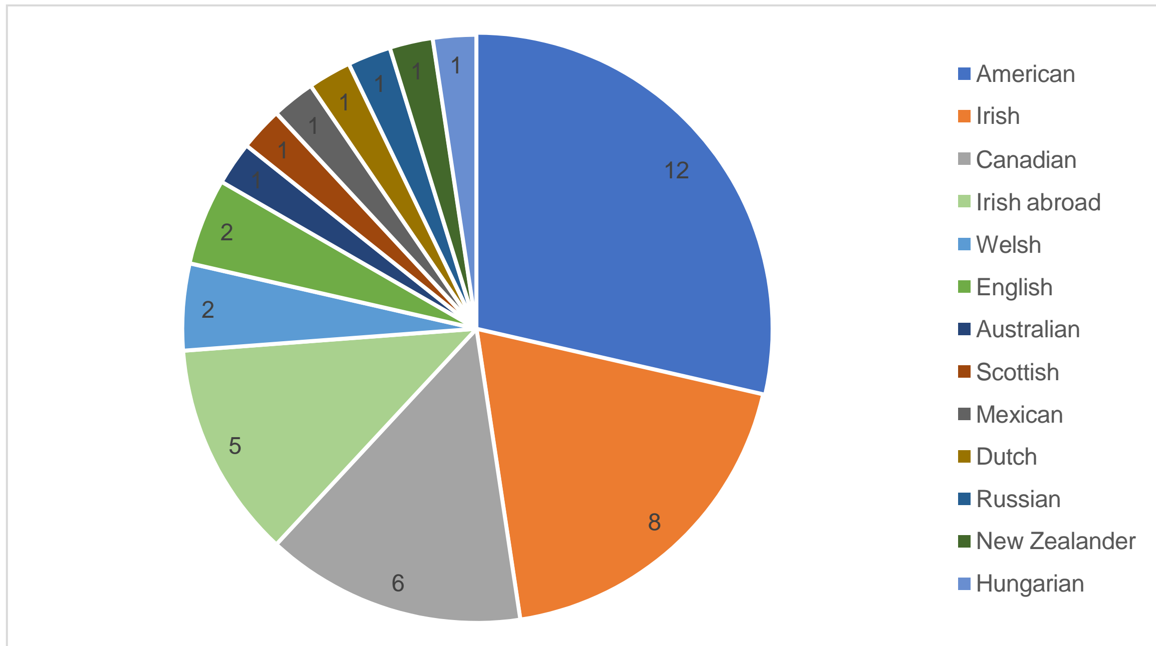
Figure 17: Demographic contrast of survey and interview samples



Key distinctions between the interview and survey samples as regards to several demographic points are outlined in **Figure 17.** Both were similar by aggregate gender identity and heritage background (although more Irish learners were interviewed). Interviewees were somewhat older than survey respondents on average, and a notable difference was that most

interviewees had experience learning Irish before their participation in the LMOOCs. This is understandable, as those who came forward for interview would likely be those with greater interest in the language than those who had simply responded to a survey.

Figure 18: Interviewee Nationality Distribution



A total of n=12 nationalities were represented amongst interviewees, the two most frequent being Irish (n=13) and American (n=12). N=5 participants were UK nationals (2 Welsh, 2 English, and one Scottish), while n=6 were Canadian. A category of note is "Irish abroad" learners, the n=5 who identified as Irish but were not raised in Ireland. All five were raised in England; three lived there at the time of interview, while the other two lived in France and the United States, respectively. Most interviewees (n=37) were English L1 speakers, with five English L2 speakers (L1s – Hungarian, Russian, Welsh, Dutch, and Spanish - respectively). One learner (I6, Faisal) reported being raised in a multilingual home in England, by family who spoke both several languages at home. One interview – Ailbhe (I35) – was conducted through Irish, with all others through English.

5.1.2 Summary of findings

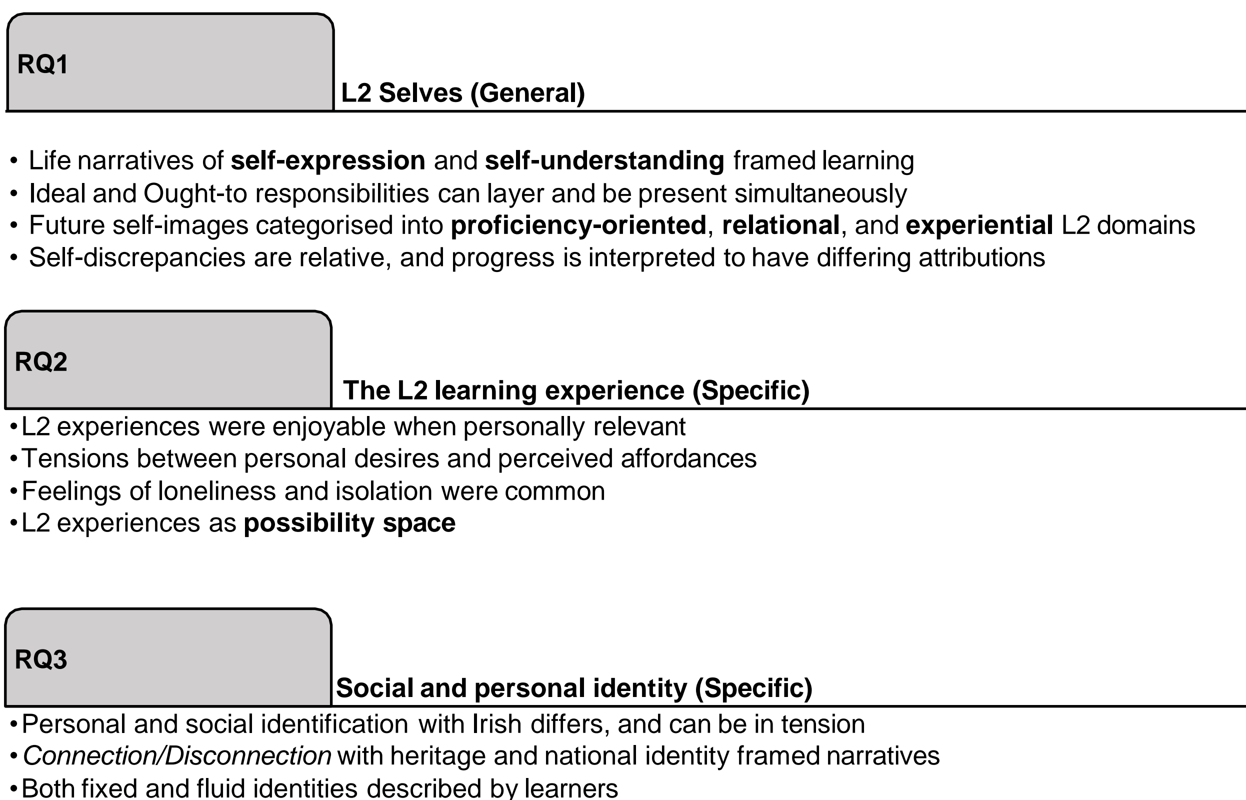
5.1.2.1 Setting the scene

This chapter covers a rich dataset, encompassing more than forty interviews. As such, a couple of initial notes are highlighted for the reader. Firstly, the researcher's role in collating and coding accounts was substantial and embedded in his relational practice with participants (De Costa et al., 2021, p. 6). What is included within this chapter is a small fraction of these experiences, selected by the researcher through an interpretive process of data reduction and comparison (see **Appendix E3**). Secondly, a naïve stance was avoided here. What was

recounted to the interviewer necessarily reflected, at some level, the selves that interviewees *wanted* to portray, reflecting their individual contexts (Hiver et al., 2019, pp. 88-89). The journey that a reader of this chapter will take starts at the most general level, examining the L2 selves that learners describe, and moves into the specifics of both their L2 learning experiences, and their social/personal identity elements.

Figure 19 offers an overview of this chapter's contributions and results, through the prism of the **RQs**. To signpost for the reader, these summaries are then each briefly described.

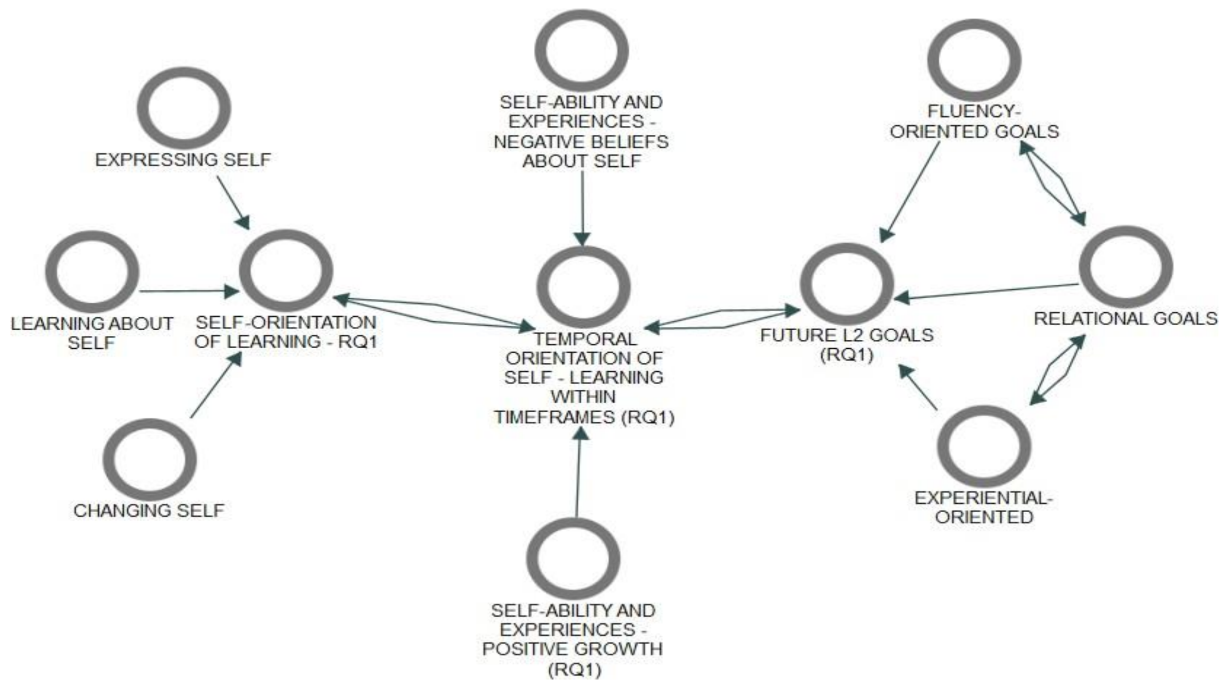
Figure 19: Summary of findings



5.1.2.2 RQ1: Technicolour L2 Selves

Within interviews, Dörnyei's (2009) distinctions between an Ideal and Ought-to L2 self were not always clear. Each interviewee is a "thinking, feeling human being" (Ushioda, 2009, p. 220); studying self-descriptions is the closest approximation of their phenomenological hopes and dreams (though not a "true" picture of reality, (Hiver et al., 2019, p. 103)). Three narrative frames were interpreted where the relationships between self and learning Irish furthered self-understanding, self-expression, and/or self-transformation. These frames were dynamic and interpreted as being used by learners to define their purposes and feelings in learning Irish.

Figure 20: A narrative model of the L2MSS (RQ1)



Future self-images were categorised by the researcher into three non-exclusive categories: **Proficiency-**oriented, **Relational** and **Experiential.** The figure above (created in NVIVO) reflects this analysis and represents learning over time (temporal orientation) as a central point upon which i) past experiences, and ii) expectations for future, are interpreted. **Self-discrepancies** occur through interaction with L2 Learning Experiences, both individually and socially (explored in **RQ2**); learners varied in their self-interpretations, and data was rich in how difficulties in learning can be attributed to both external and/or internal factors, impacting L2 self-images.

5.1.2.3 RQ2: L2 experience as possibility space

In **RQ2**, the role of the L2 learning experiences was analysed, focusing on the narrated impact of these forms of learning. Three broad points were considered, focusing on:

- Attitudes towards the L2 learning experiences described (both positive and negative)
- The sense of control/agency learners felt/did not feel within their personal learning environment
- The role of social others in shaping experiences and possible L2 selves

Possibility space, a term adopted from Davis and Sumara (2007, p. 58, referenced in Murray, 2013, p. 388) is used to describe the interaction of psychological elements and external learning environments. While Irish aligned with the personal identities of many learners (identity salience), questions of using Irish were influenced not just by available opportunities, but also whether these opportunities were viewed appropriate (afforded self-expression). In some instances, opportunities were perceived as being aimed towards other learners, of different interests or proficiencies. This illustrates how opportunities that are not seen as useful are unlikely to be pursued, even by committed learners.

5.1.2.4 RQ3: Social and personal identity

RQ3 explored three elements: i) social identities, ii) personal interpretation of L2 identity, and iii) how questions of legitimacy and L2 ownership are salient within life/learning contexts.

Interviewees differed in how they perceived their social identities. The notion of **connection** fitted these emotional narratives of investing, or not, in self-expression and self-understanding. Positive arcs included where learners felt they were "weaving" back into "Irishness" through the language. Negative patterns occurred when learners felt they had limited possibility to do so, seeing themselves as products of historical processes rather than agentic beings. Some framed their experiences inter-generationally, returning to connections with Irish/Ireland. Others described selves that should have been, could have been, but have not been, indicating disconnection. This point, which will be returned to in the thesis' conclusions, presents another way to view the L2 self, as a reflection of self-concordance.

Some negative experiences were also reported, recalling Norton's emphasis that language learning is socially mediated and that "…learners are not always able to choose the contexts of interaction…" (Darvin and Norton, 2021, p. 4). Possible identities can be constrained by perceived judgement and shame - not only from others but, more damagingly, from learners themselves. When legitimacy was questioned, several described feeling demotivated, which suggests that, for better or worse, interlocutors have great emotional and affective influence.

5.2 RQ1 – L2 Selves in context

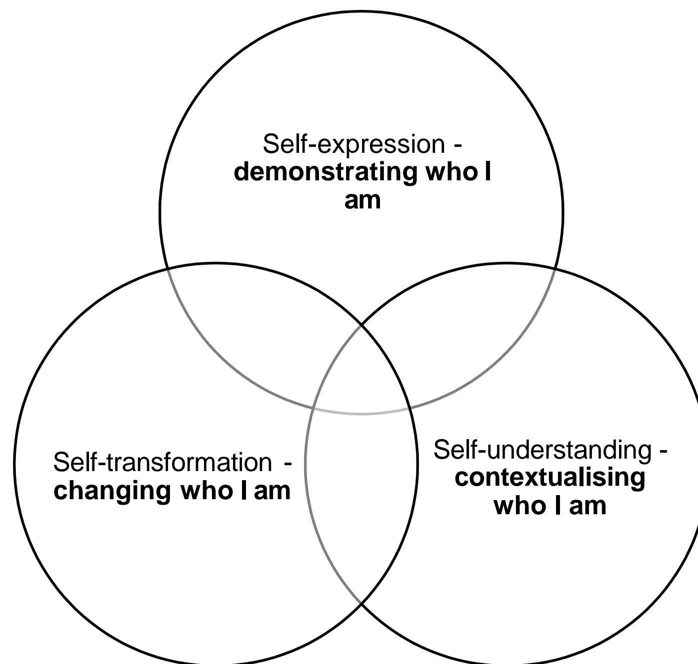
Table 60: RQ1 Restatement (QUAL)

RQ1	Operationalisation
1. How well do existing theoretical frameworks within the field of LLM (primarily the L2MSS and SEM) describe the motivations of those learning Irish using non-formal means? Are these theories in tension, complementary, or contrastive, in this study context?	• How do learners **frame learning** from a self-narrative perspective? • What **types of future L2 selves** do learners describe and do these imagined future selves fit well with the Ideal/Ought-to, and stances (Own/Other) implied by the L2MSS? • What **types of self-discrepancies** do learners describe in narrative, and is there evidence that some are more adaptive than others in supporting L2 learning?

5.2.1 Narrative frames: Understanding, expressing, changing

Learners naturally differed in how they imagined themselves both presently and in possible futures. This interplay is at the core of **RQ1** analysis, through narrative frames. These refer to the way in and degree to which a learner explained how they "...define who they are, to connect with others, and ultimately to make sense of their lives and regulate their behaviour" (Şimşek and Dörnyei, 2017, p. 56, describing McAdams and McLean's (2013) "integrative life narrative"). Narrative relationships to Irish were interpreted as reflecting i) **self-understanding,** ii) **self-expression,** and/or iii) **self-transformation.** Relationships between these frames and Ideal or Ought-to future L2 selves varied, reflecting the complexity of this question.

Figure 21: Three narrative themes of self



5.2.1.1 Understanding oneself

For some (n=13), learning Irish furthered self-understanding, in that it allowed a learner to craft a sense of meaning and place themselves in wider contexts. While in a sense (explored in section 5.4.3) these accounts linked to social (i.e., heritage) identities, they tended to be personal. Gregersen (2019) argues that ""if, however, there is no meaning or purpose to be found in an iteration of a possible self, then one would be hard pressed to idealize it" (p. 628). Where learners described having underexplored parts of their identity, contextualisation could occur through learning some Irish:

> …The language, I found this in my Fijian, in my second Master's, someone like me doesn't fit. I'm, I'm not dark enough to be a full Fijian, I'm too white to be a Fijian, to be accepted. Similarly, I'm not anything, you know? And so, and the language contains the meaning, and if you don't have the language you, you, you can't access all the parts of yourself. – I33.

> …I felt that there was a hole, there was something missing, and you know that there's some part of my background that, that needed to be fleshed out a little bit you know? And this was it, and I could see it, but I couldn't wrap my hands around it… – I38.

This is analogous to MacIntyre, Moore and Sparling's (2017) "Rooted L2 Self"; they argue that rootedness occurs where one views themselves as part of a shared community protecting an L2 (pp. 512-513). This theme of returning to roots was frequent. Indeed, a minority referenced shame at their lack of connection to Irish:

> …the sense of shame is that, you know, we don't know a lot about our past, beyond say, maybe 1890s, whereas there are a lot of other families in America that can say, "Oh, you know, my grandfather came over in 1730, and we know, he came from Switzerland, or whatever, and we can go back to Switzerland and find out". So that to

> me, is kind of, you know, a shameful thing. Um, but I'm working, I think through learning the language, the language is almost like a therapy, that you… I'm working my way to my ancestry through the language. Does that make sense? – I12.

> It, it feels like a kind of healing to be able to do that, like, so much has been taken away from us, and that, if I could regain that language for, for my family, that feels like a kind, a part of healing, right? – I42.

Such self-narratives reflect wider, “non-linguistic ideals” (Lanvers, 2012, p. 169), returned to in the summary of this question, and in **RQ3**.

5.2.1.2 Expressing oneself

The second category, **self-expression**, links more directly with Dörnyei’s theory. Self-expression is the heart of the L2MSS (Ushioda, 2011b, p. 22), yet most empirical literature explores variation in rather general terms, with limited consideration of goal idiosyncrasy (Csizér, 2019, p. 87). Some spoke of learning as enabling this self-expression, through getting the language to “do things for you”:

> …if you're confident that you, from knowledge that you've previously learned, this language or that language, to the point at which you can use it and get it to do things for you, then that, that's a great start. You don't give up quite so easily then. – I36.

> …when I'm in, when I was in that group [ciorcal comhrá], and people were talking about, discussing recipes for, their best recipes for, for Brussel sprouts, that's the end game isn't it? That's the end goal, this idea of being yourself, when I can just speak about my life in my own way... – I6.

Where learning is oriented towards self-expression, feeling able to “speak about my life in my own way”, as Interviewee 6 argues, furthers agency. This learner was articulate in describing wishes to be seen as you feel you truly are:

> I think many of us do, especially in a language, or there's maybe some, it's maybe a parallel communicative process, you know, we're talking, but we also want to be understood as who we are. And I think if I, if I just repeated script in Irish, at you, then I wouldn't feel as though, I wouldn't feel happy, because I wouldn't feel like I'd represented myself or that you’d understood who I was. – I6.

Self-expression is relational; to *feel* competent, but also to be *seen* as competent (Harder, 1980, p. 268). As Interviewee 36 notes, being able to enjoy using Irish, is also implied. Others described wanting to be being able to express their personalities, rather than to reach a particular proficiency:

> It would be nice to be able to have a conversation that involves kind of more evolved, you know, like more about thoughts, I guess and be able to have that type of conversation. I don't know if I'll ever be able to have that. – I25.

> Sílim gur mian le daoine a bhfuil ag foghlaim na Gaeilge iad féin a chur in iúil trí mheán na Gaeilge, is mian leo ábhar ar bith a bhfuil spéis acu inti, spéis acu ann, a phlé sa Ghaeilge.

> [I think that people who are learning Irish want to express themselves in Irish, they want to be able to discuss topics that interest them, in Irish.] – I35.

An insight from Mary (I19) was that many Irish L2 learning opportunities contain tensions, where attendees have little in common beyond the language:

> … Well I suppose we generally talk to the people we like talking to in any language, and you don't necessarily find people, you know, you have to make more of an effort to go to a *ciorcal comhrá*, because sure they might be talking, you know, there might be stuff, talking about stuff you wouldn't bother with, or there might be people you wouldn't bother with unless they were speaking Irish. That sounds very, you know…but it's a fact. We all have people we like being with, and you may not like them just because they are speaking Irish... – I19.

Overall, the relational aspects of self-expression can be limited where the self one wishes to express does not align with the interests or expectations of others.

5.2.1.3 Changing oneself

A distinct category, referenced by one learner, though alluded to by others, was that learning a language fundamentally changes the self. Philosophers and psychologists debate whether one has an "authentic" self (e.g. Taylor, 1989; Baumeister, 2019), but the subjective feeling that one *is* changed when speaking an L2 is common (if complex, see Pavlenko, 2006, p. 27). Ana (I15) argued that:

> Maybe it's a different side. I mean, it's funny, because when you speak a different language, your voice changes and the language changes. It's, it's funny I, I just like it. I'm a different person in Spanish, and in English, and in French, and your tone and the, the pauses you make, everything, everything changes a little. Not like being a native learner, because you will never have the same mental structure than a native learner, but it takes you nearer to this ability to see the world from the other, the other's point of view. – I15.

She also placed store on what she believed she could not change; she would never be a "native" speaker but could become closer to such others through learning. As will be outlined in RQ3, perceived division between more and less proficient learners could sharply limit imagined L2 selves.

5.2.2 Possible futures – L2 Selves by domain

Dörnyei (2014) distinguishes future goals from visions of oneself speaking a language (p. 12) and there was evidence that learners simultaneously held multiple possible L2 selves. Future self-images were categorised into three groups: i) **proficiency-oriented,** ii) **experiential,** and iii) **relational** future L2 self-images:

Table 61: Forms of Future L2 selves

Element	**Proficiency-oriented**	**Experiential**	**Relational**
Example (n=)	• Full fluency (n=7) • Fluent reading (n =6) • Conversational fluency (n=11)	• Travel to Ireland (n=11) • Use language with children/grandchildren (n=7) • Preserve Irish as community language (n=7)	• Role model (n=9) • Narrative – future self (n=7) • Imagined community (n=3)

These reflect facets of L2 selves, as learners might see some contexts (cultural, social, and educational, as examples) as more plausible to speak Irish in than others (Nakamura, 2019, p. 112). Building upon this observation, while some emphasised L2 achievement as a measure of their progress, for others emotional and relational progress was more important.

5.2.2.1 Proficiency-oriented self-images

The first category refers to desired future proficiencies, generally linked to self-expression. N=7 learners wanted to be fluent in the future:

> Is there a point at which I'd say I'm happy? If I've spent six months communicating only in Irish and I haven't spoken any English at all? Maybe…I might still be dissatisfied. I think I need to learn more [Laughs]. – I10.
>
> I would love to be very fluent so I could talk to somebody, and I would love to be able to read literature. You know, even write, you know, I would, I would like to attain that level of fluency. Would it be native? Maybe not, I'm not that good in Spanish, I'm constantly having to look up little things, you know, I there, there's still little questions I have about it. But, you know, but close would be good [Laughs]. – I11.

Desire for fluency was often qualified, as in the examples above, as it was deemed difficult to obtain. Clíodhna (I7) noted that were she to move to Ireland, fluency would not necessarily be realistic, absent further conditions:

> I do think it's [note: achieving fluency] possible. I think, especially because of technology being so advanced, I don't know that it would have been possible, you know, 10 years ago. But for me, I think it's, it's having the technological options to, you know, when you can actually watch an Irish television show, and I mean, right now, or if I listened to a podcast in Irish, you know, I can pick up a few words now, and so, I think, because you can immerse yourself without even going, I mean…
>
> But I know if I go to Ireland, it's not going to be the same. Um, you know, or at least that's my, my impression, is that, you know, having read just a little about the controversy about, you know, even the frustration about spending any money, having signs, bilingual signs, and things like that. There's a real move to have a lot of English or, you know, a lot of English is prevalent. So, I think, yeah, I'm not sure that even moving there, unless you were in a bilingual family, you wouldn't necessarily develop fluency. - I7.

Immersion being required for greater fluency was emphasised by n=14 learners, and n=10 argued that it was difficult to envision this occurring in their personal contexts. A related contrast drawn by Caroline, an English-born Irish learner, was between reading and speaking Irish. The former was easier as the latter required other people:

> But I know that I understand more just from reading, and that's wonderful, and, yeah, that would keep me going. I think because I don't have access to Irish speakers, I have to accept that, that's really where my improvement is going to be for now is, you know, the, you know, reading, keeping reading things and well, following courses. – I17.

N=11 described how their primary goal was to improve, rather than perfect, their Irish:

> I want to be able to chat away in Irish, and I mean, chat away. I don't mean this stilted, foreigner talking in Irish [Laughs], you know, I want to to get to the stage where I can chat away in Irish. - I20.

> I would like to have been able to conduct this interview totally in Irish, but I know I wouldn't have been able to express it as well, and, and, because I don't know you, I've not spoken to you before, I would have been a bit nervous and not have been able to do it very well, but I'd love to be able to that's, that's my aim, to be able to use the language as fluently as I do in English, and I know I'm never going to get quite to that stage, but to get closer to that stage would be lovely. – I23.

5.2.2.2 Experiential self-images

While many future self-images related to L2 proficiency, others focused on what one imagined doing through Irish, with particular people and in particular settings. A common desire was to visit the Gaeltacht (n=11), discussed in Ó Laoire (2018), both to learn and as a leisure activity:

> As I say some of the people do go to the *Gaeltacht* for the sake of their kids and grandchildren and that, but for themselves, like, it's a holiday, it's relaxation, but it's *trí Ghaeilge* [through Irish] and it's what's required, there's no doubt about it I think. – I1.

> And so, I'll be motivated to learn as much as I can because of that. It won't be useful for the course really, but yeah, I just feel, I just feel like I'd like to, basically, and then I could come to Ireland for a holiday and meet some people in Ireland who speak Irish. – I27.

Desiring to "meet some people" reflects an integrative element, and for some, the Gaeltacht was a place one could "cram it in" over a short period:

> Although sometimes you can't rate your own progress, and so that's why I think going to the *Gaeltacht* is quite important, because you're out of your comfort zone, you're with tutors that don't really know, you only have three days, to sort of cram everything in, and you just got to get it out. So that's really helpful to have a change in learning pace… - I16.

Another type of experiential self-image was imagining using the language with others, such as children or grandchildren. N=7 learners referenced such persons, wanting to share their Irish in the future:

> Yep, I have a much higher goal, and what I find fascinating is that my daughter is actually, she's right along there with me with the goal, which is quite fascinating. Her goal is that when she has children that Irish is their first language, and for a Canadian-born person, that's, that's not a standard type of thing, but that's her goal. Her goal is that her children will speak Irish. And I keep saying, "Well, I better get good at it so that I can speak to your children" [Laughs] – I10.

This is a strong indication that LL can have a holistic purpose and that learners occasionally though beyond their own lives, to how a more generalised future of Irish might look like.

5.2.2.3 Relational self-images

The final category, relational self-images, represents where a learner directly compared themselves to a) another version of themselves or b) a learner/L2 speaker. I16 (Brenda) noted the value of interacting with speakers of a higher proficiency than herself:

> And I think having a conversation with someone whose ability is higher than yours, who isn't teaching you, that that teaching is invaluable. I think, and I've learned more through being sat at [Irish language organisation] meetings, actually, scrabbling, going "Oh God, I better up my game, because I don't know what they're saying!" [Laughs], and suddenly the comprehension comes along, because you're forcing yourself a little bit. – I16.

"Forcing" her to push beyond her comfort level, these interactions motivated Brenda, as the second speaker gave her an opportunity to assess her own proficiencies in, as she emphasises, a non-learning context. Flynn (2020) suggests that many Irish L2 learners value particular target varieties and Holly described a fellow learner as proof that learning Irish was possible (with time and resources):

> I just remembered this guy, Micheál [pseudonym], when I was taking the classes at [Irish language organisation]. [Instructor] would always talk about Micheál being a…he was a guy from the States, and how amazing he was because he had taught himself Irish and he was now fluent in Irish. And we were all like, "Woah, that's amazing", and I guess probably Micheál had enough money to go over to Ireland and take immersion courses and stuff like that. So, he probably didn't do it all on his own, but just the idea that somebody could do that… – I42.

As will be explored in **RQ2**, social others can also provide learners with behavioural models, prompting consideration of other possibilities:

> Yes, I'd forgotten a big thing, too, is my brother-in-law, my older sister's husband, comes from Kerry, he's a very good Irish speaker, a very good Irish speaker. So again, that kind of filtered into the family a bit as well. That sort of "Oh Irish…" you know, I'd really like to be able to, you know, communicate, or at least understand. [Laughs] – Interview. 17.

Christopher, who knows and is friendly with Irish speakers through pastimes, described successfully communicating with one of these speakers as "a breakthrough":

> Well, they're [*Gaeltacht* friends] not too bad now, because I said to one of them the other night, I was at a concert on Sunday night and I said 'Oíche mhaith' [good night] the other night, I was at a concert the other night, and he answered me back - 'Slán abhaile!' [safe home], like you know, so that was a breakthrough. – I13.

Relational models need not be specific individuals but can be collective. Ben (I40) provides the example of visiting a pub full of Irish speakers in rural Ireland:

> I mean it, you know, when you can observe people doing things, it makes, makes it easier, but that was definitely a moment where, you know, I could see it as a living language more so and, and so that…that…you know, hearing it spoken, I think, makes it more, sound like it has more affinity for me. – I40.

Each of these examples illustrate that L2 selves are inherently relational, and include a strong comparative element, both with alternative versions of oneself, but also social others as models.

5.2.2.4 Ideal and Ought-to L2 Selves

These categories should not be conflated with an Ideal or Ought-to L2 self, and indeed, it is possible to analyse the examples above representing as different examples of each of the four L2 guides.

In the first case, Lionel (I20) described an Ideal Own L2 self, focusing on L2 proficiencies, with a self-expressive purpose. In the second example, Tim (I24), imagines himself and his wife teaching their future children Irish, evocative of both an Ideal and Ought-to Own L2 Self, as his desire to maintain connections to Irish culture fits both. Brenda's motivation initially reflected her grandmother's expectations, but she describes the duty as now being hers, and example of how one can internalise the expectations of others. Similarly, but reflecting an ideal, Caroline described the pride her father would have felt were he alive to witness his children learn Irish. His memory lives on and serves as an **inner audience** (Moretti and Higgins, 1999, pp. 188-189), guiding learning. These complexities show that distinguishing personal hopes and dreams from social context and beliefs about others is difficult, an issue we return to in **RQ3** and in the summary of this thesis.

Table 62: Narrative Extracts – Ideal/Ought-to Distinctions

Example	L2 guide - posited
I want to be able to chat away in Irish, and I mean, chat away. I don't mean this stilted, foreigner talking in Irish [Laughs], you know, I want to to get to the stage where I can chat away in Irish. - I20	**Ideal Own** – Proficiency
…ideally that my goal is to be as close to a fluent speaker in the next kind of two to three years, because we have, as children come into the conversation, we want to continue on kind of that connection, and make sure that that culture doesn't…that it continues to grow. – I24	**Ideal** and **Ought-to Own** – Proficiency **and** Relational
I think that there's that cultural connection to my grandmother, which I, I feel very, I feel like it's almost like duty-bound, that someone should have carried that on for her because she was so vociferous about that, that wish that someone would do it… – I16	**Ought-to Other** and **Ought-to Own** – Relational
...especially my father, he would've been just so pleased. I mean, myself, my sister, my older sister and my youngest brother, we're all, you know, having a stab at learning Irish and it's kind of a bit late, we're all getting a bit elderly ourselves now, but you know, our dad would be so, so pleased about it. - I17	**Ideal Own** and **Ideal Other** – Relational

5.2.3 Self-discrepancies

Beyond i) narrative framing and ii) future self-images, the central motivational mechanism of the L2MSS (Thorsen, Cliffordson and Henry, 2020, p. 585) - self-discrepancy - was explored to examine how learners assessed progress. Self-discrepancy is relevant only where specific criteria are fulfilled (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2021, pp. 65-66). Whether learners described differences between their present and future self-concept was critical to whether (and how) future self-images might motivate.

5.2.3.1 Moving forward

N=16 learners described a gradual progress, of slowly developing L2 skills. Not every example entailed comparison with a desired future state, but many referenced changes in self-perception. Deirdre viewed challenge in general as enjoyable, expressing comfort with ambiguity:

> I'm a bit lost too, but I don't mind being lost. I was an ESL teacher for all those years, I'm used to people talking around me that I don't understand…..
>
> Um, so I just sort of stuck out the more advanced stuff and found that I always got something out of it. Always. You know, no matter how far above my head it was, I always get some little bit out of it. And I just found that as time has gone on, it's gotten easier and easier and easier. – I11.

Having a strong internal locus of control was also referenced by Kata, who analogised learning Irish to learning English. An L1 Hungarian speaker, she compared her past self to her present one:

> And I was listening to it [note: English radio], and I could pick up stuff, I could pick up what they were talking about. I couldn't understand everything, but I knew that this was the news, and then they had a number, or this was a football match result, or d'you know, I could pick up stuff like that. And I'm at that stage, around that stage now with Irish, and I love that, because when it hit me that I remembered a time that I had listened to the radio, and I know that I can learn a language to this level that I'm speaking English, that I can learn Irish as well, because Irish and English are the same weird compared to Hungarian, d'you know what I mean? – I41.

This reflects an interesting multilingual experience and illustrates that previous experience in other L2s can frame how a new one is considered (Henry, 2017). I33 (Tabitha) argued that learning inevitably has slumps and peaks, and was confident in her resilience:

> No, it [note: perceived difficulty] hasn't put me off at all. Partly because you know, I've done a lot of study. And so, when I read the comments online, they said, "Oh, this is very difficult" and I thought "No, it's not, every piece of learning is difficult". The wheels always come off on Week 6, you know, in your traditional academic year, start a new topic, Week Six. "What am I doing? I don't understand this?!" You know, fight your way through it. – I33.

High self-efficacy, and positive L2 use can expand agency and belief, but these are not merely internal, psychological processes. Ushioda (2016) writes that learners require metacognitive awareness to "coordinate strategic thinking processes..." (p. 569). Karinne described finding what worked for her, moved from "looking" to "doing":

> People do share things on Facebook about various methods. So, you know, I've looked into a few of them, I don't want to take on too much at once get sometimes I have the habit of putting too much on my plate at one time, but yeah, yeah, you learn it from other people, and you know, they share. And then, you know, trying to find things that work for me, because I realised that just looking at a book isn't going to do it [Laughs]. I have to kind of be actually *doing* [emphasis] doing it. – I8.

Using Irish in unexpected circumstances actualised learning in real-life contexts, demonstrating to a learner that they did in fact have agency and *could* communicate through Irish. Caelinn, a Scottish LIH, used Irish in a nightclub, and reminisced:

> So, I got talking to this other [name], who, he's like a man from Galway that just moved here a few months ago, and I had a few scoops in me, so I was like, *"Tá Gaeilge agat?"* [you speak Irish?] and he was shocked. And then we started talking away in Irish and it was just mad, because all my pals were kind of looking over, "What's she doing, what's she saying?!" So that is the only other face-to-face Irish kind of learning, or conversation, if you can call it that [Laughs], that I've had. But it just shows you, you don't know when an opportunity will arise!" – I21.

Imagination is critical in learning (Murray, 2013) and perceiving opportunities increased the confidence in abilities to learn Irish as a longer-term endeavour:

> By having access online, if I take three months off, it takes a week to reacquaint myself with what I didn't do in the last three months. And to me, that is a huge, it's a huge bonus, because all of a sudden, I have access to something that I've never had access to before, I have the ability to look at the language, and also, I have much higher confidence level that what I'm learning through the DCU program is something that I could go to anywhere in Ireland and use and while they might change my pronunciation, I'm not going to be saying something that is like Google translate [Laughs] – I10.

A handful of learners described having exceeded their initial desires, a highly motivating feeling, and demonstrating progress to oneself:

> I would say it's has [motivation] actually increased the further I go. My original goal was just to be able to read signage when I go back to Ireland, I've already exceeded that. – I12.

Certain learners had a sense of "becoming" more competent where certain milestones were reached. A final note links to a desire some learners had to feel as though they were not translating, but to less-effortful forms of translating Irish in their minds:

> I was like, really excited, because I just actually was there, I just got back like two weeks ago, and I was like, thrilled because I actually read, I was reading the signage somewhere, and I read, I read the signage and realized that I had read and knew what it meant without translating it into English first. Like, I didn't go through that step of like, read, translate and then know what it meant... – I25.

Although performance and achievement are important, the standards by which learners defined "success" are therefore often more subtle than the demonstration of a particular L2 proficiency.

5.2.3.2 Protecting self

Experiences learning Irish as more of sustained difficulty were also found and negative patterns were woven into positive ones, indicating fluctuation. Learners attributed challenges to different sources, and these interpretations framed and constrained possibilities for progress; Brenda identified feeling "a bit thick" at initial difficulties, ultimately attributing them to unsuitable teaching practices (further addressed in **RQ2**):

> And I got into, to be candid, I got into quite a difficult class with quite a difficult tutor at quite a difficult time for me in that, I now know that I've got dyslexia, my employer helped me to get that diagnosis. My employer has a specialist unit, and in my first three months of learning Irish at the class, because of that tutor's influence, I think, he was a bit of an old-fashioned, you might say, and it kind of throws you straight back to school days. So, it wasn't a comfortable experience in those first few weeks. I thought "I'm a bit thick!" [Laughs]. – I16.

A minority of learners were self-critical (n=7) and interpreted failures internally. What was criticised varied, and I30 was self-reflective in describing difficulties, particularly how some related to a busy life (external), but others to internal aspects:

> There's a mixture of external with running out of time and having other life things come up that need my, like, mental resources, even if I still have time, but there's also internal of, I very much have the, what's colloquially referred to here is the "gifted kid problem" where you took advanced courses in school and you feel so smart, and then whenever you run into an actual problem with something you don't understand automatically, your brain is just like "nope, we can't fail, move on, we can't look like we're bad at anything ever!" So, I struggle with that internally some too, and I know that contributes to me losing motivation to keep going on something. – I30.

A learner who reconciled difficulties within self was Olga (I38). A self-identified strong language learner, she spoke of frustration in learning Irish:

> And so, to get to a language where I felt like it wasn't going anywhere for like a full year, you know, after a year, I still could only have very basic sentences, you know, conversations or whatever, was very frustrating for me. – I39.

Here, the self-discrepancy is not between a future and present version of herself, but instead, the level at which she feels she should perform, given her identity as a strong language learner. Reviewing this frustration, she attributed challenges to two sources:

> And I had to step back, and I had to say, "Okay, well, one, you're not in your early 20s anymore". So, your brain is not what it was back then [Laughs]. And two, "your life is not what it was back then". You know, I have a family, I have a house to take care of, like, there's all these responsibilities, so time is much more limited... – I39.

Learners' shifting interpretations of their experiences learning Irish can be positive or negative; if difficulties are considered fixed (i.e., additional time impossible to generate, age as determinative), learners might lower their targets, to reflect what they view as realistic. Problematically, some described themselves as culpable in this lack of progress; Christopher (I13) described a "mental block" or being unable to push beyond a "comfort zone". Used an as example in the methodology chapter, Celia (I25), believes herself "horrific" speaking Irish (contrasted with her successful reading):

> "I actually read, like I'm terrible at speaking, like I'm horrific at it, like horrific at it. And I'm also embarrassed to try to speak, so that probably is a lot of that comes into it, but I'm much better at reading than I am at, like being able to speak, because I have a hard time with, like, retrieving words for what I want to say." – I25.

For Maria, a greater motivation to learn Irish than other languages meant that she was frustrated at her progress:

> I, I'm not sure that I would say that I have found Irish more difficult. My desire to learn how to be able to communicate in Irish day-to-day is stronger than it is in any other language, and with that, what happens is that it seems more difficult because I'm not there yet. – I10.

In one sense, her heightened motivation has itself created pressure and awareness of what she is not (yet) capable of doing. Collectively, these finding indicate that far from a landscape of dreams, the experiences of learning Irish brought adversity for many interviewees. Some described pressures and feelings of inadequacy, as well as difficulties self-regulating the challenges inherent in learning a language as a sustained task.

5.2.3.3 Attributing self-discrepancies

To summarise the findings of **section 5.2.3,** the narrative complexity of whether learners viewed themselves as gaining proficiency over time or viewed learning Irish as a sustained struggle illustrates that self-discrepancy is contingent upon how experiences are interpreted. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2021) write that attribution is important in "how language learners' processing of past experiences might then shape current and future motivation and behaviours" (p. 47). Generally, interviewees appeared successful in life and confident in themselves. Learning Irish was a domain in which, regardless of experience, this comfort can be called into question.

Self-discrepancy also represents discomfort in self-states (Higgins, 1987), and some - Deirdre, Kata, and Tabitha – enjoyed this discomfort, as learning did not threaten self-concept (Lou and Noels, 2019, p. 544). Others struggled, with certain factors (e.g., aging, mental blocks, Irish being intractably difficult) raised as possible explanations for dissatisfaction. Future L2 selves are built on evolving expectations, and fears of failure and frustration at limited progress can lead to downwards revision, particularly relating to L2 proficiency. As will be examined in the study conclusion, learning Irish opens a wide range of self-interpretations, and considering these interpretations is critical in understanding the types of future self-images desired and ultimately viewed as plausible.

5.3 RQ2 - L2 learning experiences and possible selves

The impact of the L2 learning experience, which could further, or inhibit, L2 selves is next explored. Dörnyei (2019a) argues that this factor is overlooked despite often predicting criterion measures more strongly than an Ideal or Ought-to L2 self (p. 22). Here, an accepted premise is that experience mediates envisioned possible L2 selves. Interviewee accounts are therefore analysed to offer a spectrum of the behaviours, interpretations, and implications drawn by learners from interaction with social others, resources, and routines.

Table 63: RQ2 Restatement (QUAL)

RQ2	Operationalisation
2. Are differences observable between those who have more experience than others, and between those who have learned by different means (formal/informal)? How do learners of differing levels of L2 learning experience conceptualise and describe their motivations, and the impact these experiences have had upon the same?	• What types of different L2 learning experiences do learners describe, and what **impact have these experiences on their abilities to envision themselves as Irish speakers?** • How do social others impact motivation within learning experiences?

5.3.1 L2 engagement – experiences, attitudes, and preferences

5.3.1.1 Sparking interest – "It's got to be fun"

Positive experiences were grouped into two related categories, i) positive experience, and ii) personal enjoyment. Almost half of interviewees (n=19) referenced learning as enjoyable, including positive opinions about the LMOOCs, with I1 noting that they "hope the courses continue because they're brilliant. Absolutely brilliant...the whole thing is superb, there's no question about it at all". A similar number (n=18) were positive in their assessment of Duolingo, which enabled short bursts of activity, precisely the routine-based types of "forced" L2 engagement identified as critical in existing literature, with I37 offering a description of the app as "fantastic for vocabulary, because there's a kind of forced repetition involved in that".

An unanticipated category included desires for learning to be "fun". MacIntyre and Vincze (2017), studying the emotional experiences of L2 learners, report that amusement related to several constructs, including the Integrative orientation and Ideal L2 Self (p. 80). Kata spoke of enjoying listening to audio files created by others:

> …I always leave a comment or something, because there is a guy, who, different times he says something, that he plays a little tin whistle at the end [Laughs], which is so American [Laughs], but it's adorable as well, I like, there was effort in it….he says "*Is mise Micheál, is as* whatever", and then he kind of [tin whistle impression], and that's cute, like [Laughs]. – I41.

Mary argued that interactive LL experiences were better for engaging adults:

> …there are very good ones on Duolingo in French as well, the stories, because on Duolingo, the Irish isn't really developed because they can't get moderators, I think, but the French and the Spanish all have stories, they're well worth a look at actually, because, again, they're quite fun to do and they only last about five or six minutes. It would be an interactive story. – I19.

Tania (I36) argued instructional approaches oriented towards sharp correction can demotivate, discouraging students:

> "It's like, if you slap them every time they get a word wrong [Laughs], that's not the way to do it, if you yell at them when they get a word wrong, that's not the way to do it. You just gently correct them or, or not even correct them, just use the word, and they'll, they catch on very quickly, you know...so it has to be fun. That was my first thought is like, "it's got to be fun", or else, why would I, you know?" – I37.

The choice to engage or not engage with Irish is entirely in interviewees' hands, and, as will be explored below, where learning was challenging, learners often recounted choosing to not engage.

5.3.1.2 Learning in limbo – "The sound is nothing like the way it's written…"

Viewing Irish as difficult (as in 5.2.3.2) often reflected limited L2 experience. Confusion concerning content was common, with n=11 learners describing grammar as especially difficult. Tom (I22) described a "glitch":

> I mean, you know, something I still haven't quite cracked is that idea that there isn't a word for "a" [note: indefinite article] and that "an" [note: definite article] is "the", and I, you know, like, you have a wee glitch that you just kind of find really difficult? Kind of that's one thing that I kind of seem to have a glitch over and I know it's one of, is it, 12% of languages, the sentence structure is the verb-subject-object? – I22.

While not immutable, these challenges can magnify the absence of interlocutors. N=5 argued that learning by oneself does not foster the required interaction:

> …I got some books out, I don't remember what they were, but I didn't have much luck with them, I find that trying to learn a language from the book is difficult, and especially for the language like Irish, it's so much different. So, then it sort of drifted to the wayside… – I8.

Constrained abilities to self-assess progress were also common in the absence of interlocutors:

> ...I've been doing it very, very, very slowly because it's not something that you can like learn yourself without listening to it. So, back when I was like just trying to memorize all these grammar rules, and trying to get the pronunciation right, but I had no one to

> talk with. So, I got some Irish friends, but they were not Irish speakers, so it was just very difficult. – I15.

N=18 learners identified pronunciation as a particular challenge, which is important given perceived discrepancies between how Irish is spoken and written:

> Of course, again in the Irish, the, sound is nothing like the way it's written at all, you know… – I20.

The differences learners described between learning and actively using Irish resonate with distinctions in quantitative results. Françoise (I29) argued that moving from self-directed learning experiences to actual L2 use brought feelings of disorientation:

> And I don't know, since like, for instance, Duolingo doesn't really do complex sentences, and, you know, I can do good and feel great about myself doing one course after the other on that platform, but then I get to, say, Irish twitter and I try and read someone's opinion and I completely lose sense of who's doing what and what the action is, and I just don't know how to get to that step. - I29.

Some wondered if what they were learning would be useful in real-world communication, where differences in dialect might become a relevant factor (n=7):

> And I think it's very helpful, but I think to understand, you know, turns of phrase and ways of saying things, particularly different dialects, because I, when I've spoken with people, you know, there's already a big difference between a Dublin accent and a Connemara accent, not even talking about a Donegal accent [Laughs], you know? – I2.

These accounts suggest that the isolation Murphy (2011) reported amongst distance language learners is very common in an Irish L2 context. Any L2 self changes through experience and it was common for learners to describe inadequate practical opportunities to use Irish and feeling out of their depth when attempting to do so. While online experiences were often positive, a sense of relatedness and connection was missing in many instances.

5.3.2 Agency and control - possibility in context

5.3.2.1 Expanded possibilities

L2 selves are representations of ways a person could imagine themselves being, and finding new possibilities to use Irish, particularly when contrasted with past difficulties, could motivate. N=13 argued that technology made it easier both to access resources and to use them more efficiently:

> So many people are of Irish heritage outside Ireland that I think that that's one reason why there are more resources, you know, and that's another reason why there are more resources available, because people are interested in their heritage. And I mean, I found a lot of stuff online, it's amazing, and I use more than one program, I use a lot of stuff. – I11.

> And it's a lot quicker just to use any of them [online dictionaries] as a dictionary, it's a lot quicker than combing through *Ó Domhnaill* [physical dictionary], and it just, it just works quicker. And some people like doing courses online, I prefer to have a book in front of me, but I use the computer as a resource. – I23.

Accessing relevant resources is a benefit of using digital technologies learning languages, and n=11 learners described empowerment, with expanded choice in how/when they studied:

> I think it's good, because now with online resources you don't have to go to a language lab. When I was an undergraduate, we went to a language lab. In fact, I actually ran the language lab, a couple days a week. So now you have 24/7 ability to study... – I12.

Many, such as Ana (I15), identified gaps in their learning which online resources had filled:

> So, when I found out in the Future, FutureLearn platform, that DCU was having this series of courses. I was like, "Yay, finally!", and since the 90s, I'm listening to RTÉ, TG4, and trying to follow what is available here because, because of the region, not everything is available here, so it's kind of difficult, but very good. – I15.

If viewed as affordances (Van Lier, 2010), the LMOOCs enabled the expansion of horizons vis-à-vis previous possibilities, when learners did not believe they could learn Irish:

> So, I live in [English city], which isn't I mean, there is an Irish community in [English city], but it's not as strong as for instances in [English city] or [English city] or maybe even [English city], you know? It's there, but it's not as… I wouldn't have said access, access to Irish classes is not very good at all, not in person. I mean, obviously now that we can do things online, it's better." – I17.
>
> Um, I tend to gather stuff from lots of places at once, for like seriously studying, I try to focus on one at a time, but I love that the internet does give me access because like I said, getting to physical classes at my location is hard, so it's helped me learn anything at all. – I30.

Lionel (I20) suggests that learning online lowers L2 anxiety, as others do not see failures:

> The online stuff in some senses is a lot better, because if you get it wrong, you haven't got folk around you, and you feel that you're a total idiot because they must understand it, but you don't. And so, the online stuff is, is a lot gentler, shall we say. – I20.

Gradually building confidence in L2 proficiency is referenced by Henry and Lamb (2019, pp. 604-605) as a possible benefit of online learning, and though immersing oneself in Irish in Irish was difficult, n=8 also referenced technology as enabling an alternative type of immersion, through repetition:

> What I'm finding is I'm not getting the vocabulary as quickly as I should say, as strongly as I do with Duolingo, because Duolingo really, you know, you just there's just so much repetition that I don't worry in any given class, or any given segment, if I don't understand a word or two, because I know I'm going to hit it a hundred times down the road [Laughs] so it, sooner or later, sooner or later, it will stick in my mind. – I38.

Mark (I32), referenced the additive nature of online resources as helpful, triggering experiences from one resource in other contexts:

> They, they often do not at first, but then, then you'll, you'll find something that that reminds you or that reinforces you, your knowledge of something that you've, you've gotten from another resource. – I32.

These collective experiences indicate that learners viewed the a) ability to control and self-direct their learning as highly motivating, in most instances, and b) most learners desired this feeling in their learning opportunities.

5.3.2.2 Losing control - 'I was drowning in information'

While online resources and materials were viewed positively by many, online learning could also be viewed as artificial, with some unsure that it would "translate" into real-life use:

> And, and so kind of that's, that's difficult, but I kind of find in Duolingo, that I seem to be able to do it, but I'm not confident that that would translate to going to a *Gaeltacht* and being able to manage in a restaurant and ask directions and things like that kind of because I haven't done it. – I22.

The freedom to set goals and control learning also brings pressure, with a lack of time to study, as in I31's comment that "I was a bit disappointed with myself that I couldn't finish 102, but I think that was because I was drowning in information".

It is worth emphasising that the issue of time is complex, and entails trade-offs; Jenny (I26) noted that although she did not have sufficient time to invest in the LMOOCs, she could maintain engagement by committing to briefer bouts of learning with Duolingo:

> I did get a bit stuck with Futurelearn, because you really have to be intentional with FutureLearn, and it's like, they're going to throw, even in a couple of pages' worth of it, they're going to throw a whole lot of stuff at me. And to sort of sit down and have the time for that, whereas I find now with Duolingo if I can have five minutes and keep it more rolling on a daily basis. I want to work with the two of them. – I26.

Relating to the themes outlined above, learning Irish could have limited payoffs; a minority (n=8) described an asymmetry between amount of effort expended learning Irish and the results of their labour, Jenny further reflected on how her "dabbling" was not leading to clearer understanding (yet):

> …I'm a bit frustrated, because…I've been, sort of been dabbling a year, now, and I still don't, I can't read what I say, you know the, whenever it tells me what this sentence sounds, like a you know, I can sort of see the connection between the, a lot of the letters, a lot of the vowels. I thought that would have been more obvious by now, but hopefully it'll all become clear, someday…[Laughs]" – I26.

This suggests that disillusioning experiences can lead to reduced L2 selves; where learners felt they were constantly "relearning", there was no real sense of progression:

> I went to Irish language school at [course] for like, just for like a week at a time or whatever. And I wanted to learn the language really, really badly, and I can tell you that I learned practically nothing. Because I would learn things when I was there, and they didn't use any kind of learning aids, it was just like, board, like on the board. And,

> and I retained nothing, like, when, as soon as I left, I pretty much lost everything because there's nobody to actually speak with. – I25.

5.3.2.3 Where to next?

More experienced learners faced a particular difficulty in accessing opportunities appropriate for their L2 level. Olga, who attended an ab-initio class to meet others, noted:

> I did go ahead and take that course, and…the language parts of it were way below me, but it was kind of fun still to be in a classroom with other people who had an interest in the language and we're trying to learn a little bit, but no, it's overall it's very hard to find people to connect with I feel like. – I39.

Michael, who returned in-class to materials he had already studied independently, saw learning as repetitive:

> …when I first started, we started with, with *buntús cainte*. I'm probably not pronouncing that right, and we went through a 10-week course with *buntús*, no, I'm sorry. I went to a five-week course over the summer. That was the first one. And then when we started in the fall, we repeated the five you know, whatever we did in the five weeks we repeated in the fall. So, if they're, you know, from Summer to December, I had covered five chapters of *buntús* and I said "You know, I did that myself in a month or so over the summer, so where is this getting me?" – I38.

Ailbhe found her local learning centre catered towards learners in the early stages of learning, with fewer outlets for more proficient learners:

> Tá ranganna Gaeilge i rith an lae agus san oíche, an chuid is mó dóibh dírithe ar bhunrang agus mheánrang, agus is, agus is cosúil tá na daoine atá ag freastail ar na ciorcail chomhrá ag foghlaim Gaeilge fosta. So, is dócha go bhfuil níos mó de dhíth fá choinne mo leithéidse, atá líofa go leor.
>
> [There are Irish classes both during the day and at night, most of them for beginner and intermediate learners, and most of those attending the ciorcail chomhrá are learning Irish as well. So, I guess more is needed for people like me, who are fairly fluent.] – I35.

This suggests that identifying not just outlets for use, but also for advancement beyond ab-initio levels, is quite difficult.

5.3.3 Social Others: Inspiring and Impeding

5.3.3.1 Looking to others – "She's very, very gentle with it"

Given recurrent references to isolation/disconnection, positive trends mentioned by n=10 were when online experiences fostered belonging. Muir (2018a) highlights the power of near-peer role models, people like the learner. In many instances learning online allowed learners to see similarities with others, including those at higher proficiencies:

…most people seemed to always go to the comments after the lesson, it's as much part of the learning process and, and you, obviously some people have quite good Irish, actually, or really good Irish, and so you can pick up, you know, new words, new phrases, and not everybody speaks the same dialect. – I19.

The power of hearing the stories of others, including their thoughts and opinions, was also valued:

I think the comments inform you, they inform you in several ways. They inform you who the [inaudible] are, if they're taking learning seriously. So, and then I often find I can springboard off the comments, or I will challenge a comment… – I33.

Occasionally, experiences blossomed into relationships beyond the course through further voluntary contact:

Interviewee: I had a German partner, and it was kind of hilarious because we were practicing and he was having some trouble, and then he said, "Hey, can you speak English?" And I said, "sure" for one module, and I said, "Danken Viele, Deutsche Sprachen" and he goes, "What, you can speak German!?" and I was like "Yeah, I used to live there". And so, we were able to pair up easier that way. I did enjoy it, so I liked that part of the class.

Interviewer: Yeah, so even you would pair up, as in, give answers to each other's comments, that kind of way?

Interviewee: Yeah, and I was able to Skype with him outside of class too. So, we had some more connections that way. That's how I used it after I left the course, or after the course ended. – I28.

This also included connecting with people that learners knew from other contexts:

They [LMOOCs] were marvellous because that somehow turned into a community, I think, when we were doing those, and my sister was doing this as well and there was a woman I've met on an Irish course in [Ireland-based course] was on, a woman from America, you know, and it kind of it was lovely just sort of getting together with her again... – I17.

N=11 emphasised positive instructors, and interviewees often had detailed criteria to judge whether a particular instructor was "good". Veronika (I23), a trained teacher, argued that:

Traditionally, teaching strategies were "here's a list of words, learn them off by heart and here's some, there's some phrases that you need to know" and there was a lot of repetition. Whereas now people use a whole lot of different strategies for teaching, getting people more involved, getting them up and working at it and playing games and moving around, and it's just more attractive. – I23.

Despite some consensus on a need for repetition, instructors who were referenced positively tended to enable personalisation and encouraged learners to explore novel ways of seeing themselves:

> ...they [instructor and his partner] can do accents really well, but the way he was teaching us was through a lot of drama, through a lot of, "showing and doing", rather than, like blackboards, or whatever, or whiteboard nowadays…. Which, to be honest, whiteboards are as important for a lot of the time, but just somehow, the way he was passionate about it made me want to be involved in it… - I41.

Allowing learners to "run off on tangents" was recounted by Mary, describing an instructor who:

> …was used to doing lesson plans for all his life, and he had a lesson plan. He just didn't share it with us. You know, you could tell, but he directed and then he'd let you run off at tangents. And, you know, he encouraged that. – I19.

When asked why he enjoyed learning with a particular tutor, Lionel described her as humorous and gentle:

> I think she herself was one of those things that did it. She's very, very gentle with it. She uses children's slides actually, because she says that it means that adults don't feel threatened when they are looking at that sort of thing, and I think she's right as well. – I20.

Tim (I22), described an engaging instructor of a class he attended, as also being humorous, but supportive:

> ...he just kind of swept in and started and never told us his name or anything, and it was 100 miles an hour and I kind of thought "I'm not going to survive this at all!". And, but by day three, I kind of, I was realising that we were on different stuff to day one, and I knew the stuff from day one, and he was so humorous as well, and had little anecdotes and jokes and so on. – I22.

Collectively, these examples provide support for the profound need to develop social relatedness and connection with others. As Carson (2007) emphasises, "Often, the language classroom is one step removed from such networks" (p.24); this appears doubly true in the case of distance LL, raising challenges in how to foster meaningful connections.

5.3.3.2 It takes two to *teanga* – "I don't think you can learn fully by yourself"

As noted, a prevalent theme was isolation in learning, related not only to feedback but also to connecting with others when learning. N=17 learners described challenges contacting L2 speakers; n=10 referenced difficulties finding F2F classes, limiting possible L2 uses. Irish was often contrasted unfavourably with other L2s in this regard:

> …I have more ways of learning it [Irish] available to me. And in a way I have fewer, because I can go out and find a Spanish speaker to talk to, but try to find an Irish speaker to talk to…holy cow, really hard. So that's one difference... – Interview. 11.
>
> But also, when you're working on it by yourself, it makes it kind of tough. Like I think about when I did, so in high school, I did French, German, and Spanish, and I had friends in those classes. So, even if we were…had very low-level language capability,

> we would make up little conversations with each other just because it was fun and novel, and so, when you don't really have that, it makes it harder to learn. – I7.

This isolation extended to pedagogical practices, where a learner felt she could not fulfil the simple act of having a conversation in Irish even though living in Ireland:

> …we'd like practice at night, and then he'd [note: Irish-speaking partner] leave it, and he'd be like, "Okay, well, this is your homework assignment for today". And so, my homework assignment was to do this conversation, so I was like, "Okay, well, where am I going to find it?" Like, it just, you don't, I don't seem to find Irish speakers in [Irish city]. – I25.

This dynamic was also sometimes raised by learning materials; Caroline bought books premised on social interaction, and was unsure how to use them:

> Right, so you would be need, you would be needing to be having conversations with people, you know, they were obviously trying to get you to speak. So, a lot of the materials supposed that you would be asking somebody else the question in your group, you would, you know, you would take the suggestion for work with you to another person and then, you would go around the group maybe asking them all questions? – I17.

Isolation and disconnection narrowed what learners could envision themselves using Irish to do and this somewhat lonely learning experience raised central beliefs about how one learns a language:

> I would occasionally pick up a book, a like, Irish grammar book that I had and try and learn it, but again I felt a bit like I was kind of floundering, because I was trying to learn it by myself and yeah, I don't think you can learn fully by yourself… – I21.

Furthering **RQ1**, L2 selves are relational (Ushioda, 2015); where learners could not envision proactive L2 use with others, these experiences tended to remain solitary and challenging (see Murphy, 2011).

5.3.3.3 Voiceless - Negative L2 Use Experiences

In addition to loneliness, reportedly negative experiences with L2 instructors/users were found.[22] A minority (n=6) reported negative experiences, often in detailed ways. A common observation was that teaching methodologies didn't always fit the learners in front of them:

> Yeah, so he, had a strange way about him, the class wasn't run as I would expect a normal adult education class to be run, I've done some adult education stuff with various different things, kind of, courses, on literature and stuff like that. And I think that he had been used to be a teacher of schoolchildren and he had a disciplinarian almost approach, "Shhh!" and stuff like that, and it's like "you're talking to 70-year-olds!" in some cases, or to 19-year-olds who have just got out of that, so… – I16.

[22] These accounts reflect personal experiences, not the entire reality of situations described, and are important to include for this reason. Regardless of instructor intentions, several learners detailed examples where instructors had negative impact upon their (and other learners') self-beliefs. It is important that instructors in non-formal contexts are aware of the impacts, both positive and negative, that they may have, regardless of their intentions.

Discipline-oriented teaching was also reported by Tania, describing a tutor with whom she learned for several years:

> Yeah, it was, ok, so, I don't want to say, the lady is no longer with us, she's, and she, I'm sure she did what she thought was best, but she wasn't a super outgoing, friendly sort of person. She had never been to Ireland [Laughs], and she knew the rules, you know, but she was a bit like, you know, a bit like she'd, she didn't, but like she'd slap your knuckles with a ruler, if you know that kind of approach? – I37.

A criticism voiced by Rebecca (I14), a third-level educator, was that the methodologies in some classes were instructor-centred:

> But the way it was conducted was basically a transmission-absorption, if I want to use learning theory, which means you know, I transmit the information to you and you absorb it and you parrot it back to me, and therefore you learn it, as opposed to engaging people in a multimodal way with sounds and music and things which give a bigger scope to the learning styles, and more "ins" to the preferences that a person may have to learn. – I14.

That some instructors did not promote self-expression and were perceived as controlling is an inference of this criticism. Rebecca then contrasted her own pedagogical practice with her experiences learning Irish:

> ...Because if we're all learners struggling, you don't feel like "Oh, it's some person who knows the language and knows the, only wants one dialect", and is just sort of like, well, I mean, look, the other, my early teachers were bad teachers, you know, "that's a stupid question to ask" - I tell my students, "There is no stupid question. If I haven't, if you're asking a question, then I haven't explained it thoroughly". So, there's a big difference in quality of teachers and that's important too. – I14.

Her emphasis that "there is no stupid question" in how she approached teaching, an identity salient in other contexts of her life, highlights conflict in how she initially learned Irish. A further point pertaining to the L2 instructor referenced is they were teaching not just the language, but, as articulated by Rebecca, a *way* of speaking Irish ("only wants one dialect"), not necessarily concordant with learner desires. Daithí, an Irish learner who lives in America, criticised a teacher whom he saw as religiously driven rather than language-oriented:

> When I got my wife into Irish courses there was somebody, a teacher, all they taught her was prayers, you know, "Is é do bheatha a Mhuire" [Christian Prayer] ...she could say the "Our fathers" in Irish, but it wasn't real, it wasn't a real Irish teacher. It was one of the amateur Irish teachers… – I9.

As will be discussed within the next chapter, there are valid questions to be asked about how Irish L2 instructors can support the diverse goals that learners in front of them (either F2F or online) may have, but the impact of instructors is not always positive.

5.3.4 Selves in Possibility Space

Darvin and Norton (2021), writing from a post-structural perspective, caution that researchers should consider not solely the "inner" world of a learner, but also how they relate to the social world (p. 6). Data analysed presents a picture of habits and behaviours across three areas:

- Attitudes and perceptions of learning experiences (**5.3.1**)
- Sense of control and agency (**5.3.2**)
- Access to others with whom to share learning (**5.3.3**)

Drawing upon these findings, and the undertheorised nature of the L2 Learning Experience (see Dörnyei, 2019b), a tentative concept describing how L2 experiences might link more closely with possible L2 selves is presented: **possibility space**. This phrase is adopted from Davis and Sumara (2007, cited in Murray, 2013, p. 380), and influenced by Brophy's (1999) writings on motivational zones of development. It refers to a learner's perceptions of their ability to develop future L2 selves within their personal/social L2 learning experience, blending psychological, and social-contextual elements. Specifically:

> We use the term *not-yet-imaginable* to refer to that **space of possibilities** that is opened up through the exploration of the current **space of the possible**. By definition, the not-yet-imaginable is impossible to specify and difficult to describe. It is not a realm of unthinkable thoughts but, rather, thoughts that cannot yet be triggered. – (Davis and Sumara, 2007, p.58, italics in original, bold added for emphasis).

The term "space" has particular meaning within geography and wider educational contexts (Kraftl et al., 2022) and is used here in a metaphorical sense, to designate the space *within* self, which can shift and change. This conceptualisation is in keeping with Benson's (2019) writings on a movement towards "person-centredness" within SLA (p. 65-66). It follows that possibility space does not implicate a specific future self, but the effect of experiences on a learner's capacity to envision varying ones. It is also in keeping with Markus and Nurius' (1986) observation that possible selves "depend on the context of possibility that surrounds it" (p. 962).

Three levels describe this space, adopted from interview analysis, namely:

- **Identity salience** – whether learning Irish aligns with self-perceptions both external (social others) and internal (possible/actual visions of self)
- **Expressive affordances** – whether wider opportunities are perceived to further meaningful and self-relevant forms of L2 expression or not
- **Temporal coherence** – whether self-narrative of learning is one of growth and fulfilment, or fragmented and faltering

Regarding **identity salience**, some described a) social others worthy of emulation, and b) visions of themselves speaking Irish, which may, but need not, refer to Irish speakers (consider the sections on self-understanding and positive learning experiences in **RQ1**/**RQ2**). The degree to which the self is engaged in learning Irish varies across learner and time. Rather than viewing salience as fixed, it is a spectrum, and the priming of possible L2 selves links to identity-relevance (see Oyserman, 2019, p. 339), or how learning can be more, or less, relevant within one's wider self.

Expressive affordances relate to L2 use, particularly instances where learners could, but chose not to, use Irish. Reasons for low self-expressiveness include opportunities i) in contexts or ii) through modalities considered unenjoyable/unsuitable, iii) deemed boring, with iv) interlocutors dissimilar to the learner. More broadly, senses of loneliness and disconnection in learning are common in an Irish L2 learning context. Expanded expressiveness would be expected where a learner can demonstrate valued identities through the L2 (Muir, 2018b). Some work has explored this, such as Seoighe's (2018) study of *Pop Up Gaeltacht* attendees, noting that they often seek opportunities to use Irish with persons of similar values and to feel a sense of belonging (p. 13). Learners vary in their interpretation of activities, conditions such as plausibility or accessibility are contingent on perceived L2 opportunities aligning with their personal interests (Henry and Thorsen, 2020).

Temporal coherence (a term adopted from Dörnyei and Ryan's (2015, p. 200) discussion on narrative identity), addresses whether learning Irish has an underlying trajectory of progression/regression over time. Although elaborateness, frequency, and plausibility of L2 selves are often examined, little work within the L2MSS framework considers the temporal dimension (see Begić and Mercer, 2017, p. 270). For learners with greater temporal coherence, it can generate momentum which might align with longer-term purposes (Dörnyei, 2020, p. 146).

These three elements outline how observable behaviour is distinct from "genuine personal identification with the learning process" (Dörnyei, 2019a, p. 24), and highlight how identification with learning processes is self-contingent (Brophy, 1999, p. 79). Indeed, it is not always useful – or possible - to separate a learner conceptually from their personal context. Interviewees were reflective and often engaged in activities where much weight rested on them to self-motivate. While learning can be highly enjoyable, social contingency, isolation, and feeling inferior or judged by others within learning contexts are constraints, and these constraints narrow possibility space.

5.4 RQ3 - Heritage and Social Identities – Remembering and Reclaiming

The final question relates to social identity, whether, and how, interviewees identified with the Irish language and L2 speakers. "Identified with" refers both to Gardner's integrative orientation (with L2 speakers and culture) and to future visions of oneself (see Claro, 2019, and analysis below, on this distinction). Imagining oneself as an Irish speaker implicates both personal and social identity (Flynn and Harris, 2016), with connotations for LIH learners. This question therefore examines issues of identity and meaning making in close detail.

Table 64: RQ3 Restatement (QUAL)

RQ3	Operationalisation
3. How are issues of L2 identity, heritage, and identification with Irish as a language implicated in the possession (or absence) of these concepts? Are differences observable between Irish nationals, learners of Irish heritage, and non-Irish learners, in this regard?	• If relevant to social identity, how do learners narratively describe their social connections with Irish, such as through family? • How do learners perceive relationships between themselves and Irish as a personal identity, and how do these perceptions impact self-described possible L2 selves? • Are there particular enablers and inhibitors, based on the distinction, including possible conflict, between social and personal identity, in learning Irish?

5.4.1 Family and Community Identities

Learners were queried regarding their family identities to consider whether they came from backgrounds in which learning Irish might be meaningful in their households. N=20 learners made explicit reference to being of Irish heritage, which, when paired with N=13 Irish learners, indicated that most interviewees (78.6%) were Irish/of Irish descent.

5.4.1.1. Heritage families - 'I felt like I was Irish. I really did.'

Many LIHs described feeling connected to Ireland, but expression of this connection varied; for Máire Áine, an American LIH, it was marked in symbolic terms (given names):

> …My parents deliberately gave us Irish names like [learner name] and [sibling names]. And so even though they weren't some of the other older Irish names, they, that's why they named us the way they did. So, they felt that that was important. And they were repetitions of names that were given earlier in the generation. So, I felt like I was Irish. I really did. – I12.

Caelinn, raised in Scotland also referenced her forename being Irish and described her grandparents' impact on her:

So, I live just about 10 minutes outside [Scottish city], a place called [town name], and all my four grandparents are Irish, and they emigrated over to [town name] from Donegal and County Tyrone, I think, in the late 50s, early 60s. So, I was always kind of brought up with four Irish grandparents, and that was very much…I knew that my family were Irish and yeah so, that was my background. So yeah, and obviously I've actually been told that my first name is actually Irish. - I21.

Being Irish was enmeshed in the cultural practices and events some learners participated in as children. This was particularly true of the N=5 learners raised in England by Irish parents:

… I felt like I lived in a bit of a bubble because in England, we, we did everything in the Irish community, so, my parents would take us to the Irish centre. All of, my parents, well not all of them, my mom worked with different nationalities, but a lot of our friends were Irish growing up... – I18.

Learners of distant heritage, like Celia (I25), described an idealised Irishness, in the sense that her family loved elements of Irishness, which were not necessarily rooted in experience:

I started saving for my first trip to Ireland with my first communion money when I was seven, like it's a thing! [Laughs] I was the first one and you know, to come, to go over, but, but it was definitely like, part of our like everyday existence… like it was, like my grandmother would always be like "hallelujah and raise the flag and glory be to St. Patrick", like it was just, it was just like very much a thing. – I25.

Some expressed ambivalence regarding their heritage and by extension Irish. N=8 learners described family members "leaving" Irishness, sometimes due to perceived shame or embarrassment. Brenda believes that her parents were happy to leave Ireland:

I think my mom and dad, kind of left what they saw as the small-towns and the countryside of Ireland to come to the big smoke, they were kind-of hippies in the 70s, they wore flares, [inaudible]. So, they wanted to get away from that, they thought it was a bit backwards, I think… – I16.

A belief that Irish was old-fashioned was shared by relatives of Michael (I28), an American LIH. Indeed, he ascribed his interest to their disconnection. Debbie (I3), also attributed her family's disinterest as driving her to learn, representing something of an "Anti-Ought-to L2 self" (Thompson, 2017):

…I have an emotional connection to it because my parents were disconnected with the idea, and I wanted to reconnect, my father didn't want to have anything to do with this at all. That was his mom, that was his grandparents. It was old-fashioned, and I just wanted to get this back. – I28.

Suffice to say that this is what happens, isn't it? It's that the less you know about something, but you know something, the more you become inquisitive and the more you are attached to it, so exactly what my family was trying to eradicate actually turned around and made me more interested in it. – I3.

Tim (I22), raised in England, emphasised his identity as complex:

> Oh, I don't know, if my national identity was a Facebook profile, it would be “It's Complicated”. It's been a, you know, is how I would put it. I was born and brought up in [English city], which certainly at that time, didn't really have much by way of any ethnic minorities and there wasn't what you might call an “Irish scene”, and because my parents weren’t drinkers, really, if there had have been an Irish scene, it probably would have been quite boozy and they kind of wouldn't have really engaged with it. So, we were actually kind of quite isolated... – I22.

For learners raised in LIH families, the nature of their social identities varied greatly. The Irish language could mark a valued emotional identity, but as has been demonstrated above and in support of wider research (e.g., Walsh and Ní Dhúda, 2015), this is not a given. In many instances, the ways in which heritage was expressed varied to make predictions regarding connections difficult.

5.4.1.2 Raised in Ireland – Responsibility and Respect

The n=8 learners who were raised in Ireland (six in the Republic of Ireland, and two in Northern Ireland) were treated as a distinct category, due to their exposure to Irish when young. While heritage learners varied in social identification, learners raised in Ireland generally accepted a sense of L2 ownership, identifying Irish as “ours”:

> Because it's part of culture. It's important to have it. You meet all the other people on the street speaking their own language. “Oh, they’re French, no, no, they’re German. The Irish, they’re probably English.” For identity and for, because it is our language. It’s important that we not let it die. – I1.

This sense of responsibility echoes an Ought-to L2 self. Several Irish learners viewed their learning as important to maintaining the number of Irish speakers both in Ireland and abroad:

> …Ireland’s never going to become an Irish-speaking country, I don’t think, but it might well become more bilingual than it is at the moment, because people are beginning to have more respect for their language. Younger people are more inclined to think, “you know, why don't I have my own language? Why am I just stuck with English? All these foreigners coming to my country have, speak their own language, and I'm not able to speak mine” and that sort of attitude is, seems to be developing and might be really good for the language, maybe, hopefully. – I23.

Respect for the language and growing interest was also referenced by Mary (Interview 19), who saw it as increasingly trendy to speak Irish:

> People do seem to be...I find it hard to judge, but there seem to be a generation of 20s and 30 year olds who will go to the pub, go to a *Pop-Up Gaeltacht*, go to a *céilí*, people who, the same people who, I have children in their 40s and people who 20 years ago would, would maybe have thought they were too sophisticated to speak Irish even though they would have been good at it in to school now… – I19.

Both learners raised in Northern Ireland came from Protestant, Unionist households, a community with complex (stereotypically negative, see Walker, 2021) attitudes towards Irish. Each described regretting not having opportunities to learn Irish when younger, though this regret differed in the impact that it had on their identities. Jenny (I26) contrasted Wales, where

she now lives and is exposed to a Celtic language daily, with Northern Ireland, and sees her learning to revisit something she was never able to experience:

> …I'm very sad at home that I was on the wrong side of the community to get the chance to learn it. I've come here and everybody learns Welsh, I just think it's really stupid at home that it's politically-oriented, when it's a language that's everybody's heritage, and, you know, here I've got two kids, 16- and 19-year-olds, they're both fluent in Welsh. You know, the primary schools, it's all taught through the medium of Welsh, so I've seen it in action. And I just think "Oh you know, this should happen more at home", and I know, it is happening to a certain degree, I suppose, and I just would love to have had the opportunity earlier in my life and I didn't, so I'm going to make it happen. – I26.

Andrew (I5) described a lifelong journey, coming to view himself as Irish, rather than British:

> Well, I think what drives me to learn it is that I, I should know the language of my own country. And I have become increasingly identified, identifying myself as being Irish, not British….
>
> …certainly, when you go overseas, there is no boundary, there is no border. We're all Irish, we're all from the same island. Religion doesn't enter into it, politics doesn't enter into it, you're from Ireland, you're Irish, end of story. And so that, improving my identity, as someone from Ireland is, was one of the driving forces. – I5.

This change is perspective and identity occurred not at one moment, but over a lifetime, and demonstrates that language can be an important marker of these changing identities.

5.4.1.3 Non-Irish learners – Looking from the outside in?

The n=10 interviewees (23.8%) who were 'non-Irish learners' (NILs) - neither Irish nationals, nor of Irish heritage - presented interesting perspectives, having voluntarily chosen to learn Irish for a myriad of non-familial reasons.

Two, Faisal (British-born) and Kata (Hungarian-born), respectively, live in Ireland, and outlined their initial motivations as integrative, in that they wanted to respect the culture of Ireland, and understand what is "uniquely" Irish:

> You know, so if you're going to live in Ireland, and try and take advantage of the, take advantage of, kind of what would be unique in this country, of what it, how it can enrich your life, then, you know, I could take up tennis or Judo, but they're not things that necessarily I couldn't do anywhere else. Whereas Irish was something uniquely, could be understood and appreciated best, I think, here, more than anywhere else in the world. – I6.

Kata noted that she appreciated and enjoyed living in Ireland, belonging to "a society I like":

> …I was offered a role here within the [Irish organisation], back in 2006, I came over, and I started working there. I'm not going to go into my career from there, but after a couple of months actually I felt, "Ok, this is a society I like", and "this is a people I like". So, my original contract was for five months, and after three months I knew that if they don't renew my contract, I will look for something to stay… – I41.

Thomas, a Welsh learner who lived briefly in Belfast, had a background in linguistics, and used the term 'integrative' to describe his motivations, not just towards learning Irish, but any language:

> I wouldn't, I wouldn't say it's just to do with Irish in particular. I think any language I approach now, as a learner, I would be approaching it with some sense of getting into the culture of the people who speak it. What [applied linguist] and a lot of other people refer to as an integrative motivation for learning a language… – I36.

Wishes to understand other cultures, and view the world from the perspective of "the other", were referenced by Ana, a Mexican NIL:

> So, there's a huge current right now in academia where they study languages, a language, specific language, to understand the way they decided that, that things have to be built like, in a certain way, and not in a way that might be easier or more practical, but in, in the way they decided because of the way they thought and which is part of the way you think, it's part of the way you see the world. Basically, that leads me to say that maybe that's why I like to learn different languages, because I like to see the world from different perspectives. – I15.

Rebecca (Interview 14), an American of Jewish faith, married an Irish-American, and for her, learning was about gaining "true" understanding of Irish culture, as opposed to the stereotypical images she believed were common amongst many Irish-Americans:

> …my husband being of very much an Irish family and having reunions and all of this, I was particularly interested because there's a big difference in the perception of what Irish culture is over here in the United States, as opposed to what I really experienced when I was over in Ireland. And I find that people who are Irish that I know that come over here to a, quote, "Irish festival", it really has nothing to do with it, because it's a lot of the green beer and the shamrocks and the shillelaghs and, and to me, that's kind of a disservice to the culture, because the culture is far more rich than that… – I14.

Non-Irish interviewees referenced respect for Irish culture and Irish speakers, indicating that Irish links to "a specific community" (Al-Hoorie, 2017, p. 7). While Irish nationals and LIHs generally referenced their self-concept as being part of wider communities, non-Irish learners tended to refer to Irish in externalised terms, as a language that belonged not necessarily to them, but that they could appreciate and respect.

5.4.2 Personal Identities, Possible Connections

It is instructive to compare different ways of relating to Irish as a personal identity, given the differences between learners on this issue. These perceptions related to the narrative arcs outlined in section 5.2.2, enabling self-understanding, self-expression, or self-transformation, both ideals to be pursued and obligations to be fulfilled. Linking self-orientation, on the one hand, and heritage/social identities, on the other, is *connection*, relating not simply to feeling tied to others, but to identities across space and time (Pavlenko and Norton, 2007, p. 670).

Olga (I38) illustrates this. When asked whether the language itself furthered an emotional connection she described feeling towards Irish people and culture, she responded:

> I don't know what to call it, but you know, like music that, like you, anyone growing up in Ireland would know, and has grown up with or whatever, you know, that type of, you know, learning the lyrics to a song like that, or, or reading, you know, a folk story that I guess, you know, kind of the, learning the language is kind of the gateway to that connection, but I don't know that the actual process of learning itself is so much the, the connection, if that makes any sense. – I39.

For Olga, Irish is the "gateway" to personal connection; to experiencing things those raised in Ireland (including the interviewer) had, allowing her to feel close to and immerse herself in Irish culture. A key distinction which is explored in the following two sub-sections is where learning did, or did not, foster such connection.

5.4.2.1 Building personal connections – "A sense of my own self"

Several described learning Irish as furthering self-understanding and self-expression, in ways which might lead to greater L2 proficiency. This could include reclaiming lost connections, as Tim noted:

> But there was this kind of feeling of loss, which people like me and probably even, I guess, people in Ireland, even, who were born and brought up in Ireland, don't even to the same extent have that language around them, you know?
>
> …...What is it now, what is it now, "a nation without a language is a nation without a soul", or something like that...it's kind of romantic stuff. It's not terribly pragmatic or functional or whatever, but I kind of felt that I, I kind of learned that there's more to language than function, if you see what I mean…. – I22.

That "there's more to language than function" is central to how learning can implicate self-concordance, goals which "belong to the self in a deeper sense" (Sheldon and Elliott, 1999, p. 494, cited in Dörnyei, 2019b, p. 58). When belonging to something larger, learners could contextualise themselves more deeply. Caroline represented herself as a thread, rewoven into a sense of Irishness:

> And maybe the fact that I was, you know, in inverted commas only "born there", and grew up in England. That's another thing that's nice, it sort of knits me back into Irishness, maybe a bit more. But it's learning about the nation, the people, the history that actually feels like my nation, people, and history and very much through, sort of my parents and the generations who went before, you know, it's, it's a whole thread going through really and it's honouring that. I mean, that sounds a bit, I don't know, pompous, but it is in a way it's honouring what mattered to them as well, you know. – I17.

Family memories could inspire learners. Historical contextualisation was referenced by Sharon (I4), speaking of connection she felt to ancestors when she visited their graves in Ireland:

> **Interviewee:..** I just felt an enormous sorrow, and the only thing I can liken it to is visiting Arlington Cemetery, where my father and grandfather are buried. And at a funeral there, they hand you the flag and…you can't help but cry. I felt that same thing in Kenmare. There's no reason to, I never met the man. He's not fleshed out as far as his history, but at the same time, he is real to me, inside.
>
> **Interviewer:** A connection?
>
> **Interviewee:** Yeah. When you think about what makes things important to you, what you enjoy doing, what makes you feel alive…I think for many Irish-Americans that is part of it for us, to feel some form of that same patriotism. – I4.

In contrast, Tabitha, a New Zealander LIH, rejected that her learning reflected attempts to "be Irish" in some social sense:

> Nah, I get my own Irishness. I get my own Fijianess, see that's an interesting blend in itself when I hear that, but they don't, they're not attached to anything, they're attached to me. I'm not interested in this pathetic, man-run global world, which is a mess. So little [learner name], down at the pimple of the back… you know, we're really, down the backside of the world [Laughs]. Yeah, yes, no, I don't believe it is that important to me. Learning the language is far more important to me, to give me a sense of my own self. – I33.

There were examples of social-oriented participation in cultural activities, used to connect with others proactively. Kata, initially feeling herself to be an "outsider" to Irish culture, started to feel connections with Irish people rooted in values and beliefs:

> …I see a lot of people around me who have very similar values to me and speak Irish, around say, their political choices, or their, their choices around life, let's say, either the referendums we had in the last few years. That a lot of those people whose values are very similar to mine are also learning Irish, it seems to be that I think somehow, this kind of new, well-learned people who have a very similar ways of thinking about the world, and also see this of value, which is not the reason why I'm joining it, but it is there. – I41.

Máire Áine related her learning to her surrounding community, helping to guide others to connect with their heritage:

> Um, I don't, I don't see myself necessarily doing it on a daily basis other than my own drills and practices, but as I said, I can see my, me widening my circle out into to the community, the local community, because there are a lot of Irish-Americans, even in my apartment building, there are a lot of Irish-Americans so, and they're interested, but they don't know where to start, and you learn a lot about your heritage through the language… – I12.

Relatedness and connection can gear not just towards becoming proficient, but towards helping learners on personalised journeys. These forms represent, in differing ways, the self-engagement described in **RQ2**, where learners expanded and filled possibility space with emotion and meaning, and where opportunities for idiosyncratic, but meaningful, LL use are identified.

5.4.2.2 Selves that should have been

A distinct theme was the melancholic responses of several interviewees regarding their personal identities learning Irish. N=14 learners thought that LIHs in general are ignorant of "true" Irish culture, with limited understanding of their roots. N=7 noted that if heritage is about connection, being disconnected raises ambiguities:

> Yeah, to me, it, it means kind of exploring that background, because obviously you walk around with a surname like [learner surname], and most people say "Oh, that's very Irish" and then, you know, follow up questions of, you know, "are you, are your parents Irish" or "are your grandparents?" and when you can't even say that the grandparents, it's like "Okay, well, what [emphasis] is my relationship to my surname and what's my relationship to my heritage?"… – I29.

Notably, the learner does not have an answer to this question. Deirdre, an adoptee, started learning Irish before she was aware of her birth ancestry, and suggested that her lack of connection meant she could teach herself what others had never taught her:

> And when I found out I was Irish, I'm like," well, hot dog, look, I've already, I've already started doing this!" And that's kind of cool. So, it gives me a chance to learn about something that I guess nobody was ever going to, was going to teach me about anyway. So that's neat. – I11.

These disconnections recall what Scott (2018) terms "absent presence", how "things that are not actually there can nevertheless be perceived, imagined or remembered…" (p.11). Such absences sometimes drove learners. Máire Áine, for example, had a negative response to hearing Irish, then unfamiliar to her, on the radio:

> I've studied Latin, Serbo-Croatian, Arabic, German, and Spanish. And when I couldn't recognize this language on the radio, it really kind of upset me, I didn't know what it was because it was the different from anything I had ever heard. And when I somehow found out it was Irish, and I was so ashamed that I didn't know my native ancestral language, I couldn't recognise it. It was very upsetting to me. – I12.

Lauren described upset when considering why she struggled with Irish, despite her ancestral links:

> Yeah, of all the languages where I can say yeah, I was, I had successes and failures. I don't like the word failure, but when you have yet to learn something, is it cuts me. I feel hurt, emotionally hurt, when I don't understand what I should know to understand. This is a really interesting thing that came up…..
>
> It's as though I have this lingering heritage, or culture or background, but that doesn't match with my ability to learn the language for some ungodly reason and I use that term just as an expression…shouldn't I just, because I have the Irish background, shouldn't the Gaelic just be natural to me?... – I3.

Building upon the notion she "should know to understand", she placed herself in a particular historical context: "living proof" of what she perceives as attempts to "get rid of a culture", using rather strong language:

> …for me, we should know that language, but then I'm an educated person who has realised that there was a genocide there, or at least, to get rid of a culture completely, I am living proof of that. – I3.

Embarrassment and shame can be comparative, as in the case of Mary, embarrassed that her Irish was not as good as her French. This reference to shame is reflective of the Ought-to beliefs that many Irish learners expressed regarding Irish:

> "A couple of years ago I decided that it was really very frustrating and shameful that my French was so much better than my Irish…" – I19.

Daithí, Irish-born but having lived most of his adult life in the United States, described returning to his roots, including his recognition that what he was seeking through learning the language was a "fantasy":

> So, I don't regret coming to the United States, and I don't regret having to dream up an Irish utopia that doesn't exist, probably never existed, maybe in the 16th century. I don't know, Brehon laws and all that stuff, but I don't know. But I, I refuse to give it up. Even today. I refuse to give it up. Everybody needs somewhere to go. And that's my, that's my fantasy. – I9.

Though distinct, these accounts illustrate that connection links quite profoundly to self-beliefs and narrative selves. These connections need not have external referents and can be deeply personal. When moved into the social domain, as is next demonstrated, these identities can also come into tension with social others.

5.4.3 "Between Two Worlds" - L2 Ownership and Legitimacy

The final element connecting interviewee accounts to RQ3 relates to how personal and social categories of L2 identity were raised in learning contexts and with L2 speakers. Ushioda (2006), reviewing post-structuralist approaches, writes that L2 use is mediated by desire, on the one hand, and fear of marginalisation, on the other (p. 153). O'Rourke (2011) reports similar dynamics at play in many Irish L2 situations, where interlocutors of differing proficiencies can provoke tension, given differing social and affective backgrounds of learners.

5.4.3.1 Inhibitors and tensions – 'I could understand why other people would not open their mouth at all'

From the identity complexities described above, attempts at social interactions could see tensions, where others questioned learning and, in certain instances, legitimacy. N=8 described Irish people as unsupportive:

> …when I tell someone that I'm learning Irish and they know that I've been learning Irish for four years, or whatever, three or four years, and they tell me "so, you say *Conas atá tú* [how are you] when you ask someone..."...I'm like, do you think in four years that it's never come up [Laughs], and that's where I kind of feel like really, like I really need to, depending on who it is, I mean sometimes the fight is not worth picking, but sometimes I'm like "Ok, can we move on from that?"… – I41.

Faisal stopped raising this topic in his workplace, due to negative reactions he received from Irish colleagues when trying to use Irish:

> But I think when I did start learning, then my colleagues and the people I work with, were, they were not necessarily, well, there were some who were unsupportive, and then there was some who are actively discouraging, and I think they had a more complex relationship with the language than I did. So my like, my interaction was very neutral...
>
> Every, not every, but by and large, most non-Irish speakers I've met in Ireland have been kind of, either, either apathetic, discouraging or at worst kind of, quite discouraging. – I6.

Karinne reported that Irish people questioning her learning was common in her experience:

> She [Irish friend] just doesn't understand why anyone wants to do it, and I don't feel like I need to justify it to anyone. The only other people I would say are ones who, I've had discussions with other people who are learning Irish, who've said they've had that question as well, from people, and especially Irish people... – I8.

Judgement was described where learners interacted with L2 speakers and instructors. Bernie (I1) referenced a preference to say nothing, rather than to risk being incorrect:

> **Interviewer:** And have you had an experience like that [negative] ever when you've been speaking to someone with Irish, or?
>
> **Interviewee:** Not very directly, but you feel sometimes, like, oh, "I don't think that lad is too pleased with what I said now but…yeah, I just probably, I said, I probably said it wrong, anyway". I could understand why other people would not open their mouth at all, I could certainly understand that. – I1.

Tania recounted an incident related to her pronunciation, involving what she believed was an L2 speaker's decision to misunderstand her:

> …he could have guessed that really, but he, you know, because I said it wrong? Because I said it…. So, you know, some people are picky like that, and I understand, it's like, somebody comes in and butchers your language, but at the same time, the state of Irish language today, I think we have to be kind and forgiving about people giving it a go…" – I37.

Beyond referencing others, it was common for LIH interviewees to question their own legitimacy. Belief that Irish "belongs" to Irish people was common, and several LIHs expressed fears that their learning could be construed as cultural appropriation:

> **Interviewee:** I have seen the flip side of, you know, "your family left, you're basically appropriating Irish culture", and so, I'm conscious of that too, right? You know, I'm Irish-Canadian, I'm not Irish.
>
> **Interviewer:** And do you feel that's a distinction when you think about the language, is that..?
>
> **Interviewee:** I do a little bit, and then and maybe it's because we're hyper sensitized to the idea of appropriation now, but having, you know, seen those comments, or, you know, watched those discussions take place in social media, you kind of think, "well,

> so am I just being an appropriator?" And I think, "Well, my family didn't come over because they wanted a holiday, you know?" [Laughs] So, and I still have family over there, you know, like, so I think you kind of almost feel a bit between two worlds. – I7.

An interesting aspect here is a self-conflict, between Clíodhna's experience, and the way she feels, as being "between two worlds". Damian is cautious when asking Irish friends for advice on pronunciation, as they have an "instinctive" understanding which he did not:

> It's, it can be challenging sometimes because they don't always, because they, for them, it's just instinctive. So, sometimes it's like, "Okay, that makes sense", but sometimes it doesn't, but the big thing that I try and be careful of, is not to try and rob them of their culture, right? I don't want to be seen as someone who's just trying to appropriate what's going on? – I24.

Essentialising the experiences of Irish nationals and/or L2 speakers raises questions for the primary constructs of the L2MSS; where learners feel these categories held purchase, the possibility of imagining themselves becoming speakers would be reduced (see Dunmore, 2020, for an exploration contrasting Scottish Gaelic learners in Canada and Scotland). If viewed through **possibility space**, engagement of the self is inherently constrained, as possibilities of becoming like valued social others who speak Irish would be more difficult.

5.4.3.2 Enhancers and fulfilments – "It's more about passion"

While some felt insecure in their relationships with Irish, others developed rich understandings. These were classified into two categories, where L2 identity was accepted as i) pluralistic/multifaceted, and ii) where learners felt they were actively claiming/reclaiming the language through their actions. These pathways empowered new perspectives and opened possibilities for self-expressive engagement.

Learners in the first category described belonging to global communities of Irish speakers/learners. Brenda's identity had been influenced by being an Irish person raised in England, including ambiguities others of similar backgrounds denied:

> And a lot of my friends, again, of my generation, or maybe even 10 years older, a lot of them have said that "Well, you know, my mom is Irish, God love her, but I'm English, through and through". And I think whenever you feel so English, when you're from a migrant background, it's almost like they need to disassociate themselves, so that's their identity is foisted upon them. They don't have a choice in it, they feel English, and they're rejecting part of their identity as being Irish. And they say, "No, this is it, I'm assimilating, I'm not that, I'm this". And so, it's no different for me. I'm not that, I'm this [emphasis]. – I16.

Gyogi (2020) writes that heritage learners can view identities as both fixed and fluid. Brenda chooses to reject a fixed understanding of her identity as being determined by where she was born. Rebecca argued against "machine-stamped" versions of Irishness, noting the complexity of identity. Where teaching was oriented towards accepting diversity, rather than prescription, she felt that she could make a connection:

> …I like the fact that you can even go into The *Gaeltacht* and see someone who's emigrated from Bulgaria, who's speaking Irish, and is running a craft shop, etc. And you know, it's not all this, you know, "machine-stamped out" image of what an Irish person should be, because then I feel that I can make a connection too. The problem with the early lessons was I got the feeling if I wasn't Catholic, I wasn't Irish, if I didn't have those Irish connections, basically, you didn't belong. And I think where Ireland is changing, I think if you want to encourage the language, I think there has to be more of a focus on people who do not necessarily have those connections, to want to learn the language. – I14.

Another learner who rejected the idea that Irish "belonged" to specific groups was Amanda, who questioned whether anyone can (exclusively) "own" a language:

> Well, as far as I'm concerned, we are a global place now. The world is now so small, that for us to assume that what we have is only ours…Why? Like, we live on this planet together. I'm also a little bit of an environmentalist and all those other kind of things, and I see the world as a place that all of us live. I also live in a city that has so many different languages and cultures, that to believe that that one group has a monopoly on something, to me doesn't really make sense. It's more about passion. It doesn't mean to say that, that you know, someone who grew up in a *Gaeltacht* is not going to have a better understanding of the origins of the culture and language than someone who grew up in North America. But that's true no matter what colour your skin is. It's true, no matter where your heritage is from. – I10.

This attitude was, on occasion, also found amongst Irish learners. Veronika, who lives in England, enjoyed seeing NILs learn Irish:

> I find it quite, sort of amusing really, you go, you on a course and you may meet somebody from Paris who has no contact at all… So that's where the language is going, that it's being appreciated by people outside of people like myself, who, who have some connection with the language from their childhood and want to go back to it, it's become bigger than that. – I23.

In this instance, non-Irish learners were described as "where the language is going". Kata proposed that her ability to learn Irish as a Hungarian signals to Irish people they have little excuse not to do so:

> …I think it's, it's a bit of a poke for Irish people, that look, if a Hungarian can learn it, then d'you know, "it's the way it's taught" is not good enough, because I'm being taught as well, d'you know? – I41.

The second category included learners who were (re)claiming connections. They often described catharsis and empowerment, imbuing their learning with personal meaning. Holly (I42), said learning honoured those who had nurtured her:

> …the word that just came to my mind was honouring, you know, like kind of honouring my past, our past, and all the people who, who…I almost, got me to here, but I don't…I don't mean like, "I want to thank my writers and my producers" kind of thing, but I mean like that chain of people that I'm connected to…and then it's not just my relatives, like, you know, the people around me as I was growing up, too. Like the nuns and the priests, Father O'Malley, you know, and just, and I guess it's partly about wanting to say "thank you", it's partly about wanting to feel like I belong, because I grew up feeling like I didn't belong anywhere... – I42.

Two further examples referring to building connections are noted, foregrounded in the fact that learning Irish is an active choice, and that viewing it in a such a way can motivate. Celia (I25) referenced that her partner, an Irish speaker, challenges those angry about lost connections to do something about it:

> ….So like he, he's not, you know, and I don't mean this in a, you know, political way, It's just like, kind of like, just the phenomenon of what has happened is, you know, like, people will kind of like, come to Ireland, like Americans in particular, maybe like will come to Ireland and like my grandmother be like, "well, like our land was stolen from us or like, blah, blah, blah". And you know, [partner] will oftentimes get people come over even from Ireland and be like, "Oh, like the British did this..." and he'll say, "What have you done to retain your culture and your heritage? Do you speak the language?" And they'll be like, "Well, no". And they're like, and he'll just be like, "Well, the way that you, you know, like, regain, you know, what was lost, is to learn the language…"– I25.

Her partner focuses on the present, rather than the past and asks learners what they can do to build new connections. Cora (I30) framed learning as a choice, and that belonging and honouring that past, while using Irish in the present, are not mutually exclusive:

> …there's a sort of nebulously spiritual concept in being closer to my heritage, but I don't, it matters more to me that I'm interacting with people [Laughs] that are here and now, and that we're all still here and now. And still speaking some Irish, that it's not something that's gone or dead or that has been eradicated...and *that* [emphasis] matters to me. – I30.

In reading these collective accounts, the sometimes-conflicting desires to, and ability to, connect, both with others and with oneself, were evident.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter analyses n=42 interviews with diverse learners, ranging in age, gender, L2 experience, and personal/social identities. The study's three primary RQs were considered using a narrative methodology (Murray, 2009), underpinned by a person-in-context (Ushioda, 2009) relational approach.

RQ1 was answered through noting that the self-images described by learners can be distinguished not solely as ideals or obligations but complimentary to the narrative purposes described. The distinction between prevention (Ought-to) and promotion-oriented (Ideal) aspects was unclear, with learners describing layered motivations reflecting elements of both (though "Own"-dominant). Three future self-image categories were interpreted: proficiency-oriented, experiential, and relational. Evidence of self-discrepancies in context were found, but attributions of experience used to interpret self-discrepancies varied. Learners who viewed difficulty as temporary and displayed high self-efficacy appeared more confident in their abilities to achieve. Those who viewed Irish as intrinsically difficult or attributed struggles to internalised factors appeared less able to do so. Temporal orientation, the degree to which

learning fit a coherent self-narrative (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015), describes how learners use narrative reasoning to contextualise learning over time (Hiver et al., 2019, p. 88).

RQ2 analysed the L2 Learning Experience in context, and findings were collated into positive and/or inhibitive experiences. A theoretical means for understanding how the self interacts with the L2 learning experience was presented, that of **possibility space.** This refers to three levels of possible engagement that a learner might have with an L2 Self. A learner might feel committed to learning Irish (identity relevance) but with limited ability or desire to express this to others (expressive affordances) within their L2 learning context. Though many attached emotional and affective importance to learning Irish, limited relevant L2 use outlets inhibited the plausibility of becoming a more proficient speaker. Unless possible selves contain self-regulating elements, supported in context, they are unlikely to provoke behavioural change (Oyserman et al., 2004, p. 132). Temporal coherence refers to self-alignment over time. Many reported fits and spurts of activity, making it difficult to view a future L2 self as something one was becoming piece by piece.

RQ3 addressed the complexities of social identity, indicating questions of legitimacy, belonging, and authenticity all play roles in selves described. Differences by heritage were found, including differing interpretations regarding heritage and/or nationality. *Connection* was the primary metaphor within this section; where learners described feeling emotionally secure and confident in personal connections with Irish, they could draw on wider purposes. Where learners questioned these links, belief in one's connection with Irish was reduced and doubted.

6. Discussion & Conclusion

This multi-method study analyses three primary research questions assessing a theory which has "received unprecedented interest amongst L2 motivation researchers" (Csizér, 2019, p. 85), the L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2009). These questions are i) whether the theory is useful in understanding and explaining the motivations of adult non-formal learners of Irish, ii) whether learners of distinct levels and forms of learning experience differ in their possession of L2 guides, and iii) whether learners of distinct social and national backgrounds learning Irish differ in the possession of L2 guides. This concluding chapter is divided into several sections. Firstly, each **RQ** is answered. Reiterating a pluralistic methodological approach (MacIntyre, Moore and Noels, 2010), neither branch is viewed as superior; results are brought into dialogue, as each raises questions for the other. The original contribution of the thesis is next demonstrated, across theory, empirical data, methodology, context, and practice. Across these categories, the implications for several open questions outlined in reviews of the L2MSS (amongst others, Al-Hoorie, 2018; Mendoza and Phung, 2019; Dörnyei, 2019a), and how results here are similar, and distinct, from this global literature are discussed. Potential uses for Irish L2 pedagogues/designers are outlined, both in resource development and teaching strategies for a range of adult L2 learners. The final section addresses the limitations of the thesis and signposts future avenues for research.

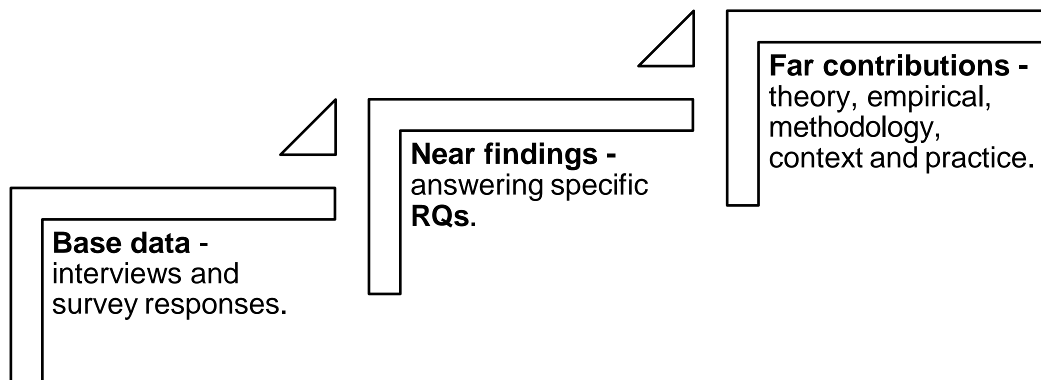
The study is at the intersection of several literatures: Irish adult language teaching and learning, LLM, and non-formal language learning, within the wider social psychology of language learning, focusing on selves - past, present, and future. The two constituent theories of the L2MSS - self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1986), and possible selves (Markus and Nurius, 1987) - were useful beyond the scope originally described in Dörnyei (2009); the former through L2 *stances* (as in Teimouri, 2017; Papi et al., 2019), and the latter in understanding possible selves as contextual (Erikson, 2007). The study also assessed Gardner's integrative orientation (Gardner 1985) reflecting openness to becoming like L2 speakers, which has been used in other Irish L2 learning contexts (Flynn, 2020; Harris and Murtagh, 1999).

Broader theories from psychology were used to contextualise unusual features of data. A principle of self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985; Noels et al. 2019) - that more internalised, autonomous forms of motivation have greater influence than those externally prescribed (McEown and Oga-Baldwin, 2019, p. 4) - explains why externalised L2 guides appear to exert little independent impact on motivation. Identity-based motivation, that "People believe they know who they are and that who they are matters for what they do" (Oyserman, 2015, p. 1), was useful in contextualising narrative findings. When asked why they were learning Irish, interviewees frequently drew upon emotional, relational, and personal aspects

of their self, beyond immediate L2 contexts, and this insight was used both to analyse results and to present the implications of findings.

6.1 The "near" and "far" of study conclusions

Figure 22: The near and far



The discussion of findings and conclusions in this chapter will be aided by a helpful analogy, the notion of "distance", to distinguish immediate analysis from broader implications and conclusions. In commencing a study, a series of questions are likely to be on the mind of a researcher (and certainly were in this case). These may modify and develop during the study but remain the foundational issues the work is intended to address. These immediate concerns (**the near**) represent the degree to which data can be said to answer relatively well-defined questions of the study.

The following five statements (noted in the study introduction) are supported by the data, indicating that Irish adult possible L2 selves are:

- **Complex (RQ1),**
- **Contextual (RQ1),**
- **Fuelled by deficit *and* fulfilment (RQ1),**
- **Impacted unpredictably by L2 experiences (RQ2),**
- **Both personal and social (RQ3).**

These five statements are drawn from close analysis of findings and the supporting evidence for each assertion across method is provided in **Table 65:**

Table 65: L2 Selves are....

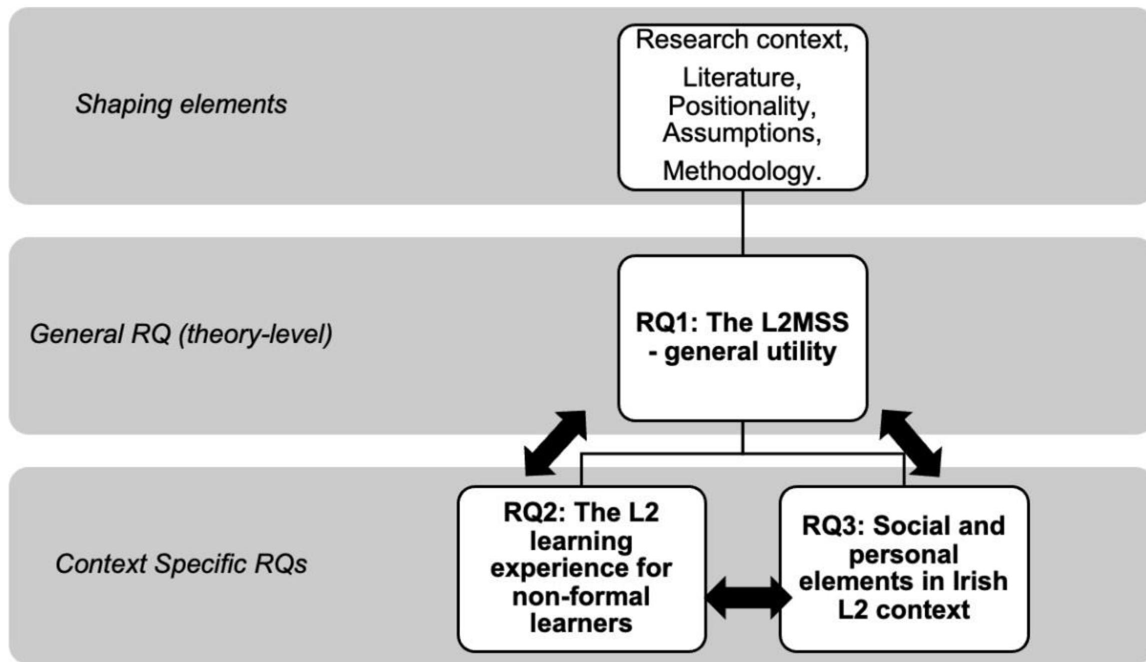
Element	Quantitative support	Qualitative support
Complex (RQ1)	• High correlations between L2 Guides • Simultaneous impact of multiple stances/guides on a range of outcomes	• Desires of others and self interact in complex ways • Imagined and hypothetical others forming **inner audience**
Contextual (RQ1)	• Large distinctions between desired and actual behaviour	• Imagined L2 uses and learning varied and were learner contextual
Fuelled by both deficit *and* fulfilment (RQ1)	• Evidence that L2 selves can serve an aspirational, rather than self-regulatory role	• Positive emotionality and meaning in learning are not always success contingent
Impacted unpredictably by L2 experience (RQ2)	• Self-reported proficiency related with a large variety of differences, but form of experience is less important	• L2 learning environment as both shaped by and shaping learning beliefs • **Possibility space** distinguishes interest from practice, and fractured experiences of many
Both personal and social (RQ3)	• Social-psychological differences relate more to importance of learning than effort or L2 use	• Interviewees described layered forms of identification with Irish

It is recognised that these statements are rather general, and that the true value of findings is in applying the principles to a wider research agenda. Therefore, following the summary of results, and these statements, the wider contribution of the study (the **far**) will be highlighted.

6.2 Answering RQs – “the near”

A summary overview of results in the L2 context considered is presented in **Figure 23** in answer to the RQs.

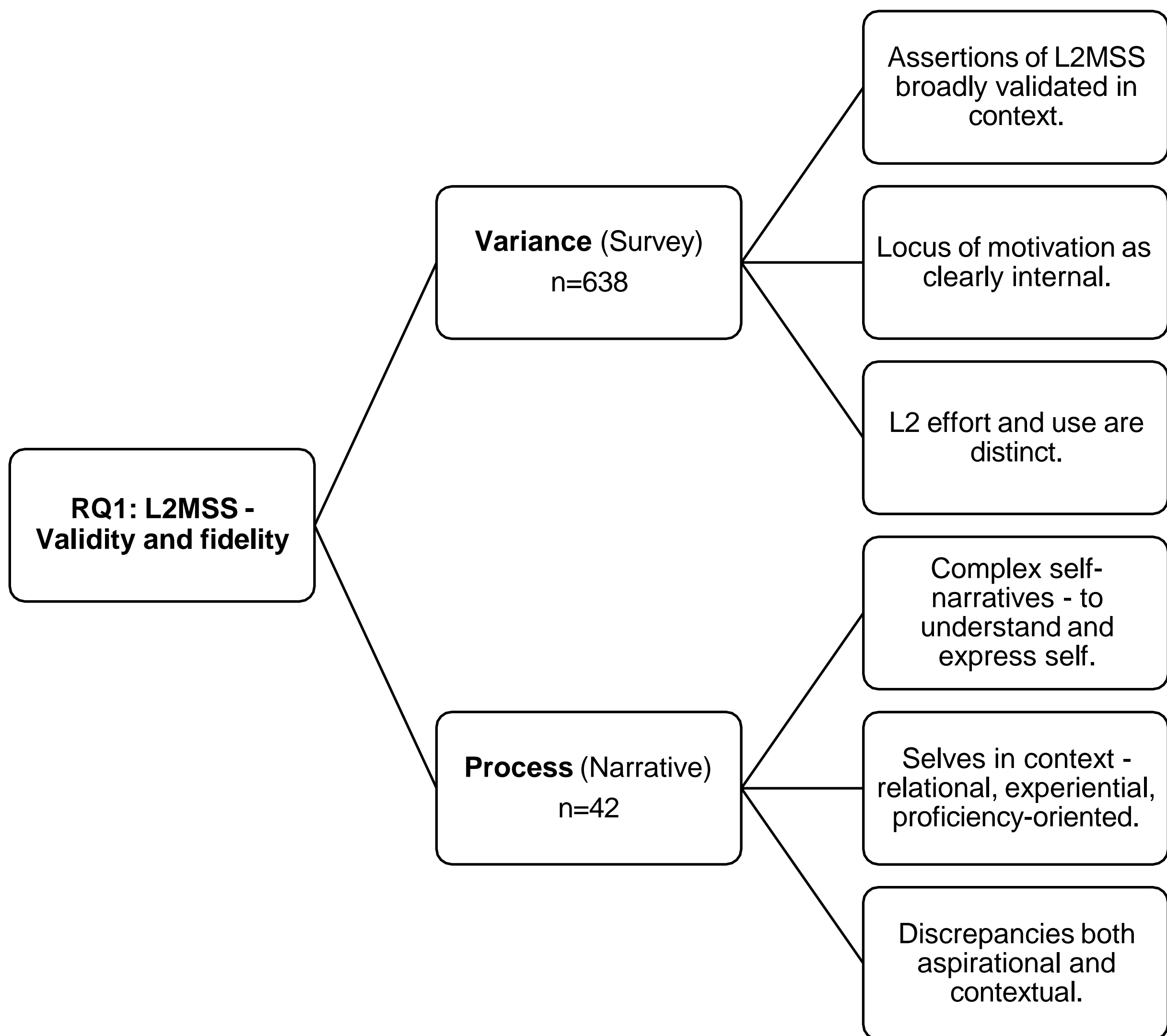
Figure 23: Restatement of RQs



6.2.1 RQ1: Assessing the L2MSS

Research Question
1. How well do existing theoretical frameworks within the field of LLM (primarily the L2MSS and SEM) describe the motivations of adults learning Irish using non-formal means? Are these theories in tension, complementary, or contrasting in this study context?

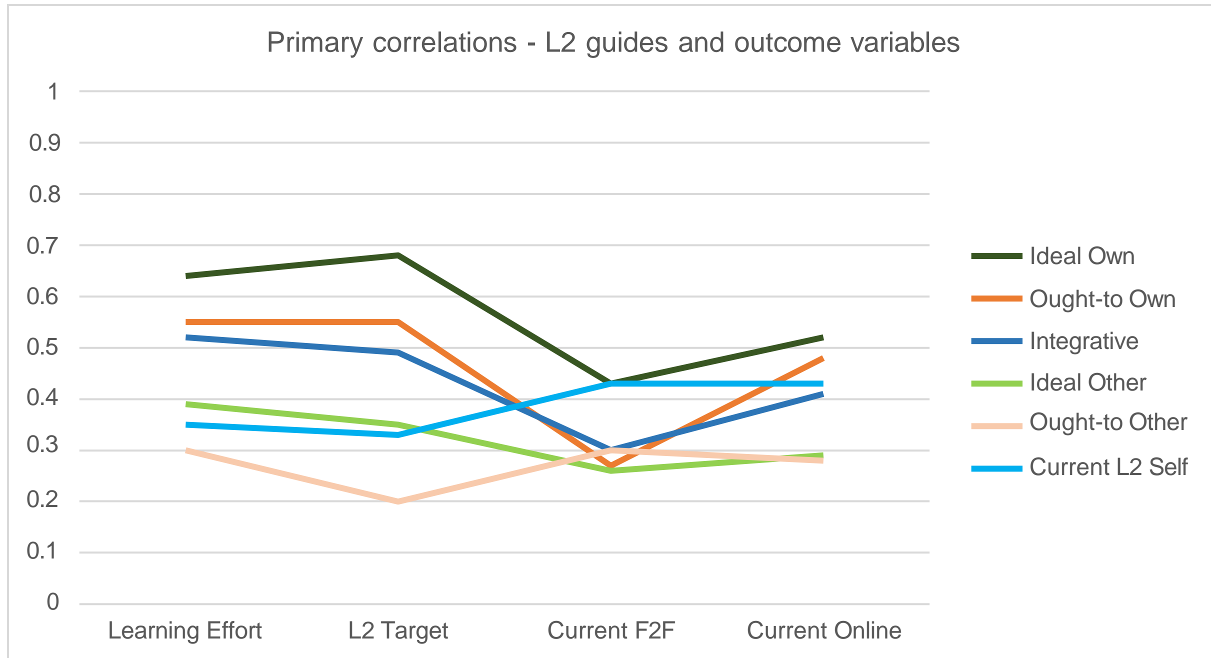
Figure 24: Results summary (RQ1)



6.2.1.1 Quantitative findings

Primary findings regarding the L2MSS are comparable to global literature. As in Al-Hoorie's (2018, p. 731) meta-analysis the strongest construct in the present research was the Ideal L2 self ('Own'), while correlations across guides were similar.[23] Validating stances, the Ought-to Own L2 self was the second-strongest guide, indicating that learners identify personal obligations which are associated with higher levels of effort.

Figure 25: Correlations – L2 Guides/Outcome variables (n=638)



Strong correlations between "Own" L2 guides and Integrative scale suggest that personal obligation, the capacity to envision a future Irish-speaking self, and positive attitudes towards Irish culture are collectively linked with outcome variables amongst learners surveyed. Correlations are low enough to limit Dörnyei's (2010, p. 75) argument that an Ideal L2 self subsumes the Integrative orientation in this context (though it is the strongest individual variable). Indeed, given the independently impactful nature of the Integrative scale, the study compliments findings from Kwok and Carson (2018) and Oakes and Howard (2022), as well as Flynn and Harris (2016) and Flynn (forthcoming), that, particularly in LOTE contexts, an Ideal L2 self cannot replace an integrative element (see Claro, 2019, p. 253). The latter construct plays an independent role regarding identification with L2 culture and speakers (see Sugita McEown, Noels and Chaffee, 2014).

[23] Ideal Own L2 Self is treated as equivalent to Ideal L2 Self, r = .63** vs. .61**, and Ought-to Other L2 Self is taken as equivalent to Ought-to L2 self, r = .30** vs. .38**.

Al-Hoorie's (2018, p. 737) note that ideals tend to motivate more than socially imposed expectations is useful in summarising these findings. In other words, whether a guide was Ideal or Ought-to L2 self was less relevant than whether the L2 guide was within "Own" self-concept. Social others have modest direct impact on motivation, but this may reflect the nature of LMOOC learning; those volitionally engaging in a non-credit, non-formal learning opportunity would seem to be naturally self-motivated. The Current L2 self, partially adopted from Thorsen, Cliffordson and Henry (2020), was moderately correlated with outcome variables, particularly with L2 use. Flynn (2020) demonstrates that many adult learners of Irish feel reticence and unease in using Irish, particularly with speakers who have a higher level of proficiency (p. 122); paired with the relatively high levels of L2 Anxiety in the survey, efficacy beliefs appear a large issue for learners.

Relative impact on L2 learning and use

Learners report expending more effort learning than using Irish (online or F2F), regardless of experience/national background (see **RQ2/RQ3**); though aspiring to higher L2 proficiency levels and more frequent use, they struggled to identify self-relevant L2 outlets. In theory, non-formal LMOOCs expand modalities for L2 use, but F2F and online L2 use are correlated ($r = .60^{**}$); being active/inactive in one is associated with being active/inactive in the other. L2 guides are similarly more correlated with desired, rather than actual, L2 use. Future L2 guides might be aspirational, as opposed to detailed; represent capacity to envision, rather than whether these visions contain active behavioural content (Henry, 2020). Narrative interviews expand on this point in demonstrating a) the diversity and range of envisioned future outcomes and b) the nuance with which they are interpreted by learners.

6.2.1.2 Qualitative findings

Interviewees varied greatly in how they contextualised learning Irish within wider lives. Two primary narrative themes, the pursuit of i) *self-understanding* and/or ii) *self-expression*[24], were analysed. These framed the invariably personal aspects of an L2 self (see Ushioda, 2019b). **Domains** of future self (described by Nakamura, 2019) were categorised into **proficiency-oriented***,* **experiential***,* and/or **relational** selves. Some learners imagined being proficient in Irish, but others emphasised more how learning Irish made them *feel*: as though they were pursuing a higher purpose and meaning. Others still had a relational view of how learning Irish allowed them to connect with future selves or others. Analogous to the high correlations between L2 selves in the quantitative branch, few distinguished personal obligations (Ought-to) from desires (Ideal). A responsibility to preserve Irish is not necessarily an external obligation but can be strongly felt within the self. Distinctions between L2 domains are of

[24] A third theme, *self-transformation*, was also found, but was rare.

degree, not kind; many learners described multiple, sometimes conflicting/competing forms of self-image within interviews, while others had no such self-images.

Quantitative approaches struggle to account for idiosyncrasy (Ushioda, 2019a, p. 200), how L2 selves vary by life context. This was evident when analysing a central element of the L2MSS, self-discrepancy. This motivating mechanism of the L2MSS is deficit-oriented, motivating because "sufficient discrepancy between these [future guides] and the actual self initiates distinctive self-regulatory strategies with the aim to reduce the discrepancy" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 18). As Higgins' (1987, p. 322) articulates, inconsistent self-beliefs are sources of distinct emotional discomforts, and far from motivating, large self-discrepancies risk provoking feelings of inadequacy. When unmoored from realistic self-representation, future selves might be "positive fantasy" (Dörnyei, 2020, pp. 117-118, reviewing Oettingen and Sevincer, 2018). Most interviewees described future L2 selves in contingent terms, identifying requirements, both internal (more commitment, greater self-discipline) and external (greater immersive opportunities, more money/time to dedicate) needed to bring them to fruition. Two implications follow. Firstly, that self-discrepancy is relative; in an Irish L2 context, using examples from interviews, one learner might be happy being able to read street signs, while another might not be satisfied until they were living entirely through Irish (see Cross and Markus, 1991, p. 233 for further examples of relative self-discrepancies).

Secondly, self-discrepancies differ in ways not well-considered in L2MSS research, as highlighted below. Learning Irish was often emotionally important to learners who had limited expectations, or even definitions, of tangible success. In such cases, examining the personal value of learning - why it might be emotionally salient even when not representing achievement - became a core question in contextualising findings.

6.2.2 Implications of RQ1 – Complex, Contextual, and Fuelled by Deficit/Fulfilment

6.2.2.1 Complex L2 Selves

Several recent studies have called for greater examination of L2 stances (Teimouri, 2017; Papi et al., 2019; Tseng, Cheng, and Gao, 2020), and testing this quantitatively validates a four-guide model fitted to context. This adds to criticisms of the "Ought-to L2 Self" as a unified construct, given the negligible impact of social others on L2-related variables. Failure to distinguish internal from social obligation can partially explain wider findings regarding the lower reliability of such scales (Takahashi and Im, 2020, p. 677). Consider the below Ought-to item from Taguchi, Magid and Papi (2009, p. 92):

> "I study English because close friends of mine think it is important."

As Teimouri (2017, p. 685) explains, such items do not distinguish personal from external obligation. There are two reference points to this; my perceptions of social others (what I think friends value), and how much weight I place on their perceived valuing (whether what I think they value is important to me). Depending on personal context, one might emphasise one aspect, the other, or both. Separating "Own" from "Other", internalised obligation is more common and motivating than the expectations of social others amongst learners surveyed in this study. Thompson's (2017) invocation of reactance - how *disobeying* expectations can motivate in certain contexts - highlights that a binary approach to self and other is often simplistic (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2021, p. 90). Distinction between externalised "Other" (representing expectations and obligations), and internalised "Own" (representing personal desires), does not do justice to the ways the desires and expectations of others are represented within "Own" self-concept.

Given "troublesome proliferation" (MacIntyre, 2022, p. 84) of L2 selves, it is useful to return to the foundations of the L2MSS appreciating self as multifaceted in such a way. Dörnyei (2009) flags that Ought-to and Ideal L2 selves can be in tension (p. 20), but evidence in quantitative data measuring a four-guide model (to date) does not necessarily support this assertion. Consider correlations reported in a sample of recent studies adopting this approach, including this study:

Table 66: Comparison of Studies Measuring 4-guide L2MSS

Study	N=	L2/Level (Country)	Ideal Own-Ideal Other	Ought-to Own-Ought-to Other	Ideal Own-Ought-to Own	Ideal Own-Ought-to Other	Ideal Other – Ought-to Other	Ideal Other-Ought to Own
Teimouri[25] (2017, p.698)	524	English/Secondary (Iran)	N/A[26]	.57**	.66**	-.29	N/A	N/A
Papi et al. (2019, p.349)	257	English/Tertiary (United States)	.36**	.46**	.11*	.07	.55**	.36**
Tseng, Cheng and Gao (2020, p.9)	528/890[27]	English/Tertiary (Taiwan)	.78**	.72**	.52**	.51**	.58**	.48**
Feng and Papi (2020, p.5)	97	Mandarin/Tertiary (United States)	.54**	.34**	.41**	.25*	.60**	.31**
Takahashi and Im (2020, p. 685)	511	English/Tertiary (Japan)	N/A[28]	.42**	.37**	.08	N/A	N/A
Present study (2022)	**638**	**Irish/Adult (Global)**	**.53****	**.49****	**.63****	**.35****	**.34****	**.40****

One way to examine this issue is to consider correlations between inverted guides; Ideal Own/Ought-to Other and Ought-to Own/Ideal Other, in theory, the most distinct pairings. In only one study (Teimouri, 2017) is the former pair negatively correlated (non-significantly so, $p = .10$, p. 698); two studies report no significant correlation, and three, including this study, show moderate significant correlations. For Ought-to Own/Ideal Other, average correlations across relevant studies was $r = .38^{**}$, very similar to findings here ($r = .40^{**}$). Like dichotomising integrative/instrumental (Gardner and MacIntyre, 1991, p. 58), L2 guides risk being falsely contrasted when they are in fact often complementary. A model of active internalisation, where one deconstructs external referents and reconstructs them internally (as

[25] Partial correlations reported.
[26] Study collapsed variables, and did not report Ideal Other scale, due to intercorrelation with Ideal Own.
[27] Two samples reported, but study is ambiguous whether analysis utilised both samples.
[28] Study did not measure Ideal Other, following Teimouri (2017).

proposed by Claro (2019, p. 250)), would appears to be a good interpretation of these processes.

A surprisingly overlooked point within wider L2MSS literature is that when studying the impact of social context, emphasis tends to be placed on those immediately surrounding a learner, implicitly privileging formal, face-to-face environments (see Dörnyei, 2019a, p. 25). The issue of social context is invariably complex (Yim, Clément and MacIntyre, 2019), and interviewees sometimes drew upon the memories of deceased family members and/or people never met/not yet born (ancestors/future (grand)children). As such, others can include non-accessible or imagined persons, an **inner audience**, "that occurs within private self-regulation" (Moretti and Higgins, 1999, p. 189). This audience consists of imagined thoughts, hopes, and expectations of referents living, dead and hypothetical. Although the L2MSS was developed in part to address internal forms of identification (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 25), little work has elaborated on imagined and learner-internal dynamics. Imagined L2 communities (Pavlenko and Norton, 2007) and MacIntyre, Moore and Sparling's (2017) "Rooted L2 self" demonstrate that connections felt when learning a language can go well beyond immediate social context. Even where learners have few accessible external L2 referents, the influence of imagined or remembered others, including non-L2 speakers, should not be discounted.

6.2.2.2 Contextual L2 Selves

A second broader finding highlights the need to examine differing types of L2 self in their specificities. **Proficiency, relational, and experiential** domains of an L2 self are useful not simply for describing focus or stance (Ideal, Own) but the personal aspects of self relevant in context. Cho (2020) writes that:

> …global measures are limited in that they cannot assess which type of ideal l2 self is personally meaningful and significant for a given learner's motivation...conventional measures of the global ideal L2 self may fully capture neither qualitative differences in the ideal L2 selves of different learners nor differences in their motivational capacity. – (p. 2032)

It seems too general to speak of learners envisioning using Irish in manners analogous to English (see Olsen, 2018, for similar arguments concerning *te reo Māori*), given their limited access to L2 referents. While a Korean learner of English might imagine many possibilities to use English, interviewees expressed bounded expectations of how, where and with whom they could likely speak Irish. Indeed, a consistent finding was not being able to imagine using Irish in daily life, with experiential uses, such as in the *Gaeltacht*, occurring in specific places (*Gaeltacht* regions), at specific times (typically holidays). Both O'Rourke, Walsh and Rowland (2015, p. 56) and Ó Laoire (2018, p. 148) write of the possible importance of the *Gaeltacht* for learners; such specificity and boundedness of images raises important questions about how

to foster sustained learning in distance contexts, where learners might not view such engagement as plausible.

Proficiency-based approaches fit closely with the objectives of language instructors, but learners commonly articulated personal reasons which did not emphasise the pursuit of achievement but of purpose. O'Rourke and Walsh (2020) describe many learners as possessing "...a wider range of identity constellations…"' (pp. 171-172); these constellations relate, but are not limited to, higher L2 proficiency. Pedagogical approaches highlighting commonalities and shared values amongst learners could prove useful (see Glynn, Ó Laoire, and Berryman, 2009). Walsh (2019), analysing the intersection of sexuality and linguistic identity amongst gay new speakers, argues that Irish is sometimes associated with a socially conservative and/or religious (generally Catholic) ethos; several interviewees in this study expressed a similar belief. In addition to symbolic and material connections, exclusion is possible, if Irish is construed as a language one wishes to learn but feels one's wider identity does not align with L2 learning experiences. Instructors valued by interviewees tended to adopt eclectic approaches, being comfortable using drama, art, and humour to support learning, through demonstration of wider frames of self. Advertising such as TG4's recent (2018) "*Tá Gaeilge agam*" marketing campaign, highlighting well-known "Astronauts, Queens and Bandits" speaking Irish, illustrates that this notion is already present in wider society within Ireland. A relational and ethical question is whether such modelling is appropriate, and useful, in adult L2 learning contexts. This issue is briefly considered in section 6.3.5.

6.2.2.3 Fuelled by *both* discrepancy and fulfilment

The distinction between **self-concordance** and a narrower description of **L2 contextual self-discrepancies**, described at several points above, is presented below to emphasise their distinction and independent utility.

Table 67: Contrasting Self-Concordance and L2 Self-Discrepancy

	Relationship within self	**Motivating through**	**Learning reflects**	**Theorised dynamism**
Self-concordance	Generalised and global: feeling who I *really* am.	*Integration* (being)	Identity beliefs, whole-self specific.	Relatively stable.
L2 contextual self-discrepancy	Specific and tangible: able to speak Irish in this way, at this place.	*Deficit* (becoming)	Efficacy beliefs, domain specific.	Relatively dynamic.

L2 contextual self-discrepancies narrow Dörnyei's use of the term "self-discrepancy". As explored in **RQ2,** learning experiences *do* effect L2 self-concept, and contextual self-

discrepancy reflects that interacting with others involves self-comparison and critique (Markus and Nurius, 1986). L2 contextual self-discrepancies represent a learner imagining themselves using Irish in specific ways, with specific people, "prompted by salient events, experiences, and implicit/explicit feedback relating to the development of target language skills" (Henry, 2015, p. 89). Critically, these ways are not yet something a learner is capable of doing, but would like to be able to do. Many learners likely do not have L2 contextual self-discrepancies. Interviewees with intrinsic interest have not necessarily developed sufficient L2 skills, and, similarly, one-third of survey respondents had an Ideal Own L2 Self mean lower than '4'; learning can therefore be valued within the self without provoking any L2 contextual self-discrepancy.

Self-concordance (formulated by Sheldon and Elliott, 1999), in contrast, reflects goals that align with deeper self-concept and who a person authentically feels themselves to be. Tethered to personal convictions (MacIntyre, 2022, pp. 89-90), self-concordance is in theory less influenced by actual experiences of learning, but by "enduring interests, values, and beliefs..." (Henry, 2022, p. 69). In narrative terms, it is a longer-framed self-perspective (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, pp. 200-202), and describes the long-term desires of many learners to do their best at learning Irish. Related reasoning is of growing importance in LLM reflecting personalised values and meanings (Dörnyei, 2020, p. 138). As described, interviewees often emphasised agentic elements of their identities; many of these elements reflect concordance in self rather than deficit. Narrowing definitions of self-discrepancy support aspects of the L2MSS while confronting weaknesses relating to motivational mechanisms. Language learning exists within broader life and learning contexts (Ushioda, 2011b, p. 12); linguistic proficiency is just one of many reasons a person might engage in such sustained learning. Results indicating that L2 selves are not especially correlated with actual L2 achievement (as in Moskovsky et al., 2016) make some sense if volitional learning amongst adults is often more "self-enhancing" than "self-defining" (see Henry, 2020, p. 491).

Learners in the present study desired to become more proficient in Irish but did not necessarily expect they would become so. This suggests an "intention-action gap", frequently observed in wider psychology research (see Sheeran and Webb's, 2016 summary). Interpreted uncharitably, respondents appear likelier to "talk the talk" than "walk the walk" regarding their behaviour (Sheldon and Krieger, 2014, p. 616). A more charitable explanation is that learning Irish furthers elements of self that do not inspire particular behaviours. Language learning can be meaningful for many reasons (Gregersen, 2019, p. 627) beyond L2 proficiency or achievement, as demonstrated in Irish L2 contexts (Flynn, 2020, p. 193). This distinction could collapse into restatement of intrinsic motivation, activities reflecting "inherent appeal" (Noels et al., 2019, p. 98), but intrinsic enjoyment need not impact self and identity; only when one

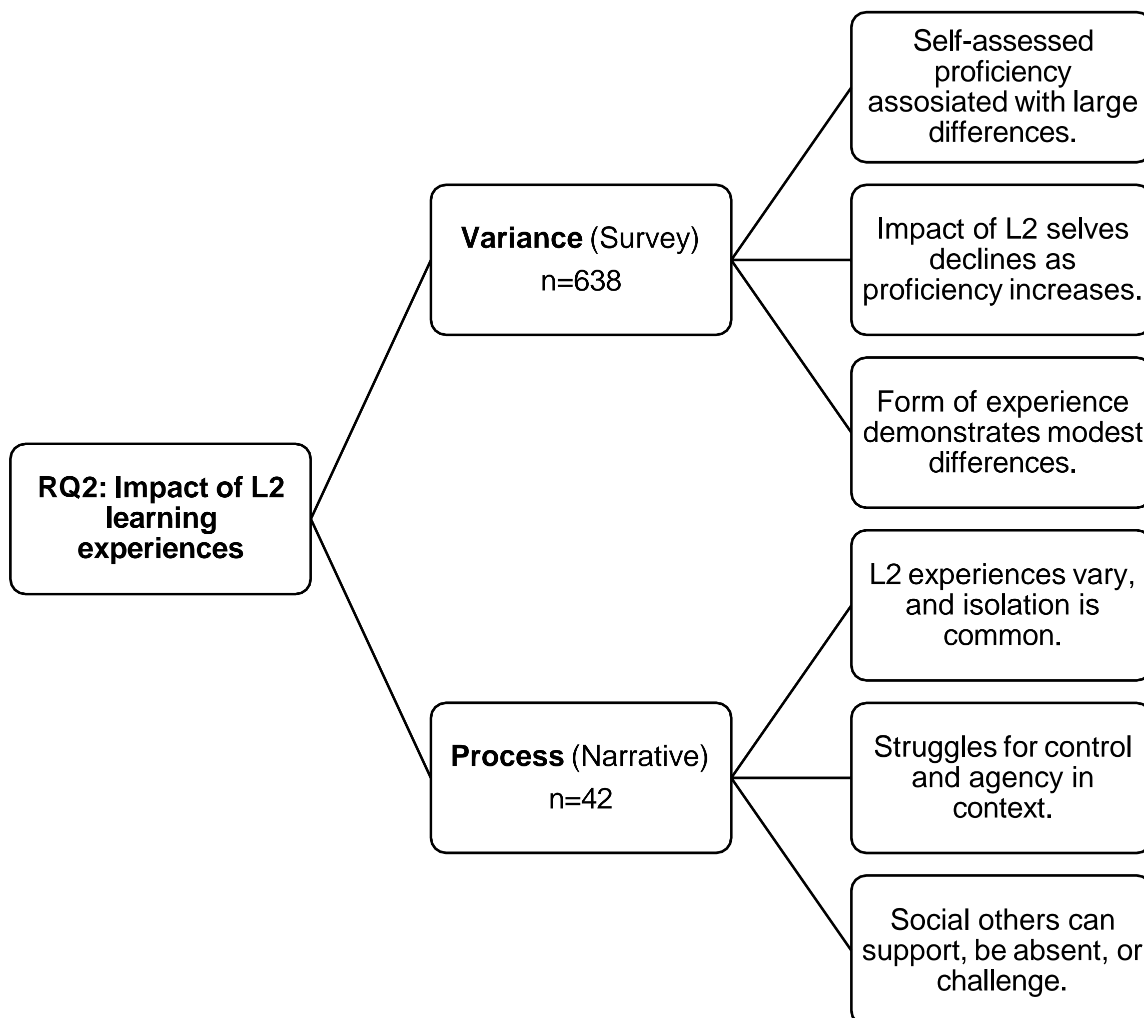
feels that learning reflects a deeper self does it incorporate "...a high degree of identity congruence" (Dörnyei and Henry, 2022, p. 28). Consider two players of the popular online puzzle Wordle, both of whom might be intrinsically motivated, stimulated by challenge. Failure to identify a word might weigh heavier on the grammarian than software engineer, if failure has differing identity implications for the grammarian (see Oyserman, Destin and Novin, 2015). So too, learning Irish can have different implications for self, dependent on personal and social identity beliefs.

Humanistic, learner-focused emphases within LL, an umbrella term under which self-concordance falls, are sometimes relegated relative to "instrumentalist" policies (often economic, see Ushioda, 2017, p. 472) to promote LL. Instrumentalist reasoning cannot explain why globally diverse learners expend effort learning an endangered minority language native to a small island in Western Europe with few plausible outlets for L2 use, even within Ireland itself (Carson, 2016, pp. 62-63). Achievement-based paradigms overlook language's role "as a means of self-expression and self-development" (Ushioda, 2011c, p. 204), and present an impoverished view of the value of LL for human flourishing (e.g., Singleton and Záborksá, 2020). Fulfilling personal obligations to protect Irish, making sense of - and peace with - lost roots, or to build different futures, suggest learners of Irish frequently use wide frames of self to explain their learning, analogous to other minority L2 contexts (Banegas and Roberts, 2022; MacIntyre, Moore and Sparling, 2017). These examples implicate the self, but not the imagined future states central to the L2MSS. Instead, they show the use of language as a means of making sense of oneself. Narrative approaches (outlined in Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, pp. 199-202) are useful for that very reason; Hiver et al. (2019), reviewing this work, note that narratives can empower one to "…create meaning and purpose in their lives…" (p. 88). Possible L2 selves that do not incorporate proficiency-based desires can be meaningful; doing what one feels they should and feeling as though they are realising a deeper self, is a valuable endeavour.

6.2.3 RQ2: L2 Learning Contexts: Experience, and experiencing

Research Question
2. Are differences observable between those with more experience than others and between those who have learned by different means (formal/informal)? How do learners of differing levels of L2 learning experience conceptualise and describe their motivations and the impact these experiences have had on the same?

Figure 26: Results summary (RQ2)



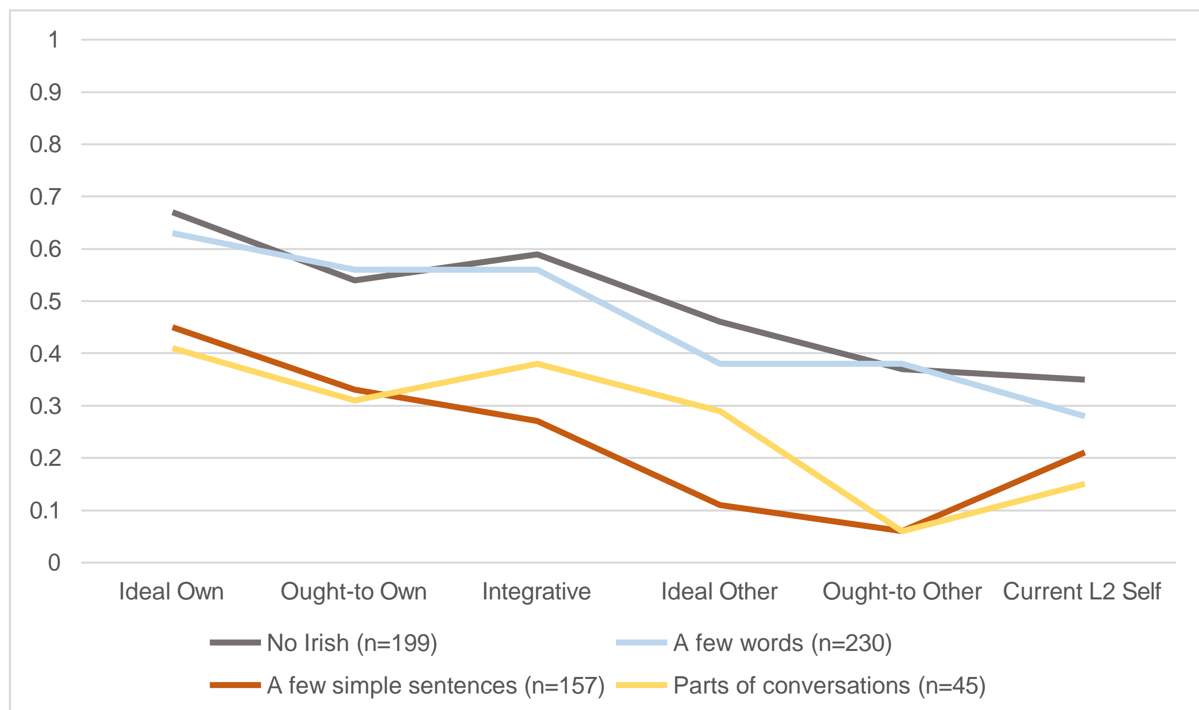
6.2.3.1 Quantitative findings

Two measures of L2 experience were analysed quantitatively; whether learners with a) specific reported experiences (formal, informal, or both) and b) levels of SRP, reported higher motivation. The link between forms of L2 experience and higher motivation was only partial; Ab-initio learners (n=308) scored lower, while those with both formal and informal experience (a small minority) were higher. Learners reporting a) formal or b) informal experience, differed in few regards; those with formal experience reported a significantly higher Current L2 Self,

and those with informal experience expended more effort learning Irish. Learners varied more by SRP, with learners of higher proficiency significantly higher across variables than those of lower proficiency.

In both cases, "Own" L2 guides had much larger effects than "Other" guides, implying that internal self-concept varies more than social context does. Validating constructs further, similar rank-order correlations were found across groups, implying similar dynamics at differing levels of L2 experience. A notable finding, however, is that correlations between effort/L2 guides decline as SRP increases:

Figure 27: Correlations – L2 Guides/Learning Effort, by SRP (n=631)



Ushioda (2013a, p. 136) emphasises that language learning requires increased effort as proficiency increases, when the pace of gains decreases and this could be a factor at play here. Dörnyei (2020, p. 154) also examines these challenge, given the common finding that LLM declines over time (see also Pawlak, 2012, p. 253). The motivating impact of self-discrepancies may lessen as learners reach certain proficiencies in Irish, at which point limited social/educational outlets for intermediate learners become more demotivating. Comfort at (relatively low) levels of L2 competence could relate to the non-formal nature of this learning but aligns with global findings from formal contexts showing similar results (Thorsen, Henry and Cliffordson, 2020). It remains to be seen whether learning resources and teaching approaches cater sufficiently for evolving, rather than static, L2 targets, given the developmental nature of language learning more broadly (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2021, p. 81). The data generated here cannot assess directionality. Hiver and Al-Hoorie (2020) note that it

is naïve to assume that L2 guides exert a causal effect upon effort or use; greater use likely also raises new possibilities which in turn impact L2 guides. Findings demonstrate a need for more granular focus on cohorts of learners who differ substantially, unearth issues in which digital learning environments raise new questions, and highlights where quantitative data is sorely missing.

6.2.3.2 Qualitative findings

In keeping with research using narrative methods (see Ushioda, 1994; Shoaib and Dörnyei, 2005; Hiver et al., 2019), interviews suggested that learners' motivation fluctuates and that learning experiences impact opportunities to use Irish Many learners saw technology as a route to new ways of learning, supporting Cotterall and Murray's (2009) point that personalisation and experimentation can nurture self-directed L2 learning (pp. 42–43). These resources can further control and empowerment, but such perceptions were not universal; many online learners felt lonely or disconnected. This dissatisfaction supports Ushioda's (2013b, p. 4) argument that technologies often provoke frequency, rather than depth, of engagement. They further echo Murphy's (2011) findings that for many, issues of "workload, isolation, and lack of choice..." (p. 121) become inhibiting factors, given the persistent need to self-motivate.

Ushioda (2015) argues that "context" is both shaped by, and shaping of, experience (p. 47), and that care must be taken not to approach L2 experiences as (entirely) "external" to a person; while in one sense language learning is a social activity, self-interpretation, memories, and beliefs interact with external environments in manners not easily delineated (ibid). The term **possibility space**, adopted from Murray's (2013, p. 380) reading of Davis and Sumara (2007, p. 58), describes this interaction. It synthesises the complex relationship between self and context, how individuals have an "agentic capacity…to act upon and shape their contexts..." (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2021, p. 7). Viewed in this way, Irish L2 learning experience becomes something one is engaged in, to lesser or greater degrees at any given moment, rather than an activity in which one is or is not motivated in binary terms (Darvin and Norton, 2021, pp. 3).

Three interactions reflecting this concept were presented: i) identity-relevance, ii) expressive affordance, and iii) temporal congruence. Identity-relevance refer to how much the self is implicated in learning Irish, and expressive affordance the degree to which environments enable, or constrict, the expression of the self (how self relates to the world, see Van Lier, 2007, p. 58, in Lamb, 2011, p. 180). L2 use opportunities are potential outlets for self-expression, but where opportunities conflict with identity-relevance (e.g., other participants are unlike the learner, opportunities are considered unsuitable), they will likely not be pursued. Irish L2 policy literature emphasises that wider opportunities for L2 use are required, such as

Ó Duibhir's (2021) point that "it is communities, not schools, that save languages". Both strands suggest that the engagement of a wider self, incorporating - personal relevance, outlets to use the language, and relevant contexts with relatable social others - are required to promote voluntary adult L2 learning.

Temporal coherence (a phrase adopted from Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015, p. 200) refers to interpretation of time within a learning experience. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2021), citing the work of Falout (e.g., 2021), note that one's "past self", including perceived failure, is an important comparative frame (pp. 144-145). Carroll, Shepperd and Arkin (2009) demonstrate that when faced with adversity, downward revision of future selves is common (p. 570). Although it is difficult ascertain just how common this is in LL, and learning Irish can remain self-relevant, unfulfilled desires might obviously reduce motivation over time. Many non-formal adult learners abandon learning Irish early in the process (Ó Coimín, 2017), and challenges to legitimacy and L2 ownership (discussed below), negative attributional beliefs, and life constraints all narrow possibility spaces even where an envisioned future L2 self is valued. Evidence presented within this study suggests that adult learners require affective, emotional, and social support to engage with the L2 in self-meaningful ways.

6.2.4 Implications of RQ2 – Impacted Unpredictably by Experience

6.2.4.1 Discrepancy satiation

Examining declining correlations between effort and L2 selves with higher SRP (**Figure 27**) presents an interesting empirical issue; are there points past which having stronger future L2 selves does not promote additional effort? Summaries analysing the L2MSS identify longer-term LL as a topic requiring greater study (Csizér, 2019; Dörnyei, 2019b; Henry, 2021, being recent examples), and analyses by SRP are rare (Al-Hoorie, 2018). Hiver and Al-Hoorie (2020), in a replication study, note that when their findings were adjusted for baseline L2 achievement, the direct impact of L2 guides on effort plummeted. They suggest that failure to consider how past success/failure are interpreted is a possible systemic issue within literature (p. 87). Using Plonsky and Oswald's (2014) criteria for correlational strength, results here reduce from strong for ab-initio learners to moderate for learners who report understanding "parts of conversations". Serafini's (2017) study of adult Spanish language learners, where learners were grouped by proficiency, reported that ab-initio learners were more motivated by an Ideal L2 Self, while the integrative element was more relevant for intermediate learners (p. 384).

Within wider psychology, larger self-discrepancies between present and Ideal/Ought-to selves are generally associated with negative effects (such as higher anxiety (Scott and O'Hara, 1993) or self-insecurity and homophobia (Theodore and Basow, 2008)). Few LLM studies

conceptualise self-discrepancy as *relative* (Current vs Ideal/Ought-to) in this manner. As noted at several points, Thorsen, Cliffordson and Henry (2020) write of two patterns of self-revision:

- **Upwards**, where current and future L2 selves rise in conjunction, and,
- **Downwards**, where struggles/challenges lead to a lower future L2 self, reflecting reduced expectations, to meet a static current one (p. 586).

A third possibility is that higher current L2 self-concept is indeed associated with higher future "Own" L2 selves (upwards revision) but not as strongly with additional learning effort. Narrative accounts (specifically section 5.3.2.3) demonstrate that experienced learners often struggle to identify L2 use outlets; satiation might be common where learning reaches a proficiency plateau and a lack of external pressure makes it harder to self-motivate. Further study could (dis)confirm this interpretation, but sustaining longer-term motivation is not simply a question of upwards self-revision, but whether learners can access adequate resources and opportunities encouraging the realisation of these desires in their everyday lives.

6.2.4.2 Possibility spaces

Possibility space compliments this analysis, furthering distinctions between identity salience, outlined above, and expressive affordances, drawing upon Murray's (2013, citing Davis and Sumara, 2007) articulation of imagination as *space* (p. 390-393). Within this space, learners negotiate social reality while navigating social constraints (see Norton and Toohey, 2011, p. 414). Future L2 self-image, while important, is insufficient to sustain motivation (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2021, p. 65). Possibility space recentres how the self interacts with external/internal environments. It partially addressing the "theoretical discordancy" described by Dörnyei (2019a, p. 27) regarding L2 learning experiences, grounded in an L2MSS approach. It also aligns with growing emphasis on engagement, a multifaceted construct reflecting emotional, individual, and social interest and attention (Hiver et al., 2021). Distinguishing identity and self-expression can address how, and why, learners may feel unable to articulate a self-authentic L2 self through Irish even when they desire to do so. Markus and Nurius (1986) highlight that the range of imagined outcomes any person imagines is large and dependent on self-framing (p. 963), and this reasoning also extends to how futures are envisioned.

No equivalent construct has been developed comprehensively to date within LLM, but the writings referenced above indicate a search for constructs which incorporate holistically the interaction of self and context in ways that the L2MSS has (to date) not. Al-Hoorie et al. (2021), for example, analyse the notion of *perezhivanie* (citing Veresov and Mok, 2018, translated variously as 'lived experience' or 'emotional experience'), writing:

> According to *perezhivanie*, an individual learner and their environment are two crucial considerations. Individual learners with different previous learning histories, backgrounds, and genetic makeup will perceive and place value on the environment differently. – (p.142).

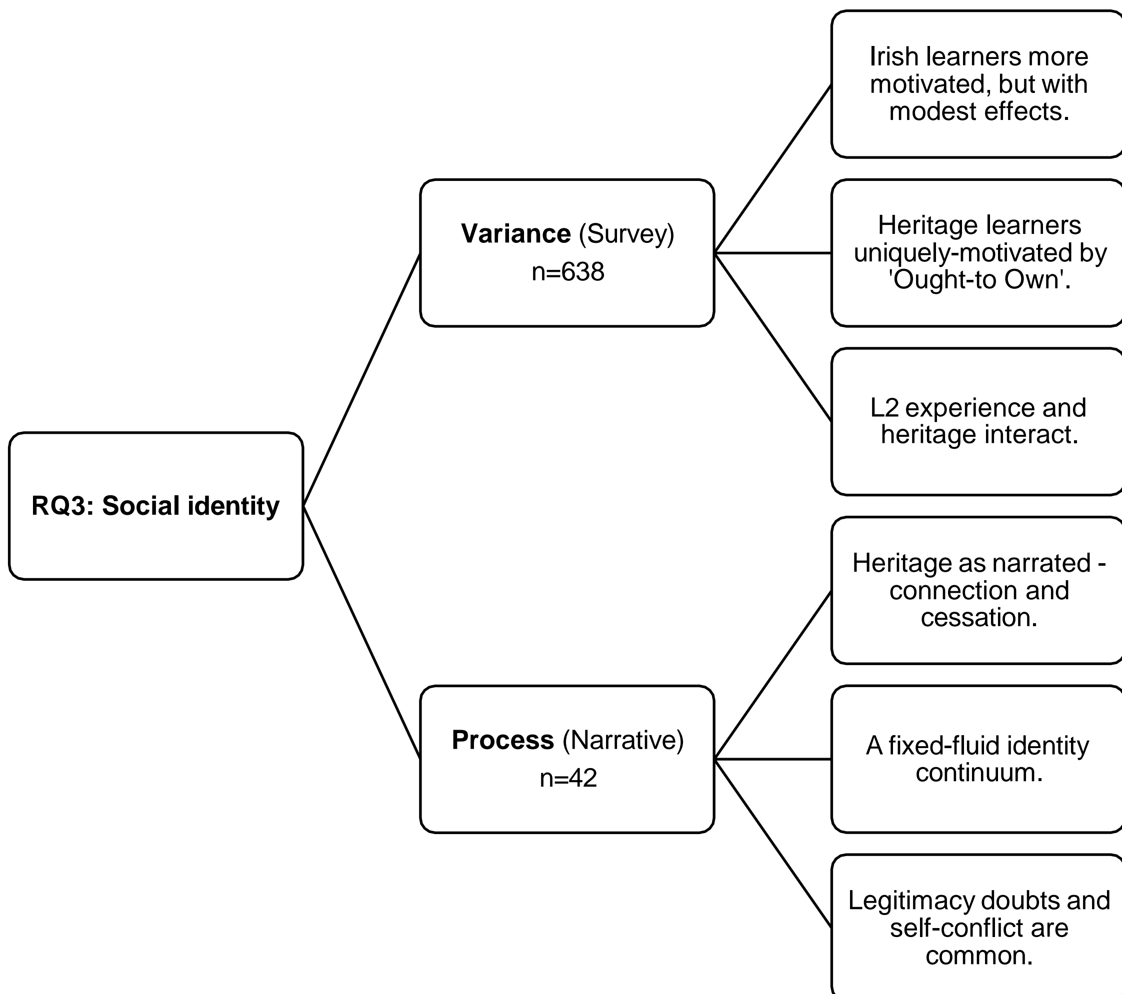
This approach aligns with **possibility space**, though the latter is drawn from a different philosophical tradition, with a different focus. Possibility is used here to maintain focus on ‘possible selves’, to link with the L2MSS, and to reflect the contingency of L2 self-images. Increasing emphasis on engagement (Mercer and Dörnyei, 2020) raises the need for such “superordinate” constructs (Al-Hoorie et al., 2021, p. 142), to aid researchers and learners in conceptualising LLM.

6.2.5: RQ3: Who lies beneath? Social identity and L2 selves

Research Question
3. How are issues of L2 identity, heritage, personal and social identification with Irish as a language implicated in the possession (or absence) of these constructs? Are differences observable in this regard between Irish nationals, learners of Irish heritage, and non-Irish learners?

The final **RQ** considered whether learner motivation differed across nationality and heritage background. The diverse samples under study demonstrates how social and personal identity interact, particularly to examine the premise that Irish nationals might be uniquely motivated.

Figure 28: Results Summary (RQ3)

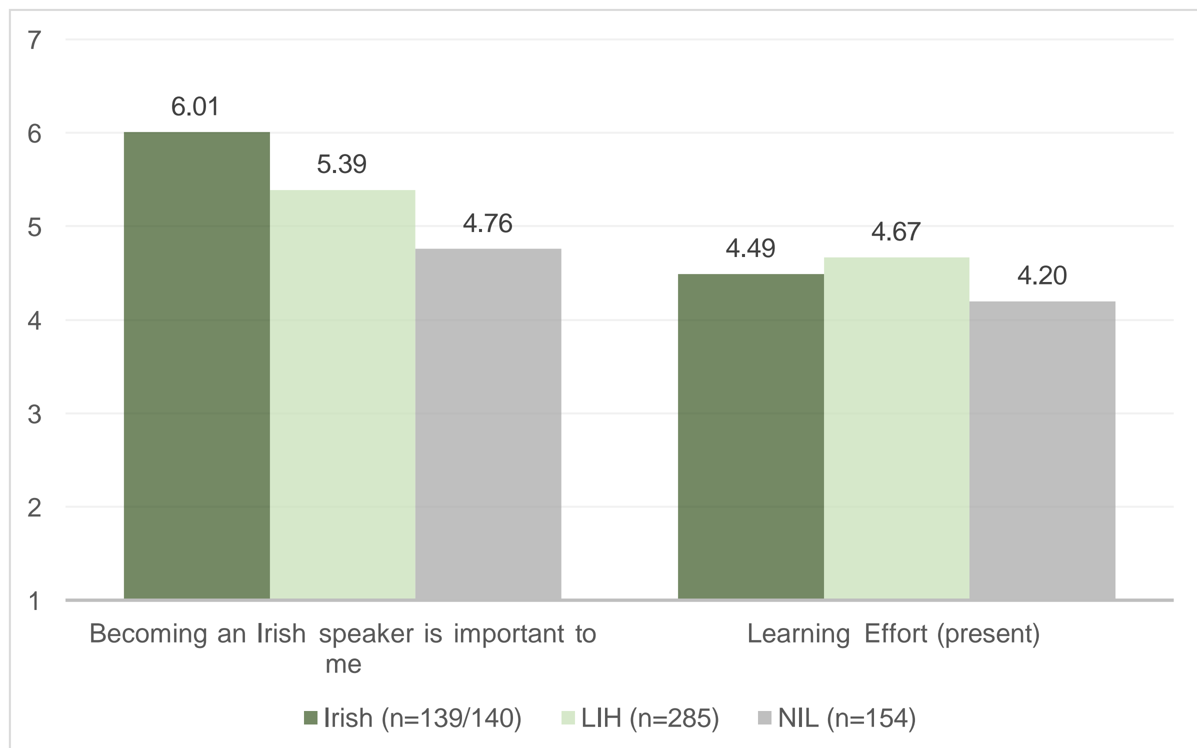


6.2.5.1 Quantitative findings

Irish respondents reported significantly higher L2 guides, with small effect sizes, excepting the i) Ought-to Own and ii) Current L2 Self scales (both quite large). The Ought-to Own result is unsurprising; learning Irish likely has special relevance to Irish and LIH learners, in comparison to NILs. Scant L2MSS research has used a social identity comparative approach (e.g., Xie, 2014; Olsen, 2018), but work using other frameworks, like self-determination theory, suggests that those with social connections to an L2 frequently feel responsible for its protection (e.g., Noels, 2005; 2009; 2014). They may also have more supportive milieus than learners with non-affective connections (Yim, Clément and MacIntyre, 2019, p. 239).

The higher Current L2 Self is likely rooted in the greater experience of Irish learners, but this experience was less impactful on an Ideal Own L2 self. Although importance of learning was significantly higher for Irish/LIH learners, effort and use varied less, suggesting identity importance does not (directly) implicate greater motivation. Causality cannot be assessed through this data but an interaction of higher general L2 experience, Irish nationality, and a lower impact of future L2 guides, suggests that relative to other learners, that L2 selves are less use/effort-contingent for Irish nationals. This is also demonstrated through contrasting two variables: the degree to which becoming an Irish speaker was important and the amount of present effort learners reported expending:

Figure 29: Comparative analysis of importance/learning effort (social category)



Irish nationals attach greater importance to becoming a speaker (eta^2 = .091) but they do not expend significantly more effort (eta^2 = .020) towards achieving this goal. Mean differences between items are much larger for Irish learners (1.52) than for LIHs (0.72) or NILs (0.56)[29]. The identity salience of Irish to learners of Irish nationality, who might consider becoming an Irish speaker self-evidently important regardless of actual effort expended in pursuit of it, is an obvious factor (Ó Ceallaigh and Ní Dhonnabháin, 2015, p. 180).

Separated into those with and without L2 learning experience, only learners with L2 experience varied by heritage category (though sub-samples were small). Learning Irish may open wider identities for learners with national and/or heritage ties than for those without, especially regarding longer-term L2 targets. Irish learners likely have access to more directly relevant role models who can speak Irish. Irish learners also report a stronger Current L2 self, implying that, while experience was rated equivalently, Irish national respondents *felt* more confident in their present abilities. This has implications for mixed non-formal contexts, where social identity differences might discourage learners from non-Irish backgrounds.

6.2.5.2 Qualitative findings

Interviews revealed deep tensions between social and personal identity. Many LIHs have complex patterns of L2 identification, rooted both in their experiences and imagined L2 identities (Kanno and Norton, 2003). Metaphors of *connection* describe how learners could feel close to or distant from both imagined and literal Irish L2 communities. This metaphor fits well with MacIntyre, Moore and Sparling's (2017) "rooted L2 self". L2 identities can be essentialised, including beliefs that Irish people have a "special" connection, which, by inference, NILs and LIHs do not (and cannot) have. Regrettably, some LIHs and NILs articulated such perspectives. The small body of work considering these issues in diasporic contexts (e.g., Garland, 2008; Vaughan, 2016) report similar; it is therefore a challenge regarding self and identity of LIH/NILs learning Irish. Others emphasised passion, viewed identity as multiple, and felt that learning Irish was not limited to those with biological or cultural connections. This demonstrates the power of self-narrative, that social identity interpretation is as meaningful as categories themselves.

[29] Correlations between items/scales are also lower – r = .48** (Irish), vs. r = .67** (LIH) and r = .69** (NIL).

6.2.6 Implications of RQ3 – Both personal and social

6.2.6.1 Simultaneously personal and social

Norton's (2019) argument that LL encompasses dynamics of power within unequal relationships (pp.160-161) is instructive and fits both quantitative and qualitative data considered. Relationships, whether material and/or emotional, depend on how a "legitimate" L2 speaker is conceptualised (Darvin and Norton, 2015, pp. 44-45, analysing the work of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu), and a complementary question might be to ask who is a "legitimate" L2 *learner*? If not analysed within ethnolinguistic and personal contexts, a self-based approach might be overly individualistic (Clément and Norton, 2021). There are possibilities for self-conflict if idealised L2 selves do not align with social and/or practical expectations, particularly where proficient L2 speakers are reified as "gatekeeping" (Ushioda, 2006, p. 153). Several interviewees described wishing to be themselves, not as "machine-stamped" Irish L2 speakers were imagined to be. Some described L2 instructors favouring particular speech and behaviour. Exercising agency and choice can expand possibility but can also be irrelevant if chosen future self-images are in tension with prestige forms of L2 group membership (O'Rourke and Walsh, 2020, p. 147).

Nowhere is this challenge more evident than in findings relating to experience and L2 heritage. As referenced above, Irish and LIH learners were ranked equivalently. In one sense, these findings are encouraging, but there was one area Irish learners did rank significantly higher – the Current L2 Self. Present self-concept speaking Irish may, for a variety of reasons, be higher for Irish nationals; in environments where learners of differing backgrounds interact, these differences could magnify doubts about legitimacy amongst LIHs (and NILs). Several LIH interviewees expressed feelings of embarrassment regarding accent and pronunciation and this self-consciousness demonstrates how one may identify strongly with learning Irish but feel frustrated if this identity-relevance does not translate to a sense of ease learning/speaking it. **Possibility space** provides a ready metaphor for this interaction, as two learners of similar experiences may interpret these experiences very differently, dependent on wider constellations of beliefs about themselves and about Irish. The window of possibility might prove wider for a person who feels a strong connection to the language rooted in their national identity.

Regarding L2 speech models, Gao (2014), studying English L2 referents from a poststructural perspective, describes four prototypical roles a learner might adopt: *faithful imitators, legitimate speakers, playful creators,* and *dialogical communicators* (summary on p.73). Desires to be a "faithful imitator" or "legitimate speaker" link to more essentialised models, where envisioned L2 identities replicate norms while "playful creators" and "dialogical

communicators" are more analogous to the complex identities described by some. Although certain literature in an Irish L2 context problematises the "native speaker" (O'Rourke and Walsh, 2020, pp. 21-22), Flynn (2020) persuasively demonstrates that many learners (within Ireland) aspire to traditional target forms (p. 191), and it should not be presumed that certain speech forms are inappropriate for learners to value. There are issues here as regards to distinctions between Irish nationals and LIHs, in particular. What appears relevant from a learner perspective is not necessarily L2 variety, but that personal expectations are self-congruent, and find expression through supportive social others and learning environments. Both L2 instructors and learning resources could cater for affective and social diversity more clearly.

6.3 Original contribution – "the far"

Defending a social scientific work, a researcher should contextualise what has been achieved within a wider body, providing paths for further research. Selwyn (2014b) refers to this as the "So what question" (in study title), and no monograph is complete until it is considered. This section presents the implications of findings across five categories: **theory**, **empirical findings**, **method**, **context**, and **knowledge of practice**. These five elements are represented below:

Table 68: Summary of contribution

Aspect	Contribution
Theory	• Usage of L2 stances, joining a handful of global studies • Diversity of L2 positions amongst Irish learners revealed • Theorising regarding **discrepancy satiation** and **possibility space**, linking context to wider literature
Empirical	• Results comparable to global findings but with some unusual aspects • Measurement of multiple forms of self and outcome-based variables • Comparison with other contexts undertaken
Methodology	• Innovative dialectical data generation • Development and validation of multiple forms of self and outcome-based variables • Both categorical and individual-level elements considered
Context	• Novel i) L2 of study, ii) study context, and iii) sample of learners, fulfilling several gaps identified in research
Practice	• Issues relating to learner and instructor positionality highlighted • Motivational challenges for learners interacting at scale explored

6.3.1 Theory

> New understandings and possibilities will result from refining theory and methods within motivation research, drawing on relevant transdisciplinary insights in related fields, and applying these insights to new as well as previously-researched but ever-changing educational contexts in an even wider range of ethnolinguistic, geographic, and heritage/nonheritage settings. – Duff (2017, p. 605).

Duff's above point was kept in mind when defining and categorising contributions to theory. In general, findings support the utility of the L2MSS in conceptualising the motivations of adult L2 learners of Irish, but the theory was not adopted naively; as outlined in presenting findings, there remain foundational issues to assess. Three key theory-based contributions are emphasised here:

- Use of L2 stances
- Specifying L2 selves using narrative approaches
- Discrepancy satiation and possibility space as future roadmaps for research

L2 stances remain novel, despite a growing number of researchers arguing for their use. Findings from this study indicate they are an encouraging way of distinguishing internal from external forms of obligation, which should be considered in other learning contexts. Secondly, the study respects the particularity and individuality of L2 selves, as emphasised by Csizér (2019, p. 87), although there is undoubtedly more to be achieved in this regard. Thirdly, it draws on wider writings to describe two theoretical constructs: discrepancy satiation and possibility space. These ideas are interpreted from findings and represent new directions for further study. Satiation, and issue that not been explored adequately to date (excepting in the work of Henry, Cliffordson, and Thorsen, 2020) compliments a view of L2 selves as dynamic. Possibility space is an example of a construct that could further the utility of such self-based approaches. In theory, both concepts are operationalisable (and disprovable). A question relevant for other L2 contexts would be whether findings are similar, particularly where languages have a similar sociolinguistic status to that of Irish.

6.3.2 Empirical

Quantitative findings regarding the impact of L2 guides are comparable to other studies. As this study highlights, self-reported effort is neither the sole measure of LLM nor the only behaviour educators might wish to foster, but it provides a benchmark for empirical comparison across differing contexts. Assessed against three studies which measured the four-guide L2MSS and an analogue of motivated behaviour, results are roughly equivalent:

Table 69: Impact of 4-guide L2MSS in Relevant Studies

Study	N=	L2/Level	Ideal Own	Ought-to Own	Ideal Other	Ought-to Other
Teimouri (2017, p. 698) – *Intended Effort*	524	English/Secondary (Iran)	.49**	.16**	N/A	.08*
Papi et al. (2019, p.350) – *Motivated Behaviour*	257	English/Tertiary (United States)	.30**	.52**	.43**	.42**
Feng and Papi (2020, p.5) – *Motivational Intensity*	97	Mandarin/Tertiary (United States)	.57**	.38**	.44**	.18
Present study – *Learning Effort*	**638**	**Irish/Adult (Global)**	**.64****	**.55****	**.39****	**.30****

Learners were primarily "Own"-oriented across contexts; the contribution of this study is to consider this relationship in a rather unusual environment. What these findings raise is that the learners examined here are quite distinct to those learning English, either at second level (Teimouri, 2017) or university (Papi et al., 2019). Nevertheless, patterns are similar, indicating agreement with these international examples. A consensus is therefore forming that "Own"-oriented guides are the primary engines of LLM, when operationalised.

Three wider conclusions can be drawn, respectful of the fact that these studies examine different learning contexts. Firstly, life context is important when framing results. The present study is the only study identified to analyse non-formal adult learners; two other studies (Feng and Papi, 2020; Papi et al., 2019) used tertiary samples, where students have invested substantial time, money, and effort in learning. In self-directed contexts, failure to conform to one's own expectations may be more relevant than the attitudes of social others. In more

directed environments (such as mandatory schooling), the attitudes of social others likely impact L2 experiences more directly. Internalised motivations can enrich, but also place pressure on non-formal adult learners; as described, several interviewees blamed themselves for struggles learning Irish, when their wider social environments were not necessarily conducive to learning.

Secondly, L2 of study is important in examining these results. Of the three studies examining adult learners, the L2 English study (Papi et al., 2019) demonstrates a substantial effect for the Ought-to Own, and weaker Ideal Own. Tertiary EFL learners might see English as a gateway to advancement, being motivated by an internal responsibility to learn, for professional enhancement. In contrast, both other studies (the present one and Feng and Papi, 2020) examine LOTE learners where perceived social compulsion, and linking LL with advancement, might be lower.

Lastly, L2 stance appears especially salient for the Ought-to L2 self, given the Ought-to Own has a much larger effect than unified Ought-to L2 self scales. Criticisms regarding the Ought-to L2 self (Csizér, 2019, p. 77) suggest that social expectation is impactful only when self-endorsed. Such reasoning supports Boyatzis and Akrivou's (2006) warning that when an Ought-to self is not incorporated into an Ideal, one can "…feel betrayed, frustrated, and even angry at the time and energy they wasted in pursuit of dreams and expectations that they were never passionate about" (p. 628). It is notable that for non-formal learners, for whom the stakes of learning within their wider lives are almost certainly low, the Ought-to *Own* was influential.

This study therefore provides valuable empirical data that can be contrasted with international examples and contributes to the growing body of working utilising a four-guide L2MSS model.

6.3.3 Methodological

Debate is heated within LLM, shifting from historical emphasis on positivist reasoning to pluralistic perspectives (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2021, p. 56) which this study embraces. Two methods were used in conjunction, both well-grounded in existing research; applied linguistics has a strong tradition of narrative inquiry, from varying epistemological perspectives (e.g., Pavlenko, 2007; Carson, 2007; Murray, 2009), and LLM researchers commonly operationalise an L2 self using an individual differences perspective (Ryan, 2019), under the assumption that learners differ in quantitatively measurable ways.

The novelty of the methodology comes from pairing two promising recent trends within the study of Irish language teaching and learning adopting an explicitly psychological perspective. Firstly, like O'Rourke and Walsh (2020), the study uses narrative frames to approach learners as living, social beings, "giving voice" to learners" (p.7). The sample of interviewees was

intentionally broad, focused not simply on wishes to become an L2 speaker, but the relational value of learning for interviewees. Additionally, interviewees raised many aspects not directly L2 related to the fore, such as access to relevant resources, time constraints, and how learning fit within wider life and social spaces. Secondly, following Flynn (2020), is to further a series of psychometrically robust scales which draw upon existing global practice but are fitted to context. The use of multiple scales to measure varying forms of L2 use and learning ensures that distinctions between these two concepts are examined. Through using such diverse measurements, findings illustrate that what one measures has great bearing on what one sees and that the excessive focus on intended effort (problematised by Al-Hoorie (2018, p. 737)) masks distinct responses from learners to different measures.

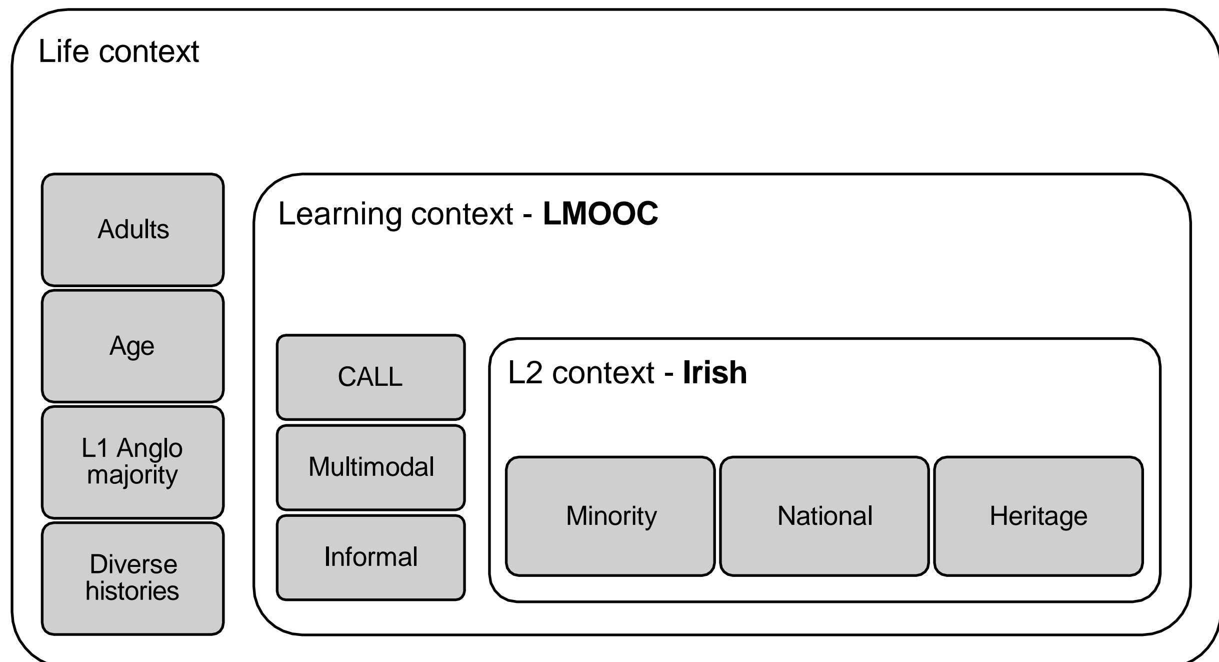
Decisions were taken to analyse data separately, reflecting, as MacIntyre, Moore and Noels (2010) caution, the fallible nature of any method as partial. LLM is a complex phenomenon, and, multiple methods allow more detailed exploration of inter-person differences, recognising general patterns are just that. Excessive focus on mean distribution (for example) can mislead, obscuring important differences (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2021, p. 182). The variation identified in interviews illustrates that it is very difficult to understand possible L2 selves in a meaningful way without considering the individual perspective.

6.3.4 Context

6.3.4.1 Widening focus and sample

As mapped in **Figure 30**, the study expands several areas of inquiry, across i) **L2**, ii) **Learning context**, and iii) **life context.**

Figure 30: Situating sample contribution



L2 of study

This study joins only a handful of L2MSS examples (e.g., Xie, 2014, Olsen, 2018) comparing learners of different heritage/affective backgrounds. It unusual even within that literature, given Irish's ambivalent status as both minority and national language (Ó Laoire, 2005, p. 254), as well as one with diasporic links for millions. The data produced here answers Mendoza and Phung's (2019) call for studies exploring more diverse L2s, given a dominant focus on English as L2 of study (Oakes and Howard, 2022, p. 169), providing tentative support for several of the L2MSS's key constructs. Findings that Irish nationals and LIHs differ somewhat from NILs, in that they possess greater internal obligation, and higher proficiency targets, worth considering in other L2 contexts, to further capture nuances regarding L2 of study (Csizér, 2019; Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie, 2017) and influences of social context/identity.

Learning context

Out-of-class LL, as pointed out by Chik and Ho (2017), varies in "environments, intentionality, interests, structure, and duration" (p. 164), and such learners are the subject of this study. Within this category, LMOOC learners are underexplored, with the field just now reaching its

"coming of age" (Díez-Arcón and Martín-Monje, 2022). Few researchers examine CALL contexts using the L2MSS (Bodnar et al., 2016, p. 201) and the field still lacks an overarching theoretical framework (Sallam, Martín-Monje and Li, 2020, p. 784) despite the growth of LMOOCs. Henry and Lamb (2019) argue that digital technologies can empower but highlight challenges regarding cross-cultural communication (p. 614). Like in Murphy (2011, p. 118), learners here make use of eclectic methods of learning, and MOOC learning occurs within wider online/life contexts (Veletsianos, Reich and Pasquini, 2016, p. 6). This insight has been increasingly recognised in recent MOOC scholarship, shifting from taxonomising motivations (e.g., Barak, Watted and Haick, 2016) to learner perspectives (Moore and Blackmon, 2022), exploration of barriers (e.g., Henderikx et al., 2021), and cultural variation among MOOC learners (Rizvi et al., 2022). Although L2MSS constructs are equivalent to other contexts, non-formal language learners using digital means face specific challenges, outlined below. Language pedagogues must move from "lagging behind" (Al-Hoorie, 2017, p. 7) technological change to consider more closely issues of appropriate technology use and scale.

Learner diversity

A third element is the diversity of learners across life and learning contexts. Older adult learners are not well considered within LLM (Kim and Kim, 2014, p. 122), despite the questions they raise about self-concept consistency over time (Ryan and Dörnyei, 2013) and scope of possible selves (Cross and Markus, 1991). Four-in-ten survey respondents and a majority of interviewees were older than 55. Some had complex learning histories, others learning purely for pleasure. Three-quarters of survey respondents, and most interviewees, were L1 Anglophones, answering Lanvers' (2012, p. 171) call for study of English L1 speakers, given their unusual positionality; none are compelled to learn a second language, let alone a minority one, and live in societies where the value of LL is often questioned (Ortega, 2022, p. 237). Variation of L2 experience heightens issues regarding utility of online environments in promoting social learning and in tailoring learning for mixed spaces, analysed below, given findings that learners of differing experience levels are somewhat distinct.

6.3.4.2 LMOOC Learning Context

Lastly, the LMOOC context of this study should be considered. Half of survey respondents, and a quarter of interviewees, were ab-initio, raising questions regarding pedagogical tailoring. It is occasionally suggested that technology enables personalisation of LL, but the practical evidence is mixed (Kerr, 2016, pp. 5-6). Satisfying diverse learners can be challenging, given potential for negative self-comparison in online learning environments, where students are not stratified by experience or level of proficiency. Many participants did not envision using LMOOC courses for L2 production and described frustrations when attempting to do so. Fang

et al. (2019) report that peer identification mediates MOOC engagement (pp. 86-87); given language learning is (partially) mediated through identification (Gardner, 2019a), it is debatable whether LMOOCs have to date become true social learning environments (Sokolik, 2014). Shifts towards less-monitored, flexible runs of MOOCs (Shah, 2017) are not necessarily promising in this regard, and the degree to which providers have fulfilled the participatory potential of MOOCs, what Brown (2016) terms a “Reconceptualizing Discourse”, (p. 38) is debatable.

There can be substantial difficulties balancing life commitments and interest in Irish, and to further learner control, resource designers could “unMOOC” materials for distribution and/or replication (Ruipérez-Valiente et al., 2020). Allowing self-determined use of resources over time could give learners a greater sense of control of their learning, given encouraging findings from that experimental study (p. 10). One commonly identified advantage to learning Irish online was abilities to replay/reread learning materials. Frequency of thought was identified by Hessel (2015) as the most influential factor in an L2 self being motivating (p. 111); resources promoting short, sustained bursts of interactive learning might enable greater engagement with Irish.

6.3.5 Knowledge of Practice

Findings provide evidence for educators interested in adult non-formal L2 pedagogies and highlight practical insights towards aligning research and pedagogical perspectives. Low confidence in L2 abilities was common among interviewees, and survey results indicated that L2 Anxiety levels are a) substantial and b) do not decline as SRP increases. Promoting positive L2 use (and avoiding negative experiences) is helpful where learners doubt their L2 abilities, but how can a typical instructor do this in practice? Instructors cannot change social perceptions, but can, within the “small culture” (Holliday, 1999, p. 241) of their teaching environment, reframe difficulty, and encourage learners to link their aspirations to personal contexts. Affirming gains, and contextualising struggles, might counter what Barry terms “a lethal combination of experiencing poor performances and a lack of feedback during school” (quoted in Mary Immaculate College, 2021). To emphasise learner diversity, Barry’s note could be expanded to include those who have *never* received feedback, like many of the non-formal learners here.

This study identifies an important problem: defining the nebulous role of Irish L2 instructors in adult non-formal contexts, and what responsibilities they have (if any) to foster learner motivation. Ó Laoire (2018), describing principles for immersive experiences through

Gaeltacht visits, notes that the expectations of learners and instructors can differ, including, but not limited to, that learners (p. 150[30]):

- Be more fluent,
- Be more accurate,
- Improve as regards pronunciation,
- Be more responsible for their own learning,
- Have more confidence,
- Learn vocabulary and phrases they did not have before attending the course,
- Be able to produce longer sentences.

Within these criteria, what responsibilities lie with instructors vis-à-vis students and what tensions could emerge if they do not align? Richards' (2006) thoughtful reflection on the role of L2 instructors is important; in adult learning contexts, where learners may be of similar ages to instructors, personal identification with instructors might foster new possibilities beyond developing L2 skills, allowing learners to articulate self-concordant (and self-discrepant) aspects of learning through dialogue. Increasing focus on the concept of "engagement" in language learning emphasises not simply behavioural, but also emotional and social aspects (Hiver et al., 2021, pp. 4-5). It is questionable to what degree these affective elements are currently considered in non-formal adult contexts.

No less than learners, instructors range in experience, opinions, and beliefs; Ó Murchadha and Flynn (2018) write that (formal) Irish language educators have both implicit and explicit beliefs regarding linguistic norms, including preferences for traditional L2 forms amongst many (Ó Murchadha and Flynn, 2022). Such preferences may implicitly influence the desired self-images learners have. Tension is possible if instructor beliefs are interpreted as being "imposed" on learners (as per Taylor, 2013, analysed in Lanvers, 2016, p. 81). Little research explores beliefs/attitudes of volunteer L2 instructors in non-formal contexts, who, whether paid or unpaid, give substantial time teaching others Irish. The varying beliefs interviewees attributed to non-formal instructors suggests, however, that particular teaching methodologies (i.e., perceived as instructor-centred) can generate conflict. Further, if instructors are given great representational power by learners, even in non-compulsory contexts, then they need to be aware of their substantial role in shaping expectations in ways they might not intend (see Consoli and Aoyama, 2020).

[30] This piece was published in Irish; the criteria were translated by the researcher.

In a timely piece, Ushioda (2022) emphasises the ethical and relational imperative for teachers to consider how their views and values, both implicit and explicit, might influence learners, even when seeking to foster autonomy and self-valued goals (p. 15). Where learning is non-compulsory and instructors have no power to sanction or set deadlines, issues of power and control outwardly appear less problematic, but the negative experiences outlined by learners indicates challenges regarding control and self-determination may be more common than often imagined. Instructors dedicate time and effort to help adults learn Irish, but findings here imply that, in many instances, these efforts can have unintended consequences.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

This research, of which the limitations have been outlined, is preliminary; no published research using other online fora and interactive environments has used a social-psychological lens to examine Irish non-formal learners. The below are signposts for ways to further expand our collective understanding of the psychological elements of learning Irish as a second language.

6.4.1 Replication in different Irish L2 contexts

Scales developed were used in a specific context, and many results, such as strength of "Own"-based L2 guides, may prove context-dependent. An obvious extension would be to administer these instruments, or similar, in other Irish L2 learning contexts, either face-to-face or online. Students at secondary level in Ireland, for example, might demonstrate more externally influenced motivations, given the (generally) compulsory nature of Irish within the Irish educational system. A pertinent question would be whether children in *Gaelscoileanna*, Irish-medium schools, differ from those in non-Irish-medium schools, in the types of future L2 selves they envision. Lee and Lee's (2021) work of the comparative effect of L2MSS constructs on EFL students at elementary, secondary, and university level provides a readily adoptable template for researchers interested in these issues.

6.4.2 Longitudinal study

The research design adopted did not track the development of specific individuals over time, a decision taken given the study's exploratory nature, but both strands of the research in the study imply dynamism, through the i) influence of L2 proficiency and social identity and ii) struggles described in learner narratives. Jiang and Dewaele (2015), studying Chinese ELT learners, reported that the Ideal and Ought-to L2 Self fluctuated amongst individual students, even where sample-level means remained static (pp. 339-341). Longitudinal tracking would provide valuable data regarding self-image evolution, understanding how and in what way Irish L2 selves develop, and to assess possible interventions to improve these facets. A caveat

is conceptualising the appropriate level of time for a study in an adult context; a single course, a semester-length intervention, or a pre-specified length of time? There are no obvious answers but given growing interest in temporal perspectives within LLM (Lamb, 2018, p. 358), research over longer timeframes is sorely needed.

6.4.3 Ethnographic and practitioner research

A finding of interest was the critical perspectives of a minority of interviewees regarding certain L2 instructors, and these critical voices are generally absent in Irish L2 literature. Some research exists regarding adult Irish non-formal classes that describe struggles for L2 legitimacy (e.g., O'Rourke, 2011, Nic Fhlannachadha and Hickey, 2018), but action research would provide examples of what Ushioda (2016) terms (in title) a "small lens" approach to LLM. This focus could be paired with idiographic methods, to better understand the dynamics and consequences of classroom interaction, including in a neglected context: digital learning environments. Given that Irish L2 instructors have an impact, both positive and negative, upon the dynamic motivations of learners, it would be useful to explore how (mis)communication can occur, and the effects these have on possible L2 selves.

6.4.4 Locus and generality of self

The distinction between self-concordance and L2 contextual self-discrepancy is ripe for consideration. Self-concordance – how important language learning is to one's wider self - could be measured through centrality of language learning to self, while self-discrepancies could be assessed through querying what specifically learners imagine themselves doing through Irish. Results could be contrasted against existing L2MSS scales to explore whether self-concordance is, as theorised, more fixed, and can therefore explain where learning is emotionally meaningful, but does not reflect actual changes in behaviour. This approach would further the L2MSS, improving and refining insights into how to support those learning diverse second languages as adults, fostering and nourishing personal goals and desires.

6.5 Conclusion – Learning to express, learning as self-expression

This study has focused on the future selves and identities of adult Irish L2 learners. In doing so, is rooted in theories of LLM and, specifically, the literature reflecting a self and identity approach. Distinct samples of learners from a series of LMOOCs were surveyed and interviewed, creating data marshalled within a multimethod design. This revealed great variation amongst learners and provides, at the most general level, support for the model among learners of diverse backgrounds and L2 learning experiences. When examined closely, however, issues of self-perception, belonging and identity ambiguity became relevant, demonstrating that L2 selves can flourish, or wilt, based on a learner's personal sense of

purpose and meaning in learning. The history of the Irish language is a complex one of adversity and struggle (De Fréine, 1978). This research demonstrates that many non-formal adult learners of Irish have their complex histories to tell, often also riven with adversity and struggle.

That the rich L2 selves in this context are complex and multifaceted fittingly reflects the changing nature of Irish language learning in the 21st century. These include the distinct paths to discovery and rediscovery of the language that many are engaging in through diverse modalities. While non-formal in many cases this learning is far from trivial. Learners referred to aspirations and hopes, as well as fears and responsibilities, while survey results demonstrate that multiple motivations can simultaneously be present. The dizzying numbers and range of non-formal Irish language learners - be they dipping toes or desiring to become new speakers of Irish - highlight the dangers of developing nomothetic rules which deemphasise the individual experiences of learners as persons (Ushioda, 2009; Benson, 2019). As referenced at the start of this study, a tendency against achieving high proficiency is something of a norm in second language learning (Dörnyei, 2022) but for many, it truly is the journey, rather than destination, that inspires. Although findings support the central tenets of the L2MSS within this study, a profound limitation identified may be that the model as construed entails excessive focus on *future* states, and less focus on emotional meaning in the present.

The title of this thesis is intended to describe this distinction. To date, we argue that LLM research has focused primarily on the L2MSS as a means of examining processes of ***learning to express***. This concern has seen researchers query what an L2 self is and how learners can be supported, through a range of motivational strategies, in developing their capacities to use the L2. It appears premised on the assumption that an active and motivating L2 self *entails* such use, which has arguably limited the scope and range of ways to think about the interaction of LL and the self more broadly. In the same manner that one may speak of instrumentalist motivations, perhaps one can also speak of instrumentalised imagined L2 selves, which reflect particularised logics and priorities, and neglect others (see Ushioda, 2017). ***Learning as self-expression*** describes the fact that adult learners, particularly those interviewed here, root their learning not simply in the pursuit of L2 proficiency, but in personal and social values, beliefs, and non-linguistic elements of self (as in Lanvers, 2012), grounded in wider self-expressive purposes are not dissimilar to other vibrant L2 minority learning contexts (Banegas and Roberts, 2022; MacIntyre, Moore and Sparling, 2017). It follows that a parallel concern must be to ask what types of meanings, feelings, and memories learners sketch on canvasses which are both rich and ambiguous.

In calling for closer consideration of the personal meaning that learners derive from learning a language, this study compliments recent literature in LLM (Gregersen, 2019; MacIntyre, Ross and Gregersen, 2019). Where compulsion is absent, researchers should be doubly interested in persons who self-direct their learning, often on lonely paths lined with doubts. Supporting adult non-formal learners requires deep engagement with their self-perspectives and expanding definitions of "successful" language learning beyond an exclusive focus on acquisition or achievement. It is important that learners express valued selves through any L2, but to return to the title of this study, learning can simultaneously, or entirely, be an act of self-expression, independent of one's capacity to produce using the language. As noted by one interviewee, "…there's more to language than function…", and accepting this, there are many questions, frontiers, and stories for researchers to consider which have not been examined to date.

References

Adolphs, S., Clark, L., Dörnyei, Z., Glover, T., Henry, A., Muir, C., Sánchez-Lozano, E., Valstar, M. (2018) 'Digital innovations in L2 motivation: Harnessing the power of the Ideal L2 Self', *System*, 78, pp. 173-185. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2018.07.014

Alario-Hoyos, C., Estévez-Ayres, I., Pérez-Sanagustín, M., Delgado Kloos, C., and Fernández-Panadero, C. (2017) 'Understanding Learners' Motivation and Learning Strategies in MOOCs', *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning (IRRODL),* 18(3), pp. 119-137. https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v18i3.2996

Al-Hoorie, A. (2016) 'Unconscious motivation. Part 1: Implicit attitudes towards L2 speakers', *Studies in Second Language Teaching and Learning*, 6(3), pp. 423-454. https://doi.org/10.14746/sllt.2016.6.3.4

Al-Hoorie, A. (2017) 'Sixty years of language motivation research: looking back and looking forward', *SAGE Open*, Jan-March 2017, pp. 1-11. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244017701976

Al-Hoorie, A. (2018) 'The L2 Motivational Self-system: a meta-analysis', *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 8(4), pp. 721-754. https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2018.8.4.2

Al-Hoorie, A. (2019) 'Motivation and the Unconscious', in M. Lamb, K. Csizér, A. Henry, and S. Ryan, (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 561-578.

Al-Hoorie, A., and Hiver, P. (2020) 'The Fundamental Difference Hypothesis: Expanding the Conversation in Language Learning Motivation', *SAGE Open*, 2020, pp. 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020945702

Al-Hoorie, A., Hiver, P., Kim, T., and De Costa, P. (2021) 'The Identity Crisis in Language Motivation Research', *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, (40)1, pp. 136-153. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X20964507

Al-Hoorie, Ali, and MacIntyre, P. (2019) *Contemporary Language Motivation Theory: 60 Years Since Gardner and Lambert (1959).* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Al-Hoorie, A., and Vitta, J. (2018) 'The seven sins of L2 research: A review of 30 journals' statistical quality and their CiteScore, SJR, SNIP, JCR Impact Factors', *Language Teaching Research,* 23(6), pp. 727-744. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168818767191

Al-Hoorie, A., and Vitta, J. (2022) 'Complexity Theory: From Metaphors to Methodological Advances', In A. Al-Hoorie, and F. Szabó, (eds) *Researching Language Learning Motivation: A Concise Guide. London*: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 175-184.

Ames, C., and Archer, J. (1988) 'Achievement goals in the classroom: students learning strategies and motivation processes', *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 80(3), pp. 260-267. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.80.3.260

Andringa, S., and Godfroid, A. (2020) 'Sampling Bias and the Problem of Generalizability in Applied Linguistics', *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 40, pp. 134-142. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190520000033

Armstrong, R. (2014) 'When to use the Bonferroni correction', *Ophthalmic and Physiological Optics,* (34)5, pp. 502-508. https://doi.org/10.1111/opo.12131

Baker, C., and Jones, S. (1998) *Encyclopaedia of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Bali, M. (2014) 'MOOC Pedagogy: Gleaning Good Practice from Existing MOOCs', *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 10(1), pp. 44-55.

Bali, M. (2015) *Pedagogy of Care – Gone Massive.* Available at: https://hybridpedagogy.org/pedagogy-of-care-gone-massive/ (Accessed: 4 August 2022).

Bandura, A. (1977) 'Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change', *Psychological Review*, 84(2), pp. 191-215. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191

Banegas, D., and Roberts, G. (2022) 'If we don't study the language, the history will be lost': motivation to learn Welsh in Argentine Patagonia', *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 25(3), pp. 1137-1150. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2020.1742651

Bannigan, K., and Watson, R. (2009) 'Reliability and Validity in a nutshell', *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 18, pp. 3237-3243. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2702.2009.02939.x

Barak, M., Watted, A., and Haick, H. (2016) 'Motivation to earn in massive open online courses: Examining aspects of language and social engagement', *Computers & Education*, 94, pp. 49-60. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2015.11.010

Bárkányi, Z. (2021) 'Motivation, self-efficacy beliefs, and speaking anxiety in language MOOCs', *ReCALL*, (33)2, pp. 143-160. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344021000033

Barkhuizen, G. (2014) 'Narrative research in language teaching and learning', *Language Teaching,* 47(4), pp. 450-466. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444814000172

Baumeister, R. (1999) 'Self-concept, self-esteem, and identity', in V. Derlega, B. Winstead, and W. Jones, (eds) *Personality: Contemporary theory and research*, Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, pp. 339-375.

Baumeister, R. (2019) 'Stalking the True Self Through the Jungles of Authenticity: Problems, Contradictions, Inconsistencies, Disturbing Findings – and a Possible Way Forward', *Review of General Psychology*, 23(1), pp. 143-154. https://doi.org/10.1177/1089268019829472

Bazeley, P. (2013) *Qualitative Data Analysis: Practical Strategies.* London: SAGE.

Bazeley, P., and Kemp, L. (2012) 'Mosaics, Triangles, and DNA: Metaphors for Integrated Analysis in Mixed Methods Research', *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 6(1), pp. 55-72. https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689811419514

Beaven, T., Codreanu, T., and Creuzé, A. (2014) 'Motivation in a Language MOOC: Issues for Course Designers', in E. Martín-Montje, and E. Bárcena, (eds) *Language MOOCS: Providing learning, transcending boundaries. Warsaw/*Berlin: DeGruyter Open, pp. 48-66.

Begić, I., and Mercer, S. (2017) 'Looking back, looking forward, living in the moment: understanding the individual temporal perspectives of secondary school EFL learners', *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 11(3), pp. 267-281. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2017.1317261

Beirne, E. (2020) '*What a feeling! A multistage, multimethod Investigation of emotions and their antecedents in an Irish language MOOC'*, PhD Thesis, Dublin City University. Available at: https://doras.dcu.ie/24749/ (Accessed 21 January 2021)

Benson, P. (1997) 'The philosophy and politics of learning autonomy', in P. Benson, and P. Voller (eds) *Autonomy and Independence in Language Learning.* London: Routledge, pp. 18-35.

Benson, P. (2004) '(Auto)biography and learner diversity', in P. Benson and D. Nunan (eds) *Learners' Stories: Difference and Diversity in Language Learning.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 4-21.

Benson, P. (2007) 'Autonomy in language teaching and learning', *Language Teaching*, 40, pp. 21-40. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444806003958

Benson, P. (2019) 'Ways of seeing: The individual and the social in applied linguistics research methodologies, *Language Teaching*, 52(1), pp. 60-70. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444817000234

Bliss, L. (2008) 'Greene, J.C. (2007). Mixed Methods in Social Inquiry', *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 2(2), pp. 190-192. https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689807314013

Bodnar, S., Cucchiarini, C., Strik, H., and Van Hout, R. (2016) 'Evaluating the motivational impact of CALL systems: current practices and future directions', *Computer Assisted Language Learning,* (29)1, pp. 186-212. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2014.927365

Boo, Z., Dörnyei, Z., and Ryan, S. (2015) 'L2 motivation research 2005-2014: Understanding a publication surge and a changing landscape', *System*, 55, pp.145-157. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2015.10.006

Boyatzis, R., and Akrivou, K. (2006) 'The ideal self as the driver of intentional change', *Journal of Management Development*, (25)7, pp. 624-642. https://doi.org/10.1108/02621710610678454

Bradbury-Jones, C., Taylor, J., and Herber, O. (2014) 'How theory is used and articulated in qualitative research: Development of a new typology', *Social Science & Medicine*, 120, pp. 135-141. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2014.09.014

Braun, V., and Clarke, V. (2006) 'Using thematic analysis in psychology', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, (3)2, pp. 77-101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., and Clarke, V. (2019) 'Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis', *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health,* 11(4), pp. 589-597. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806

Brophy, J. (1999) 'Toward a Model of the Value Aspects of Motivation in Education: Developing Appreciation for Particular Learning Domains and Activities', *Educational* Psychologist, 34(2), pp. 75-85. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep3402_1

Brown, M. (2016) 'MOOCs as social practice: a kaleidoscope of perspectives', in L. Engwall, E. Corte, and U. Teichler (eds) *From books to MOOCs? Emerging models of learning and teaching in higher education*. London: Portland Press, pp. 31-41.

Brown, M. (2021a) 'What are the Main Trends in Online Learning? A Helicopter View of Possible Futures', *Asian Journal of Distance Education*, 16(2), pp. 118-143. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5764839

Brown, M. (2021b) 'Teaching Online Beyond the Shadows', in Farrell, O., Brunton, J., Ní Shé, C., Costello, E. (eds) *#Openteach: Professional Development for Open Online Educators*. Dublin: #Openteach Project, pp. 14-21. Available at: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/openteach/ (Accessed: 14 September 2022).

Bruner, J. (1990) *Acts of meaning.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bryman, A. (2006) 'Integrating qualitative and quantitative research: how is it done?', *Qualitative Research*, 6(1), pp. 97-113. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794106058877

Busse, V. (2013) 'An exploration of motivation and self-beliefs of first year students of German', *System*, 41(2), pp. 379-398. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2013.03.007

Carnie, A. (1995) *Modern Irish: A Case Study in Language Revival Failure.* MIT Working Papers in Linguistics, Papers on Endangered Languages.

Carroll, J. (1990) 'Cognitive abilities in foreign language aptitude: then and now', in T. Perry and W. Stansfield, (eds) *Language aptitude reconsidered*, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, pp. 11-27.

Carroll, P., Shepperd, J., and Arkin, R. (2009) 'Downward self-revision: erasing possible selves', *Social Cognition*, (27)4, pp. 550-578. https://doi.org/10.1521/soco.2009.27.4.550

Carson, L. (2007) 'Relatedness and learner autonomy: A case study of an adult refugee learning English in Ireland', *Reflections on English Language Teaching*, (6)2, pp. 21-38.

Carson, L. (2010) 'Language learner autonomy: Myth, magic or miracle?', *Proceedings of the International Conference, 'From Teaching to Learning: Current Trends in English Language Teaching*, South East European University, pp. 77-100.

Carson, L. (2016) 'The Sights and Sounds of the Multilingual City', in L. King, and L. Carson, (eds) *The Multilingual City: Vitality, Conflict and Change.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 49-86.

Caruso, M., and Fraschini, N. (2021) 'A Q Methodology Study into Vision of Italian L2 University Students: An Australian Perspective', *The Modern Language Journal*, 105(2), pp. 552-568. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12713

Cattell, R. (1966) 'The Scree Test for the Number of Factors', *Multivariate Behavioural Research,* 1(2), pp. 245-276. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327906mbr0102_10

Chan, L., Dörnyei, Z., and Henry, A. (2015) 'Learner Archetypes and Signature Dynamics in the Language Classroom: A Retrodictive Qualitative Modelling Approach to Studying L2 Motivation', In Z. Dörnyei, P. MacIntyre, and A. Henry, (eds*) Motivational Dynamics in Language Learning*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 238-259.

Chik, A. (2020) 'Motivation and Informal Language Learning', in M. Dressman, and R. Sadler, (eds) *The Handbook of Informal Language Learning*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 15-26.

Chik, A., and Benson, P. (2020) 'Commentary: Digital language and learning in the time of coronavirus', *Linguistics and Education*, Published Online. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2020.100873

Chik, A., and Ho, J. (2017) 'Learning a language for free: Recreational learning among adults', *System*, 69, pp. 162-171. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2017.07.017

Chirkov, V., Ryan, R., Kim, Y., and Kaplan, U. (2003) 'Differentiating Autonomy from Individualism and Independence: A Self-Determination Theory Perspective on Internalization of Cultural Orientations and Well-Being', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, (84)1, pp. 97-110. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.1.97

Cho, M. (2020) 'An investigation into learners' ideal L2 self and its motivational capacity', *Reading and Writing*, 33, pp. 2029-2048. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-020-10031-7

Claro, J. (2019) 'Identification with External and Internal Referents: Integrativeness and the Ideal L2 Self', in A. Al-Hoorie, and P. MacIntyre, (eds) *Contemporary Language Motivation Theory: Sixty Years Since Gardner and Lambert (1959).* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 233-261.

Clément, R., and Kruidenier, B. (1983) 'Orientations in second language acquisition 1: The effects of ethnicity, milieu and the target language on their emergence', *Language Learning,* 33(3), pp. 273-291. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1983.tb00542.x

Clément, R., and Noels, K. (1992) 'Towards a Situated Approach to Ethnolinguistic Identity: The Effects of Status on Individuals and Groups', *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 11(4), pp. 203-232. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X92114002

Clément, R., Noels, K., and MacIntyre, P. (2007) 'Three Variations on the Social Psychology of Bilinguality: Context Effects in Motivation, Usage and Identity', in A. Weatherall, B. Watson, and C. Gallois, (eds) *Language, Discourse and Social Psychology.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 51-77.

Clément, R., and Norton, B. (2021) 'Ethnolinguistic Vitality, Identity, and Power: Investment in SLA', *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, (40)1, pp. 154-171. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X20966734

Coetzee-Van Rooy, S. (2006) 'Integrativeness: untenable for world Englishes learners?', *World Englishes*, 25(3-4), pp. 437-450. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.2006.00479.x

Comanaru, R., and Noels, K. (2009) 'Self-determination, motivation and the study of Chinese as a heritage language', *Canadian modern language review/La revue canadienne des languages vivantes,* 66(1), pp. 131-158. https://doi.org/10.3138/cmlr.66.1.131

Consoli, S., and Aoyami, T. (2020) 'Longitudinal L2 motivation inquiry: a response to Lamb's (2016) 'when motivation research motivates: issues in long-term empirical investigations', *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 14(2), pp. 178-187. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2018.1548081

Cotterall, S., and Murray, G. (2009) 'Enhancing metacognitive knowledge: Structure, affordances and self'', *System*, 37(1), pp. 34-45. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2008.08.003

Council of Europe. (No Date). *Formal, non-formal and informal learning*. Available at: https://www.coe.int/en/web/lang-migrants/formal-non-formal-and-informal-learning (Accessed: 16 May 2020).

Creswell, J., and Plano Clark, V. (2007) *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE. 1st Edition.

Creswell, J., and Plano Clark, V. (2011) *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE. 2nd Edition.

Crookes, G., and Schmidt, R. (1991) 'Motivation: Reopening the research agenda', *Language Learning*, 41(4), pp. 469-512. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1991.tb00690.x

Cross, S., and Markus, H. (1991) 'Possible selves across the lifespan', *Human Development*, 34(4), pp. 230-255. https://doi.org/10.1159/000277058

Csizér, K. (2019) 'The L2 Motivational Self System', in M. Lamb, K. Csizér, A. Henry, and S. Ryan, (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 71-93.

Csizér, K., and Lukács, G. (2010) 'The comparative analysis of motivation, attitudes and selves: The case of English and German in Hungary', *System*, 38, pp. 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2009.12.001

CSO. (2016) *Census of Population 2016 – Profile 10 Education, Skills and the Irish Language*. Available at: https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp10esil/p10esil/ilg/ (Accessed: 10 March 2019).

Cypress, B. (2017) 'Rigor or Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Strategies, Reconceptualization, and Recommendations', *Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing,* 36(4), pp. 253-263. https://doi.org/10.1097/DCC.0000000000000253

Daoud, J. (2017) 'Multicollinearity and Regression Analysis', *Journal of Physics Conference Series*, No. 949. https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/949/1/012009

Darmody, M., and Daly, T. (2015) *Attitudes towards the Irish Language on the Island of Ireland.* Available at: https://www.esri.ie/publications/attitudes-towards-the-irish-language-on-the-island-of-ireland (Accessed: 15 March 2018).

Darvin, R., and Norton, B. (2015) 'Identity and a Model of Investment in Applied Linguistics', *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 35, pp. 36-56. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190514000191

Darvin, R., and Norton, B. (2021) 'Investment and motivation in language learning: What's the difference?', *Language Teaching*, 2021, pp. 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444821000057

Davidson, C. (2009) 'Transcription: Imperatives for Qualitative Research', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(2), pp. 35-52. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800206

Davis, B., and Sumara, D. (2007) 'Complexity Science and Education: Reconceptualizing the Teacher's Role in Learning', *Interchange*, 38, pp. 53-67. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10780-007-9012-5

Deakin, H., and Wakefield, K. (2014) 'Skype interviewing: reflections of two PhD researchers', *Qualitative Research*, 14(5), pp. 603-616. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794113488126

Delacre, M., Lakens, D., and Leys, C. (2017) 'Why Psychologists Should by Default Use Welch's t-test Instead of Student's t-test', *International Review of Social Psychology*, (30)1, pp. 92-101. http://doi.org/10.5334/irsp.82

De Barba, P., Kennedy, G., and Ainley, M. (2016) 'The role of students' motivation and participation in predicting performance in a MOOC', *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 32(3), pp. 218-231. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.12130

De Barra, C. (2017) 'The case for ending state support of Irish language is littered with dubious 'facts', *TheJournal.ie*. Available at: http://www.thejournal.ie/readme/fake-facts-irish-language-debate-3220676-Feb2017/ (Accessed: 10 March 2018).

De Costa, P., Randez, R., Lee, H., Green-Eneix, C. (2021) 'Navigating ethical challenges in second language narrative inquiry research', *System*, 102. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102599

De Fréine, S. (1978) *The great silence.* Dublin: Mercier Press.

Deci, E., and Ryan, R. (1985) *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior.* New York: Plenum.

Deci, E., and Ryan, R. (2000) 'Self-determination theory and the facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development and Well-Being', *American Psychologist*, 55(1), pp. 68-78. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68

Devitt, S., Little, D., Ó Conchúir, S., and Singleton, D. (1983) *Learning Irish with Anois is Arís*. Dublin: Trinty College in association with Raidió Teilifís Éireann. CLCS Occasional Paper 6.

Díez-Arcón, P., and Martín-Monje, E. (2022) 'The coming of age of LMOOC research: A systematic review (2019-2021)', *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2022.2082446

Dörnyei, Z. (1998) 'Motivation in second and foreign language learning', *Language Teaching*, 31(3), pp. 117-135. https://doi.org/10.1017/S026144480001315X

Dörnyei, Z. (2005) *The Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition.* London: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007) *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009) 'The L2 Motivational Self System', in Dörnyei, Z., and Ushioda, E., (eds) *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 self.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 9-42.

Dörnyei, Z. (2010) 'Researching motivation: from integrativeness to the ideal L2 self', in S. Hunston, and D. Oakley (eds) 'Introducing Applied Linguistics: Concepts and Skills'. London: Routledge, pp. 74-83.

Dörnyei, (2014) 'Future Self-Guides and Vision', in K. Csizér, and M. Magid (eds) *The impact of self-concept on language learning*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 7-18.

Dörnyei, Z. (2017) 'Conceptualizing learner characteristics in a complex, dynamic world', in L. Ortega, and Z. Han, (eds) *Complexity Theory and Language Development: In celebration of Diane Larsen-Freeman.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, pp. 79-96.

Dörnyei, Z. (2019a) 'Towards a better understanding of the L2 learning experience, the Cinderella of the L2 Motivational Self System', *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching,* 9(1), pp. 19-30. https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2019.9.1.2

Dörnyei, Z. (2019b) 'From Integrative Motivation to Directed Motivational Currents: The Evolution of the Understanding of L2 Motivation over Three Decades', in M. Lamb, K. Csizér, A. Henry, and S. Ryan, (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 39-69.

Dörnyei, Z. (2020) *Innovations and challenges in language learning motivation.* London: Routledge.

Dörnyei, Z. (2022) 'The interface of psychology and second language acquisition', in J. Gervain, G. Csibra, and K. Kovács, (eds) *A Life in Cognition: Studies in Cognitive Science in Honor of Csaba Pléh.* Cham: Springer Switzerland, pp. 17-28.

Dörnyei, Z., and Al-Hoorie, A. (2017) 'The Motivational Foundation of Learning Languages Other than Global English: Theoretical Issues and Research Directions', *The Modern Language Journal*, 101(3), pp. 455-468. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12408

Dörnyei, Z., and Chan, L. (2013) 'Motivation and vision: an analysis of future L2 self images, sensory styles, and imagery capacity across two target languages', *Language Learning,* 63(3), pp. 437-462. https://doi.org/10.1111/lang.12005

Dörnyei, Z., Csizér, K., and Németh, N. (2006) *Motivation, Language Attitudes and Globalisation: A Hungarian Perspective.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z., and Czisér, K. (2012) 'How to Design and Analyse Surveys in Second Language Acquisition Research', in A. Mackey, and S. Gass, (eds) *Research Methods in Second Language Acquisition: A Practical Guide.* Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 74-94.

Dörnyei, Z., and Henry, A. (2022) 'Accounting for long-term motivation and sustained motivated learning', in Elliott, A. (ed), *Advances in Motivation Science, 9.* Cambridge, MA: Academic Press, pp. 89-134.

Dörnyei, Z., MacIntyre, P., and Henry, A. (2015) 'Introduction: Applying complex dynamic systems principles to empirical research on L2 motivation', in Z. Dörnyei, P. MacIntyre, and A. Henry (eds) *Motivational dynamics in language learning*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 1-7.

Dörnyei, Z., and Ryan, S. (2015) *The Psychology of the Language Learner Revisited*. London: Routledge Press.

Dörnyei, Z., and Ushioda, E. (2009) 'Motivation, Language Identities and the L2 Self: Future Research Directions', in Z. Dörnyei, and E. Ushioda (eds) *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 self.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 350-356.

Dörnyei, Z., and Ushioda, E. (2013) *Teaching and researching motivation.* London: Pearson. 2nd Edition.

Dörnyei, Z., and Ushioda, E. (2021) *Teaching and researching motivation.* Harlow: Longman. 3rd Edition.

Drabble, M. (2019) 'German Lessons', *The Paris Review*. Available at: https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2019/11/14/german-lessons/ (Accessed: 12 January 2022).

Dron, J., and Anderson, T. (2022) 'Informal Learning in Digital Contexts', in O. Zawacki-Richter and I. Jung (eds) *Handbook of Open, Distance and Digital Education.* Singapore: Springer Singapore. Available at: https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-981-19-0351-9_84-1#DOI (Accessed: 15 May 2022).

Duff, P. (2017) 'Commentary: Motivation for learning languages other than English in an English-dominant world'*, The Modern Language Journal,* 101(3), pp. 597-607. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12416

Duff, P., Liu, Y., and Li, D. (2017) 'Chinese Heritage Language Learning: Negotiating Identities, Ideologies, and Institutionalization', in O. Kagan, M. Carreira and C. Chik (eds) *Routledge Handbook on Heritage Language Education*. New York: Routledge, pp. 409-422.

Dunbar, C. (2020) 'What is this about?', *Pobailura.com*. Available at: https://pobailura.com/what-is-this-about/ (Accessed: 12 January 2022).

Dunmore, S. (2020) 'Emic and essentialist perspectives on Gaelic heritage: New speakers, language policy, and cultural identity in Nova Scotia and Scotland', *Language in Society,* (50)2, pp. 259-281. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404520000032

Dutton, J. (2021) 'Autonomy and Community in Learning Languages Online: A Critical Autoethnography of Teaching and Learning in COVID-19 Confinement During 2020', *Frontiers in Education*, 6(647817). https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2021.647817

Eccles, J., and Wigfield, A. (2002) 'Motivational beliefs, values and goals', *Annual Review of Psychology,* 53(1), pp. 109-132. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.53.100901.135153

Eguz, E. (2019) 'Learning a second language in late adulthood: benefits and challenges', *Educational Gerontology*, 45(12), pp. 701-707. https://doi.org/10.1080/03601277.2019.1690273

Emanuel, E. (2013) 'MOOCs taken by educated few'*, Nature*, 503(342). Available at: https://www.nature.com/articles/503342a (Accessed 10 January 2019).

Erikson, M. (2007) 'The meaning of the future: Towards a more specific definition of possible selves', *Review of General Psychology*, 11(1), pp. 348-358. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.11.4.348

Eshach, H. (2007) 'Bridging In-school and Out-of-school Learning: Formal, Non-Formal, and Informal Education', *Journal of Science, Education and Technology*, (16)2, pp. 171-190. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10956-006-9027-1

Falout, J. (2021) 'Researching Motivational Resonance Hands-on: Learner Self-Concepts, Learning Groups and Educational Cultures', in R. Sampson and R. Pinner (eds) *Complexity Perspectives on Researching Language Learner and Teacher Psychology.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 103-119.

Fang, J., Tang, L., Yang, J., and Peng, M. (2019) 'Social interaction in MOOCs: The mediating effects of immersive experience and psychological needs satisfaction', *Telematics and Informatics*, 39, pp. 75-91. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2019.01.006

Feng, L., and Papi, M. (2020) 'Persistence in language learning: The role of grit and future self-guides', *Learning and Individual Differences*, 81, pp. 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2020.101904

Finlay, L. (2002) 'Negotiating the Swamp: The Opportunity and Challenge of Reflexivity in Research Practice', *Qualitative Research*, 2(2), pp. 209-230. https://doi.org/10.1177/146879410200200205

Fishman, J. (2001) '300-Plus Years of Heritage Language Learning in the United States', in J. Peyton, D. Ranard and S. McGinnis (eds) *Heritage Language Learning in America: Preserving a National Resource.* Washington D.C: Centre for Applied Linguistics, pp. 81-98.

Flynn, C. (2020) *Adult minority language learning: Motivation, Identity and Target Variety.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Flynn, C. (forthcoming) 'Adult migrant learners of Irish: Motivations, methods and multilingualism', in Simpson, J., and Pöyhönen, S (eds), *Minority Language Learning for Adult Migrants in Europe*. London: Routledge.

Flynn, C., and Harris, J. (2016) 'Motivational diversity among adult minority language learners: are current theoretical constructs adequate?', *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural development,* 34(4), pp. 371-384. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2015.1072204

Foster, E. (1997) 'Transformative Learning in Adult Second Language Learning', *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 74, pp. 33-40. https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.7404

Freshwater, D. (2007) 'Reading Mixed Methods Research: Contexts for criticism', *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(2), pp. 134-146. https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689806298578

Friðriksdóttir, K. (2021) 'The effect of content-related and external factors on student retention in LMOOCs', *ReCALL*, 33(2), pp. 128-142. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344021000069

Galleta, A. (2013) *Mastering the Semi-Structured Interview and Beyond: From Research Design to Analysis and Publication.* New York: NYU Press.

Gao, Y. (2014) 'Faithful imitator, legitimate speaker, playful creator, and dialogical communicator; shifts in English learners' identity prototypes', *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 14(1), pp. 59-75. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2013.866124

Gardner, R. (1985) *Social Psychology and Language Learning: the role of attitudes and motivation*. London: Edward Arnold.

Gardner, R. (2001) 'Language Learning Motivation: The Student, The Teacher and The Researcher', Texas Papers in Foreign Language Education, (6)1, pp. 1-18. Available at: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED464495.pdf (Accessed: 15 March 2020)

Gardner, R. (2005) *Integrative motivation and second language acquisition.* Speech at the Canadian Association for Applied Linguistics, May 30th, 2005. Available at: https://publish.uwo.ca/~gardner/docs/caaltalk5final.pdf (Accessed: 27th June 2022).

Gardner, R. (2007) 'Motivation and Second Language Acquisition', *Porta Linguarum*, 8, pp. 9-20. Available at: http://digibug.ugr.es/bitstream/handle/10481/31616/Gardner.pdf (Accessed 12 October 2018).

Gardner, R. (2010) *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition: The Socio-Educational Model.* New York: Peter Lang.

Gardner, R. (2019a) 'Looking back and looking forward', in A. Al-Hoorie and P. MacIntyre (eds) *Contemporary Language Motivation Theory: Sixty Years Since Gardner and Lambert (1959).* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 5-14.

Gardner, R. (2019b) 'The Socio-educational Model of Second Language Acquisition', in M. Lamb, K. Csizér, A. Henry, and S. Ryan (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning.* London: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 21-37.

Gardner, R., and Lambert, W. (1959) 'Motivational Variables in Second Language Acquisition', *Canadian Journal of Psychology/Revue Canadienne de psychologie*, 13(4), pp. 266-272.

Gardner, R., and Lambert, W. (1972) *Attitudes and motivation in Second Language Learning.* Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publishers.

Gardner, R., and MacIntyre, P. (1991) 'An Instrumental Motivation in Language Study; Who says it isn't effective?', *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 13(1), pp. 57-72. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263100009724

Gardner, R., and MacIntyre, P. (1993) 'A student's contributions to second language learning. Part II: Affective variables', *Language Teaching*, 26, pp. 1-11. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444800000045

Garland, J. (2008) 'The importance of being Irish: National Identity, Cultural Authenticity, and Linguistic Authority in an Irish Language Class in the United States', *Pragmatics*, 18(2), pp. 253-276. https://doi.org/10.1075/prag.18.2.04gar

Gastwith, J., Gel, Y., and Miao, W. (2009) 'The Impact of Levene's Test of Equality of Variances on Statistical Theory and Practice', *Statistical Science*, 24(3), pp. 343-360. https://doi.org/10.1214/09-STS301

Gearing, N., and Roger, P. (2019) 'Where's the vision? Rescuing integrativeness to understand the language learning motivation of English-speaking EFL instructors living in South Korea', *System*, 82, pp. 122-131. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.03.008

Giddings, L. (2006) 'Mixed methods research: Positivism dressed in drag?', *Journal of Research in Nursing,* (11)3, pp. 195-203. https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987106064635

Giles, H., and Byrne, J. (1982) 'An intergroup approach to second language acquisition', *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 3, pp. 17-40. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.1982.9994069

Giles, J. (2016) '"No, it is not a hobby for me": Examining the motivations of non-Irish learners of the Irish language in North America', *Language and Communication*, 47, pp. 135-143. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2015.06.001

Glynn, T., Ó Laoire, M. & Berryman, M. (2009) 'Transformative pedagogy and language learning in Maori and Irish contexts', in S. May (ed) *LED 2007: 2nd International Conference on Language, Education and Diversity, Refereed Conference Proceedings and Keynotes, The University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand, 21-24 November 2007.* Hamilton: The University of Waikato.

Greene, J. (2007) *Mixed methods in social inquiry.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Greene, J., Caracelli, V., and Graham, W. (1989) 'Towards a Conceptual Framework for Mixed Methods Evaluation Designs', *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, (11)3, pp. 255-274. https://doi.org/10.3102/01623737011003255

Greene, J., and Hall, J. (2010) 'Dialectics and Pragmatism: Being of Consequence', in A. Tashakkori and C. Teddlie (eds) *SAGE Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioural Research.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE, pp. 119-143.

Gregersen, T. (2019) 'Aligning Positive Psychology with Language Learning Motivation', in M. Lamb, K. Czisér, A. Henry and S. Ryan (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning*. London: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 621-640.

Guest, G. (2013) 'Describing Mixed Methods Research: An Alternative to Typologies', *Journal of Mixed Methods Research,* 7(2), pp. 141-151. https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689812461179

Guttman, L. (1954) 'Some necessary conditions for common factor analysis', *Psychometrika*, 19, pp. 149-161.

Gyogi, E. (2020) 'Fixity and fluidity in two heritage language learners' identity narratives', *Language and Education*, 34(4), pp. 328-344. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2020.1720228

Haeffel, G., and Howard, G. (2010) 'Self-Report: Psychology's Four-Letter Word', *American Journal of Psychology*, 123(2), pp. 181-188. https://doi.org/10.5406/amerjpsyc.123.2.0181

Hair, J., Black, W., Babin, B., and Anderson, R. (2014) *Multivariate Data Analysis.* Harlow: Pearson. 7th Edition.

Hamilton, C., and Serrano, R. (2015) 'Contact, attitude and motivation in the learning of Catalan at advanced levels', *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 12(3), pp. 241-258. https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2014.986127

Hammersley, M. (1995) 'Theory and evidence in qualitative research', *Quality & Quantity*, 29, pp. 55-66.

Harder, P. (1980) 'Discourse as self-expression – on the reduced personality of the second language learner', *Applied Linguistics*, 1(3), pp. 262-270. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/I.3.262

Harwood, J., Giles, H., and Bourhis, R. (1994) 'The Genesis of Vitality Theory: Historical Patterns and Discoursal Dimensions', *International Journal of the Sociology of* Language, 108, pp. 167-206. https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl.1994.108.167

Harris, J., and Murtagh, L. (1999) *Teaching and Learning Irish in Primary School: A Review of Research and Development*. Baile Átha Cliath: Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann.

Hashemi, M., and Babaii, E. (2013) 'Mixed methods research: Towards new research designs in applied linguistics', *The Modern Language Journal*, 97(4), pp. 828-852. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2013.12049.x

Henderikx, M., Kreijn, K., and Kalz, M. (2017) 'Refining success and dropout in massive open online courses based on the intention–behavior gap', *Distance Education*, 38(3), pp. 353-368. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2017.1369006

Henderikx, M., Kreijns, K., Xu, K., and Kalz, M. (2021) 'Making Barriers to Learning in MOOCS Visible. A Factor Analytical Approach', *Open Praxis*, 13(2), pp. 143-159. http://doi.org/10.5944/openpraxis.13.2.124

Henrich, J., Heine, S., and Norenzayan, A. (2010) 'The weirdest people in the world?', *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 33(2-3), pp. 61-83. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X0999152X

Henry, A. (2010) 'Contexts of possibility in simultaneous language learning: Using the L2 Motivational Self System to access the impact of Global English', *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 31(2), pp. 149-162. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434630903471439

Henry, A. (2015) 'The Dynamics of Possible Selves', in Z. Dörnyei, P. MacIntyre and A. Henry (eds) *Motivational Dynamics in Language Learning*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 83-94.

Henry, A. (2017) 'L2 Motivation and Multilingual Identities', *The Modern Language Journal*, 101(3), pp. 548-565. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12412

Henry, A. (2020) 'Possible selves and personal goals: What can we learn from episodic thinking?' *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 6(3), pp. 481-500. https://doi.org/10.32601/ejal.834659

Henry, A. (2021) 'Vision and Goal Self-Concordance', in T. Gregersen and S. Mercer (eds) *The Routledge Handbook of the Psychology of Language Learning and Teaching.* Oxford: Routledge, pp. 231-244.

Henry, A. (2022) 'Goal self-concordance and Motivational Sustainability', in A. Al-Hoorie and F. Szabó (eds), *Researching Language Learning Motivation: A Concise Guide.* London: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 61-70.

Henry, A., and Cliffordson, C. (2015) 'The Impact of Out-of-School Factors on Motivation to Learn English: Self-discrepancies, Beliefs, and Experiences of Self-authenticity', *Applied Linguistics*, 38(5), pp. 713-736. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amv060

Henry, A., and Lamb, M. (2019) 'L2 Motivation and Digital Technologies', in M. Lamb, K. Csizér, A. Henry and S. Ryan (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 599-619.

Henry, A., and Thorsen, C. (2020) 'Disaffection and agentic engagement: 'Redesigning' activities to enable authentic self-expression', *Language Teaching Research*, 24(4), pp, 456-475. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168818795976

Henson, R., and Roberts, J. (2006) 'Use of Exploratory Factor Analysis in Published Research: Common Errors and Some Comment on Improved Practice', *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 66(3), pp. 393-416. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164405282485

Hessel, G. (2015) 'From vision to action: inquiring into the conditions for motivational capacity of ideal second language selves', *System*, 52, pp. 103-114. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2015.05.008

Higgins, E.T. (1987) 'Self-discrepancy: A theory relating to self and affect', *Psychological Review*, 94(3), pp. 319-340. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.94.3.319

Higgins, E.T. (1998) 'Promotion and prevention: Regulatory focus as a motivational principle', *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 30, pp. 1-46. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60381-0

Hiver, P., and Al-Hoorie, A. (2020) 'Reexamining the Role of Vision in Second Language Motivation: A Pregregistered Replication of You, Dörnyei and Csizér (2016)', *Language Learning*, 70(1), pp. 48-102. https://doi.org/10.1111/lang.12371

Hiver, P., Al-Hoorie, A., Vitta, J., and Wu, J. (2021) 'Engagement in language learning: A systematic review of 20 years of research methods and definitions', *Language Teaching Research*, Published Online. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688211001289 (Accessed: 27 July 2022).

Hiver, P., Obando, G., Sang, Y., Tahmouresi, S., Zhou, A., and Zhou, Y. (2019) 'Reframing the L2 learning experience as narrative reconstructions of classroom learning', *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 9(1), pp. 83-116. https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2019.9.1.5

Hiver, P., and Papi, M. (2019) 'Complexity Theory and L2 Motivation', in M. Lamb, K. Csizér, A. Henry and S. Ryan (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 117-132.

Holec, H. (1981) *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning.* Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Holliday, A. (1999) 'Small cultures', *Applied Linguistics*, 20(2), pp. 237-264. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/20.2.237

Hornburger, N., and Wang, C. (2008) 'Who are our heritage language learners? Identity and biliteracy in heritage language educations in the United States', in Brinton, D., Kagan, O., and Bauckus, S. (eds) *Heritage language education: A new field emerging*. New York: Routledge, pp. 3-35.

Horwitz, E., Horwitz, M., and Cope, J. (1986) 'Foreign language classroom anxiety', *The Modern Language Journal,* 70(2), pp. 125-132. https://doi.org/10.2307/327317

Howell, D. (2010) 'Scheffé's Test', in N. Salkind (ed) *The SAGE Encyclopaedia of Research Design.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE, pp. 1323-1325.

Howley, E. (2020) *Why are we turning to poetry in the middle of a pandemic?* Available at: https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2020/0331/1127523-poetry-pandemic-coronavirus/ (Accessed: 2 September 2022).

Hoyle, R., and Duvall, J. (2004) 'Determining the Number of Factors in Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis', in D. Kaplan (ed) *The SAGE Handbook of Quantitative Methodology for the Social Sciences.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE, pp. 301-316.

Hurd, S. (2006) 'Towards a Better Understanding of the Dynamic Role of the Distance Language Learner: Learner perceptions of personality, motivation, roles, and approaches', *Distance Education*, 27(3), pp. 303-329. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587910600940406

Hurd, S. (2008) 'Affect and Strategy Use in Independent Language Learning', in S. Hurd and T. Lewis (eds) *Language Learning Strategies in Independent Settings*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 218–236.

Irie, K. (2014) 'Q Methodology for post-social turn research in SLA', *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 4(1), pp. 13-32. https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2014.4.1.2

Irie, K., and Brewster, D. (2013) 'One Curriculum, three stories: Ideal L2 self and L2-self discrepancy profiles', in M. Apple, D. Da Silva and T. Fellner (eds) *Language Learning Motivaion in Japan*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 110-128.

Ivankova, N., Creswell, J., and Stick, S. (2006) 'Using Mixed Methods Sequential Explanatory Design: From Theory to Practice', *Field Methods*, 18(1), pp. 3-20. https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05282260

James, N., and Thériault, V. (2020) 'Adult education in times of the COVID-19 pandemic: Inequalities, changes, and resilience', *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 52(2), pp 129-133. https://doi.org/10.1080/02660830.2020.1811474

Jiang, Y., and Dewaele, J. (2015) 'What lies bubbling beneath the surface? A longitudinal perspective on fluctuations of ideal and Ought-to L2 Self among Chinese learners of English', *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 53(3), pp. 331-354. https://doi.org/10.1515/iral-2015-0015

Johnson, R., Onwuegbuzie, A., and Turner, L. (2007) 'Towards a Definition of Mixed Methods Research', *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(2), pp. 112-133. https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689806298224

Jordan, K. (2015) 'Massive Open Online Courses Completion Rates Revisited: Assessment, Length and Attrition', *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning (IRRODL)*, 16(3), pp. 341-358. https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v16i3.2112

Kagan, O. (2005) 'In support of a proficiency-based definition of Heritage Language Learners: The case of Russian', *The International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 8(2-3), pp. 213-221. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050508668608

Kahneman, D., and Riis, J. (2005) 'Living, and Thinking about it: Two perspectives on Life', in F.A Huppert, N. Baylis and B. Keverne (eds) *The Science of Well-Being*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 285-304.

Kaiser, H. (1960) 'The application of electronic computers to factor analysis', *Educational and Psychological* Measurement, 20, pp. 141-151. https://doi.org/10.1177/001316446002000116

Kalaja, P., Alanen, R., Palviainen, A., and Dufva, H. (2011) 'From Milk Cartons to English Roomates: Context and Agency in L2 Learning Beyond the Classroom', in P. Benson, and H. Reinders (eds) *Beyond the Language Classroom.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 57-58.

Kanno, Y., and Norton, B. (2003) 'Imagined communities and Educational Possibilities: Introduction', *Journal of Language and Identity in Education*, 2(4), pp. 241-249. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327701JLIE0204_1

Kerr, P. (2016) 'Personalization of language learning through adaptive technology', *Cambridge papers in ELT Series.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kharchenko, Y. (2021) 'Show another side of yourself', *Mind Brain Ed Think Tanks+*, December 2021. Available at: https://www.mindbrained.org/2021/12/show-another-side-of-you/ (Accessed 14 September 2022).

Kim, T. (2005) 'L2 Learning Motivation from a Sociocultural Theory Perspective: Theory, Concepts, and Empirical Evidence', *English Teaching*, 61(4), pp. 51-76.

Kim, T., and Kim, Y. (2014) 'Elderly Korean Learners' Participation in English Learning Throughout Lifelong Education: Focusing on Motivation and Demotivation', *Educational Gerontology*, 41(2), pp. 120-135. https://doi.org/10.1080/03601277.2014.929345

Kizilcec, R., and Scheider, E. (2015) 'Motivation as a lens to understand online learners: towards data-driven design with the OLEI scale', *ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction*, 22(2), pp. 1-24. https://doi.org/10.1145/2699735

Kizilcec, R., Reich, J., Yeomans, M., Dann, C., Brunskill, E., Lopez, G., Turkay, S., Williams, J., and Tingley, J. (2020) 'Scaling up behavioural science interventions in online education', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science of the United States of America (PNAS)* 117(26), pp. 14900-14905. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1921417117

Kluckhohn, C., and Murray, H. (1948). *Personality in nature, society and culture.* New York: Knopf.

Knäuper, B., Roseman, M., Johnson, P., and Krantz, L. (2009) 'Using mental imagery to enhance the effectiveness of implementation intentions', *Current Psychology: A Journal for Diverse Perspectives on Diverse Psychological Issues*, 28(3), pp. 181-186. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-009-9055-0

Knief, U., and Forstmeier, W. (2021) 'Violating the normality assumption may be the lesser of two evils', *Behaviour Research Methods*, 53, pp. 2576-2590. https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-021-01587-5

Kormos, J., Kiddle, T., and Csizér, K. (2011) 'Systems of Goals, Attitudes, and Self-related Beliefs in Second-Language-Learning Motivation', *Applied Linguistics*, 32(5), pp. 495-516. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amr019

Kraftl, P., McKenzie, M., Gulson, K., Accioly, I., Blackmore, J., Burke, C., Perrota, C.., Clarke, D.A.G., Daniels, H., Fregoso Bailon, R.O., Goodyear, V., Goodyear, P., Gunasekara, I., Hartong, S., Hickman Dunne, J., Howard. S., Lupinacci, J., Mcphie, J., Mannion, G., Nxumalo, F., Parnell, R., Pykett, J., Ratuio, P., Sefton Green, J., Selwyn, N., Stovall, D., Southgate, E., Talbert, R., Teelucksingh, C., Tucker, R., Uduku, O., Wilson, A. and Wood, A. (2022). 'Learning spaces: built, natural and digital considerations for learning and learners', In S. Bugden and G. Borst (eds) *Education and the learning experience in Reimagining education: The International Science and Evidence based Education Assessment.* New Delhi: UNESCO MGIEP.

Kwok, C., and Carson, L. (2018) 'Integrativeness and intended effort in language learning motivation amongst some young adult learners of Japanese', *Language Learning in Higher Education,* 8(2), pp. 265-279. https://doi.org/10.1515/cercles-2018-0016

Laing, L. (2006) *The Archaeology of Celtic Britain and Ireland: c. AD 400 – 1200.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lamb, M. (2004) 'Integrative motivation in a globalising world', *System*, 32(1), pp. 3-19. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2003.04.002

Lamb, M. (2007) 'Which came first, the worm or the cocoon?' *Independence*, 40, pp. 28-29.

Lamb, M. (2011) 'Future selves, motivation and autonomy in long-term English foreign language learning trajectories', in G. Murray, X. Gao, and T. Lamb, (eds) *Identity, motivation and autonomy: Exploring their links.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 177-194.

Lamb, M. (2018) 'When motivation research motivates: issues in long-term empirical investigations', *Innovation in Language Learning and Technology*, 12(4), pp. 357-370. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2016.1251438

Lamb, M., Czisér, K., Henry, A., and Ryan, S. (2019) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning.* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Langley, A. (1999) 'Strategies for Theorizing from Process Data', *The Academy of Management Review*, 24(4), pp. 691-710. https://doi.org/10.2307/259349

Lanvers, U. (2012) ''The Danish speak so many languages it's really embarrassing'. The impact of L1 English on adult language students' motivation.', *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching,* 6(2), pp. 157-175. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2011.641970

Lanvers, U. (2016) 'Lots of selves, some rebellious: Developing the self-discrepancy model for Language Learners', *System*, 60, pp. 79-92. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2016.05.012

Larsen-Freeman, D. (2006) 'The Emergence of Complexity, Fluency, and Accuracy in the Oral and Written Production of Five Chinese Learners of English', *Applied Linguistics*, 27(4), pp. 590-619. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/aml029

Larsen-Hall, D., and Plonsky, L. (2015) 'Reporting and Interpreting Quantitative Research Findings: What Gets Reported and Recommendations for the Field', *Language Learning*, 65(1), pp. 127-159. https://doi.org/10.1111/lang.12115

Lasagabaster, D., and Ó Laoire, M. (2004). 'Attitudes towards trilingualism: a comparison between the Basque and Irish contexts', *Teanga*, 22. https://doi.org/10.35903/teanga.v22i0.157

Laurillard, D. (2002) *Rethinking University Teaching: A Conversational Framework for the Effective Use of Learning Technologies.* London: Routledge.

Lee, J. (2005) 'Through the learners' eyes: Reconceptualising the Heritage and Non-Heritage Learner of Less Commonly Taught Languages'*, Foreign Language Annals*, 38(4), pp. 554-563. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2005.tb02522.x

Lee, J., and Lee, K. (2021) 'The role of informal digital learning of English and L2 motivational self system in foreign language enjoyment', *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 52(1), pp. 358-373. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12955

Leech, N., and Onwuegbuzie, A. (2009) 'A typology of mixed methods research designs', *Quality & Quantity*, 43, pp. 265-275. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-007-9105-3

Leeman, J. (2015) 'Heritage language Education and Identity in the United States', *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics,* 35, pp. 100-119. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190514000245

Leeman, J., and King, K. (2015) 'Heritage language education: Minority Language Speakers, Second Language Instruction, and Monolingual Schooling', in M. Bigelow and J. Ennser-Kanenen (Eds.) *The Handbook of Educational Linguistics.* New York: Routledge, pp. 210-223.

Levy, K. (1980) 'A Monte Carlo Study of Analysis of Covariance Under Violations of the Assumptions of Normality and Equal Regression Slopes', *Educational and Psychological Measurement,* 40(4), pp. 835-840. https://doi.org/10.1177/001316448004000404

Li, S. (2016) 'The Construct Validity of Language Aptitude: A Meta-Analysis', *Studies in Second Language* Acquisition, 38(4), pp. 801-842. https://doi.org/10.1017/S027226311500042X

Li, Y. (2016) *To speak is to blunder.* The New Yorker. Available at: https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/01/02/to-speak-is-to-blunder (Accessed: 9 February 2022).

Lin, C., and Warschauer, M. (2011) 'Integrativeness versus Instrumental Orientation among Online Language Learners', *Linguagens e Diálogos*, 2(1), pp. 58-86.

Little, D. (2007) 'Language Learner Autonomy: Some Fundamental Considerations Revisited', *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1(1), pp. 14-29. https://doi.org/10.2167/illt040.0

Livingstone, D. (2001) 'Adults' informal learning: Definition, findings, gaps and future research', *NALL working papers*, 21. Available at: https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/retrieve/4484/ (Accessed: 12 January 2021).

Loewen, S., Crowther, D., Isbell, D., Kim, K., Maloney, J., Miller, Z., and Rawal, H. (2019) 'Mobile-assisted language learning: A Duolingo case study', *ReCALL*, 31(3), pp. 293-311. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344019000065

Lore, A., and Beaton, F. (2000) 'Adult foreign language learners: motivation, attitudes and behaviour', *The Language Learning Journal,* 21(1), pp. 31-36. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571730085200081

Lou, N., and Noels, K. (2019) 'Language Mindsets, Meaning-Making, and Motivation', in M. Lamb, K. Csizér, A. Henry, and S. Ryan (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning.* London: Springer International Publishing, pp. 537-559.

Lynch, A. (2003) 'The Relationship between Second and Heritage Language Acquisition: Notes on Research and Theory Building', *Heritage Language Journal*, 1(1), pp. 26-43.

MacIntyre, P. (2007) 'Willingness-To-Communicate in the Second Language: Understanding the Decision to Speak as a Volitional Process', *The Modern Language Journal*, 91(5), pp. 564-576. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2007.00623.x

MacIntyre, P. (2022) 'Using the Self as a Basis for a Motivation System: Is It Worth the Trouble?', in A. Al-Hoorie and F. Szabó (eds) *Researching Language Learning Motivation: A Concise Guide.* London: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 83-90.

MacIntyre, P., Baker, S., and Sparling, H. (2017) 'Heritage Passions, Heritage Convictions and the Rooted L2 Self: Music and Gaelic Language Learning in Cape Breton, Nova

Scotia', *The Modern Language Journal*, 101(3), pp. 501-516. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12417

MacIntyre, P., and Legatto, J. (2011) 'A dynamic system approach to willingness to communicate: Developing an idiodynamic method to capture rapidly changing affect', *Applied Linguistics*, 32(2), pp. 149-171. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amq037

MacIntyre, P, Dewaele, J., Macmillan, N., and Li, C. (2019) 'The Emotional Underpinnings of Gardner's Attitudes and Motivation Test Battery', in A. Al-Hoorie and P. MacIntyre (eds) *Contemporary Language Motivation Theory: Sixty Years Since Gardner and Lambert (1959).* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 57-79.

MacIntyre, P., and Vincze, L. (2017) 'Positive and negative emotions underlie motivation for L2 learning', *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 7(1), pp. 61-88. https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2017.7.1.4

MacIntyre, P., MacKinnon, S., and Clément, R. (2009) 'The Baby, the Bathwater, and the Future of Language Learning Motivation Research', in Z. Dörnyei and E. Ushioda (eds) *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 self.* London: Palgrave McMillan, pp. 43-66.

MacIntyre, P., Noels, K., and Moore, B. (2010) 'Perspectives on motivation in second language acquisition: Lessons from the Ryoanji Garden', in M. Prior (ed) *Selected proceedings of the 2008 second language research forum: Exploring SLA Perspectives, Positions, and Practices.* Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project, pp. 1-9.

MacIntyre, P., Ross, J., and Clément, R. (2019) 'Emotions are motivating', in M. Lamb, K. Csizér, A. Henry, and S. Ryan (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning.* London: Springer International Publishing, pp. 183-202.

MacFarlane, A., and O'Reilly-De Brún, M. (2011) 'Using a Theory-Driven Conceptual Framework in Qualitative Heath Research', *Qualitative Health Research*, 22(5), pp. 607-618. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732311431898

Mac Giolla Chríost, D. (2005) *The Irish language in Ireland: From Goídeal to globalisation.* Oxford: Routledge.

Mac Lochlainn, C., Nic Giolla Mhichíl, M., and Beirne, E. (2021) 'Clicking, but connecting? L2 learning engagement on an ab initio Irish language LMOOC', *ReCALL*, 33(2), pp. 111-127. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344021000100

Mac Murchaidh, C. (2008) 'Current attitudes to Irish', in Nic Pháidín, C., and Ó Cearnaigh, S., (eds) *A New View of the Irish Language.* Baile Átha Cliath: Cois Life, pp. 212-223.

Mahmoodi, M., and Yousefi, M. (2021) 'Second language motivation research 2010-2019: a synthetic exploration', *The Language Learning Journal*, 50(3), pp. 273-296. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2020.1869809

Margarita Johnson, S. (2015) *Adult learning in the language classroom.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Markus, H., and Kitayama, S. (1991) 'Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation', *Psychological Review*, 98(2), pp. 224-253. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.98.2.224

Markus, H., and Nurius, P. (1986) 'Possible Selves', *American Psychologist*, 41(9), pp. 954-969. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.41.9.954

Martín-Montje, E., and Bárcena, E. (2014) *Language MOOCs: Providing Learning, Transcending Boundaries.* Warsaw/Berlin: DeGruyter Open.

Martín-Monje, E., and Borthwick, K. (2021) ‘Researching massive open online courses for language teaching and learning’, *ReCALL*, 33(2), pp. 107-110. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344021000094

Mary Immaculate College. (2021) *Irish people downplaying their Gaeilge ability, according to Applied Linguistics researcher.* Available at: https://www.mic.ul.ie/irish-people-downplaying-gaeilge-ability-shane-barry (Accessed 10 January 2022).

Masgoret, A., and Gardner, R. (2003) ‘Attitudes, motivation and second language learning: A meta-analysis of studies conducted by Gardner and Associates’, *Language Learning*, 53(1), pp. 123-163. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9922.00212

Mason, J. (2006) ‘Mixing methods in a qualitatively driven way’, *Qualitative Research*, 6(1), pp. 9-25. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794106058866

Maxwell, J., and Loomis, D. (2004) ‘Mixed Method Design: An Alternative Approach’, in A. Tashakkori and C. Teddlie (eds) *Handbook of Mixed Methods in the Social and Behavioural Sciences.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE, pp. 241-271.

Maxwell, J., and Mittapalli, K. (2010) ‘Realism as a stance for mixed methods research’, in A. Tashakkori and C. Teddlie (Eds.) *SAGE Handbook of Mixed Methods Research.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE, pp. 145-167.

McAdams, D., and McLean, K. (2013) ‘Narrative Identity’, *Current Directions in Psychological Science,* 22(3), pp. 233-238. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721413475622

McAuley, A., Stewart, B., Siemens, G., and Cormier, D. (2010) ‘*The MOOC Model for Digital Practice’.* Available at: https://www.oerknowledgecloud.org/archive/MOOC_Final.pdf (Accessed: 15 May 2018).

McConnell, D. (2019) Is breá liom Gaeilge, but we should dump it as a core subject. *The Irish Examiner*, Available at: https://www.irishexaminer.com/breakingnews/views/columnists/daniel-mcconnell/is-brea-liom-gaeilge-but-we-should-dump-it-as-a-core-subject-915772.html (Accessed: 12 April 2019).

McGroarty, M. (2001) ‘Situating Second Language Motivation’, in Z. Dörnyei and R. Schmidt (eds) *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition.* Hawai’i: University of Hawai’i Press, pp. 69 – 91.

McKight, P., and Najab, J. (2010) ‘Kruskal-Wallis Test’*,* in I. Weiner and E. Craighead (eds) *The Corsini Encyclopaedia of Psychology.* Wiley and Sons, 4th Edition.

McMonagle, S. (2010) ‘Deliberating the Irish Language in Northern Ireland: from conflict to multiculturalism’, *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 33(3), pp. 253-270. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2010.481766

Mendoza, A., and Phung, H. (2019) ‘Motivation to learn languages other than English: A critical research synthesis’, *Foreign Language Annals*, 52, pp. 121-140. https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12380

Mercer, S., and Dörnyei, Z. (2020) *Engaging Language Learners in Contemporary Classrooms*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Miller, E., and Kubota, R. (2013) ‘Second language identity construction’, in J. Herschensohn, and M. Young-Scholten (eds) *The Cambridge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 230-250.

Mitchell, G., and Cody, W. (1993) ‘The Role of Theory in Qualitative Research’, *Nursing Science Quarterly,* 6(4), pp. 170-178. https://doi.org/10.1177/089431849300600405

Mitchell, D., and Miller, M. (2019) 'Reconciliation through language learning? A case study of the Turas Irish language project in East Belfast', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 42(2), pp. 235-253. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1414278

Moore, R., and Blackmon, S. (2022) 'From the Learner's perspective: A systematic review of MOOC learner experiences (2008-2021)', *Computers & Education* [In Press Pre-proof]. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2022.104596

Moretti, M., and Higgins, E.T. (1999) 'Own versus Other Standpoints in Self-Regulation: Developmental Antecedents and Functional Consequences', *Review of General Psychology*, 3(3), pp. 188-223. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.3.3.188

Morgan, D. (2007) 'Paradigms Lost and Pragmatism Regained: Methodological Implications of Combining Qualitative and Quantitative data', *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1), pp. 48-76. https://doi.org/10.1177/2345678906292462

Morse J. (1991) 'Approaches to qualitative-quantitative methodological triangulation', *Nursing Research,* 40(2), pp. 120–123.

Morse, J., and Niehaus, L. (2016) *Mixed Methods Design: Principles and Procedures.* Abington, Oxford: Routledge University Press. 2nd edition.

Moskovsky, C., Assulaimani, T., Racheva, S., and Harkins, J. (2016) 'The L2 Motivational Self System and L2 Achievement: A Study of Saudi EFL Learners', *The Modern Language Journal*, 100(3), pp. 641-654. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12340

Motterham, G. (2013) 'Introduction', in Motterham, G., (ed) *Innovations in learning technologies for English Language Teaching. London*: British Council, pp. 5-15.

Mowrer, O.H. (1950) *Learning theory and personality dynamics: selected papers.* New York: Ronald Press.

Muir, C. (2018a) 'Motivational aspects of using near peers as role models', *Cambridge 'Papers in ELT' Series.*

Muir, C. (2018b) 'Using learner-centred content in the classroom', *Cambridge 'Papers in ELT' Series.*

Murphy, L. (2011) 'Why am I doing this? Maintaining motivation in distance language learning', in G. Murray, X. Gao, and T. Lamb (eds), *Identity, Motivation and Autonomy in Language Learning.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 107-124.

Murray, G. (2009) 'Narrative Inquiry', in Heigham, J., and Croker, R., (Eds.) *Qualitative Research in Applied Linguistics: A Practical Introduction.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 45-65.

Murray, G. (2011) 'Older Language Learners, Social Learning Spaces and Community', in P. Benson and H. Reinders (eds) *Beyond the Language Classroom.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 132-145.

Murray, G. (2013) 'Pedagogy of the possible: Imagination, autonomy, and space', *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching,* 3(3), pp. 377-396. https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2013.3.3.4

Murtagh, L. (2007) 'Out-of-school Use of Irish, Motivation and Proficiency in Immersion and Subject-only Post-primary Programmes', *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism,* 10(4), pp. 428-453. https://doi.org/10.2167/beb453.0

Murthy, V. (2008) 'Digital Ethnography: An Examination of the Use of New Technologies for Social Research', *Sociology*, 42(5), pp. 837-855. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038508094565

Myers, K. (2013) 'The cúpla focal and pious drivel that keeps Irish artificially alive', *The Irish Independent*. Available at: https://www.independent.ie/opinion/columnists/kevin-myers/the-cupla-focal-and-pious-drivel-that-keeps-irish-artificially-alive-29131893.html (Accessed: 10 March 2019).

Nakamura, T. (2019) 'Understanding motivation for learning languages other than English: Life domains of L2 self', *System*, 82, pp. 111-121. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.03.006

Neigert, M. (2019) *New Perspectives on Older Language Learners: A Mixed-Methods Study on the Temporal Self of Young-Old EFL-learners in Germany.* Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto Verlag GmbH.

Ní Aodha, G. (2016) 'Over 2.3 million language learners have signed up for Irish lessons on Duolingo', *TheJournal.ie.* Available at: https://www.thejournal.ie/duolingo-ireland-3100715-Nov2016/ (Accessed: 10 May 2020).

Ní Chiobháin, S. (2019) 'From toddlers to drag queens: Meet New York's new Gaeilgeoirs', The *Irish Times.* Available at: https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/abroad/from-toddlers-to-drag-queens-meet-new-york-s-new-gaeilgeoirs-1.3825770 (Accessed: 15 May 2021).

Ní Riordáin, C. (2018) 'Poetry across the linguistic divide', *The Irish Times.* Available at: https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/poetry-across-the-linguistic-divide-1.3730310 (Accessed: 10 January 2019).

Nic Craith, M., and Leyland, J. (1997) 'The Irish language in Britain: A case study of North West England', *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 10(3), pp. 171-185. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908319709525250

Nic Fhlannchadha, S., and Hickey, T. (2018) 'Minority language ownership and authority: perspectives of native speakers and new speakers', *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 21(1), pp. 38-53. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2015.1127888

Nic Giolla Mhichíl, M., Lynn, T., and Rosati, P. (2018) 'Twitter and the Irish language, #Gaeilge – agents and activities: exploring a data set with micro-implementers in social media', *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 39(10), pp. 868-881. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2018.1450414

Noels, K. (2005) 'Orientations to learn German: Heritage Language Learning and Motivational Substrates', *The Canadian Modern Language Review/La Revue Canadienne des Langues vivantes*. 62(2), pp. 285-312. https://doi.org/10.3138/cmlr.62.2.285

Noels, K. (2009) 'The internalisation of language learning into the Self and Social Identity', in Z. Dörnyei and E. Ushioda (eds) *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 self'.* London: Multilingual Matters, pp. 295-313.

Noels, K., Pelletier, L., Clément, R., and Vallerand, R. (2000) 'Why are you learning a second language? Motivational orientations and self-determination theory', *Language Learning,* 50(1), pp. 57-85. https://doi.org/10.1111/0023-8333.00111

Noels, K., and Clément, R. (2015) 'Situational variations in ethnic identity across immigration generations: Implications for acculturative change and cross-cultural adaptation', *International Journal of Psychology*, 50(6), pp. 451-462. https://doi.org/10.1002/ijop.12205

Noels, K., Lou, N., Lascano, D., Chaffee, K., Dincer, A., Zhang, Y., and Zhang, X. (2019) 'Self-determination and Motivated Engagement in Language Learning', in M. Lamb, K. Csizér, A. Henry, and S. Ryan (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 95-115.

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). (2022) *Main Statistics for Northern Ireland Statistical Bulletin – Language*. Available at: https://www.nisra.gov.uk/system/files/statistics/census-2021-main-statistics-for-northern-ireland-phase-1-statistical-bulletin-language.pdf (Accessed: 22 September 2022).

Norton Peirce, B. (1995) 'Social identity, investment, and language learning', *TESOL* Quarterly, 29(1), pp. 9-31. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587803

Norton, B. (2012) 'Identity and second language acquisition', in C. Chapelle (ed) *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics.* New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing.

Norton, B. (2019) 'Motivation, Identity and Investment: A Journey with Robert Gardner', in A. Al-Hoorie and P. MacIntyre (Eds.) *Contemporary Language Motivation Theory: 60 Years since Gardner and Lambert (1959).* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 153-170.

Norton, B., and Toohey, K. (2011) 'Identity, language learning, and social change', *Language Teaching,* 44(4), pp. 412-446. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444811000309

Oakes, L., and Howard, M. (2022) 'Learning French as a foreign language in a globalised world: an empirical critique of the L2 Motivation Self System', *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism,* 25(1), pp. 166-182. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2019.1642847

OECD. (2007) 'Terms, Concepts and Models For Analysing the Value of Recognition Programmes', *Recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning Project*. Available at: https://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/41834711.pdf (Accessed: 12 May 2020).

Oga-Baldwin, W., Fryer, L., and Larson-Hall, J. (2019) 'The critical role of the individual in language education: New directions from the learning sciences.', *System* 86. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.102118

Olsen, M. (2018) 'What and Who in the L2 Motivational Self System: The Interlinked Roles of Target Language and Heritage Learner Status', *The Canadian Modern Language Review/La revue Canadienne des langues vivantes*, 74(2), pp. 279-301. https://doi.org/10.3138/cmlr.2016-0002

Ortega, L. (2022) 'Afterword', in A. Al-Hoorie and F. Szabó (eds) *Researching Language Learning Motivation: A Concise Guide*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 235-239.

Ortega, L., and Zyzik, E. (2008) 'Online interactions and L2 learning: Some ethical challenges for L2 researchers', in S. Magnan (ed) *Mediating Discourse Online*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Company, pp. 331-355.

Ó Ceallaigh, T.J., and Ní Dhonnabháin, Á. (2015) 'Reawakening the Irish Language through the Irish Educational System: Challenges and Priorities', *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 8(2), pp. 179-198.

Ó Conchubhair, B. (2008) 'The global diaspora and the 'new' Irish (languages)', in C. Nic Pháidín and S. Ó Cearnaigh (eds) *A New View of the Irish language.* Baile Átha Cliath: Cois Life, pp. 224-248.

Ó Coimín, M. (2017) 'An Ghaeilge agus an Tuircis na teangacha is lú a ndéantar dul chun cinn iontu ar Duolingo.', *Tuairisc.ie*. Available at: https://tuairisc.ie/an-ghaeilge-agus-an-tuircis-na-teangacha-is-lu-a-ndeantar-dul-chun-cinn-iontu-ar-duolingo/ (Accessed: 25 June 2022).

Ó Duibhir, P. (2018) *Immersion education: lessons from a minority language context.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Ó Duibhir, P. (2021) 'We need to talk (about) Irish', *RTÉ.ie*. Available at - https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2021/0310/1203090-speaking-learning-irish-seachtain-na-gaeilge/ (Accessed: 4 January 2022).

Ó Duibhir, P., NigUidhir, G., Ó Cathalláin, S., Ní Thuairisg, L., and Cosgrove, J. (2017) *An Analysis of Models of Provision for Irish-medium Education.* Baile Átha Cliath: Foras na Gaeilge.

Ó Giollagáin, C., and Charlton, M. (2015) *Nuashonrú ar an Staidéar Cuimsitheach Teangeolaíoch ar Úsáid na Gaeilge sa Ghaeltacht*. Údarás na Gaeltachta. Available at: https://www.udaras.ie/assets/uploads/2020/11/002910_Udaras_NuashonruI%C2%81_FULL_report_A4_FA.pdf (Accessed: 31 August 2022)

Ó Giollagáin, C., Mac Donnacha, S., Ní Chualáin, F., Ní Shéaghdha, A., and O'Brien, M. (2007) *Comprehensive linguistic study of the use of Irish in the Gaeltacht: Principal findings and recommendations.* Available at: http://www.cogg.ie/wp-content/uploads/Linguistic-Study-of-the-Use-of-Irish-in-the-Gaeltacht.pdf (Accessed: 8 January 2019).

Ó hIfearnáin, T. (2013) 'Family language policy, first language Irish speaker attitudes and community-based response to language shift', *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 34(4), pp. 348-365. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2013.794809

Ó Murchadha, N., and Flynn, C. (2018) 'Educators' Target Language Varieties for Language Learners: Orientation Toward 'Native' and 'Nonnative' Norms in a Minority Language Context', *The Modern Language Journal*, 102(4), pp. 797-813. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12514

Ó Murchadha, N., and Flynn, C. (2022) 'Teachers as new speakers of a minority language: Identity, speakerness, and ideologies on variation in Irish', *International Journal of Bilingualism*. [Published Online]. https://doi.org/10.1177/13670069221110384

Ó Murchadha, N., and Kavanagh, L. (2021) 'Language ideologies in a minority context: An experimental study of teachers' responses to variation in Irish', *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 26, pp. 197-220. https://doi.org/10.1111/josl.12538

Ó Laoire, M. (2005) 'The Language Planning Situation in Ireland', *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 6(3), pp. 251-314. https://doi.org/10.1080/14664200508668284

Ó Laoire, M. (2012) 'Language policy and minority language education in Ireland: re-exploring the issues, *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 25(1), pp .17-25. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2011.653055

Ó Laoire, M. (2018). 'An Tumfhoghlaim sa Ghaeltacht: Féidearthachtaí agus Dúshláin d'Ábhair Oidí, *Léann Teanga: An Reiviú*, 6, pp. 141-154. Available at: http://leannteangaanreiviu.com/sites/default/files/11-Muiris%20%C3%93%20Laoire.pdf (Accessed: 29 August 2022).

O'Rourke, B. (2011) 'Whose Language is it? Struggles for Language Ownership in an Irish Language Classroom', *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, 10(5), pp. 327-345. https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2011.614545

O'Rourke, B., and Walsh, J. (2015) 'New speakers of Irish: shifting boundaries across space and time', *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 231. PP 63-83. https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2014-0032

O'Rourke, B., and Walsh, J. (2020) *New speakers of Irish in the Global Context; New Revival?* Oxford: Routledge.

O'Rourke, B., Walsh, J, and Rowland, H. (2015) *Research Report on New Speakers of Irish.* Translated by Ó Cuiv, M. Dublin: Foras na Gaeilge.

Ó Torna, C. (2005) *Cruthú na Gaeltachta 1893 – 1922.* Baile Átha Cliath: Cois Life.

Ó Riagáin, P., Williams, G., and Morcno, F. (2008) *Young people and minority languages: Language use outside the classroom.* Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta. Available at: http://www.gaelscoileanna.ie/files/Young-People-and-Minority-Languages.pdf (Accessed: 10 May 2018).

Ó Tuathaigh, G. (2015) *I mBéal an Bháis: The Great Famine and Language Shift in Nineteenth-Century Ireland.* Hamden, CT: Quinnipiac University Press.

Oettingen, G., and Sevincer, A. (2018) '*Fantasy about the future as friend and foe',* in G. Oettingen, A. Sevincer and P. Gollwitzer (eds) *The psychology of thinking about the future.* London: London: The Guildford Press, pp. 127-149.

Oxford, R., and Shearin, J. (1994) 'Language learning motivation: expanding the theoretical framework', *The Modern Language Journal*, 78(1), pp. 12-28. https://doi.org/10.2307/329249

Oyserman, D. (2015) 'Identity-based Motivation', in Scott, R., and Kosslyn, S., (eds) *Emerging Trends in the Social and Behavioural Sciences.* Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons. Published Online. Available at: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781118900772.etrds0171 (Accessed: 10 January 2022).

Oyserman, D. (2019) 'The Essentialized Self: Implications for Motivation and Self-Regulation', *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 29(2), pp. 363-343. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcpy.1093

Oyserman, D., Bybee, D., Terry, K., and Hart-Johnson, T. (2004) 'Possible selves as roadmaps', *Journal of Research in Personality*, 38, pp. 130-149. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0092-6566(03)00057-6

Oyserman, D., Destin, M., and Novin, S. (2015) 'The Context-Sensitive Future Self: Possible Selves Motivate in Context, Not Otherwise', *Self and Identity*, 14(2), pp. 173-188. https://doi.org/10.1080/15298868.2014.965733

Papi, M. (2010) 'The L2 motivational self system, L2 anxiety and motivated behaviour: A structural equation modelling approach', *System*, 38(3), pp. 467-479. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2010.06.011

Papi, M., Bondarenko, A., Mansouri, S., Feng, L., and Jiang, C. (2019) 'Rethinking L2 Motivation Research: The 2x2 Model of L2 Self-Guides', *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 41(2), pp. 337-361. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263118000153

Papi, M., and Khajavy, H. (2021) ‘Motivational Mechanisms Underlying Second Language Achievement: A Regulatory Focus Perspective’, *Language Learning*, 71(2), pp. 537-572. https://doi.org/10.1111/lang.12443

Pawlak, M. (2012) ‘The dynamic nature of motivation in language learning: A classroom perspective’, *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 2(2), pp. 249-278. https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2012.2.2.7

Paulhus, D., and Vazire, S. (2007) ‘The Self-Report Method’, in R. Robins, R. Fraley and R. Krueger (eds) *Handbook of Research Methods in Personality Psychology.* New York: Guildford, pp. 224-239.

Pavlenko, A. (2002) ‘Poststructuralist Approaches to the Study of Social Factors in Second Language Learning and Use’, in V. Cook (ed) *Portraits of the L2 User*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, pp. 275-303.

Pavlenko, A. (2003) ‘“I never Knew I was a Bilingual”: Reimaging Teacher Identities in TESOL’, *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 2(4), pp. 251-268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327701JLIE0204_2

Pavlenko, A. (2006) *Bilingual Minds: Emotional Experiences, Expression and Representation.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Pavlenko, A. (2007) ‘Autobiographic Narratives as Data in Applied Linguistics’, *Applied Linguistics*, 28(2), pp. 163-188. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amm008

Pavlenko, A., and Norton, B. (2007) ‘Imagined communities, Identity and English Language Learning’, in C. Cummins and C. Davison (eds) *International Handbook of English Language Teaching.* Boston: Springer, pp. 669-680.

Pawluk, M. (2014) ‘The dynamic nature of motivation in language learning: A classroom perspective’, *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 2(2), pp. 249-278. https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2012.2.2.7

Pek, J., Wong, O., and Wong, A. (2018) ‘How to Address Non-normality: A Taxonomy of Approaches, Reviewed, and Illustrated’, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9. Available at: https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02104/full (Accessed 7th July 2022).

Pemberton, L., Fallahkhair, S., and Masthoff, J. (2005) ‘Learner Centred Development of a Mobile and iTV Language Learning Support System’, *Educational Technology and Society*, 8(4), pp. 52-63.

Petit, K. (2016) ‘Successful Learners of Irish as an L2: Motivation, Identity and Linguistic Mudes’, *Studia Celtica Posnaniensia*, 1(1), pp. 39-56. https://doi.org/10.1515/scp-2016-0003

Pettigrew, A. (1990) ‘Longitudinal field research on change: Theory and practice’, *Organization Science*, 1, pp. 267-292.

Plano Clark, V. (2019) ‘Meaningful integration within mixed methods studies: Identifying why, what, when, and how’, *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 57, pp. 106-111. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2019.01.007

Plonsky, L., and Oswald, F. (2014) ‘How Big is “Big”? Interpreting Effect Sizes in L2 Research’, *Language Learning*, 64(4), pp. 878-912. https://doi.org/10.1111/lang.12079

Pohlmann, J. (2004) ‘Use and Interpretation of Factor Analysis in The Journal of Educational Research: 1992-2002’, *The Journal of Educational Research* 98(1), pp. 14-23. https://doi.org/10.3200/JOER.98.1.14-23

Polinsky, M., and Kagan, O. (2007) 'Heritage languages: In 'the wild' and in the classroom', *Languages and Linguistics Compass*, 1(5), pp. 368-395. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-818x.2007.00022.x

Prior, M. (2018) 'Accomplishing "rapport" in qualitative research interviews: Empathic moments in interaction', *Applied Linguistics Review*, 9(4), pp. 487-511. https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2017-0029

Pujolar, J., and Puigdevall, M. (2015) 'Linguistic mudes: how to become a new speaker in Catalonia', *International Journal on the Sociology of Language*, 231, pp. 167-187. https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2014-0037

Quinn Patton, M. (2015) *Qualitative researcher and evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice.* London: SAGE. 4th edition.

Rabin, E., Henderikx, M., Kalman, Y., and Kalz, M. (2020) 'What are the barriers to learners' satisfaction in MOOCs and what predicts them? The role of age, intention, self-regulation, self-efficacy and motivation', *The Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 36(3), pp. 119-131. https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.5919

Rains, S. (2003) *Diasporic Ethnicity: Irish-American Performativity of Irishness in Popular Culture, 1945-2000.* PhD Thesis. Available at: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/11311669.pdf (Accessed: 12 April 2020).

Ramage, K. (1990) 'Motivational Factors and Persistence in Foreign Language Study', *Language Learning*, 40, pp. 189-219. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1990.tb01333.x

Ramírez Gómez, D. (2016) 'Critical geragogy and foreign language learning: An exploratory application', *Educational Gerontology*, 42(2), pp. 136-143. https://doi.org/10.1080/03601277.2015.1083388

Reinders, H., and Benson, P. (2017) 'Research Agenda: Language learning beyond the classroom', *Language Teaching*, 50(4), pp. 561-578. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444817000192

Reparaz, C., Aznárez-Sanado, M., and Mendoza, G. (2020) 'Self-regulation of learning and MOOC retention', *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 111, pp. 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106423

Richards, K. (2006) ''Being the teacher': identity and classroom conversation', *Applied Linguistics,* 27(1), pp. 51-77. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/ami041

Rizvi, S., Rienties, B., Rogaten, J., and Kizilcec, R. (2022) 'Beyond one-size-fits-all in MOOCs: Variation in learning design and persisrence of learners in different cultural and socioeconomic contexts', *Computers in Human Behavior*, 126. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.106973

Romaine, S. (2006) 'Planning for the survival of linguistic diversity', *Language Policy*, 5, pp. 443-475. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-006-9034-3

Romaine, S. (2008) 'Irish in the global context', in C. Nic Pháidín and S. Ó Cearnaigh (eds) *A New View of the Irish language.* Baile Átha Cliath: Cois Life, pp. 11-25.

Rosenberg, A. (2010) 'Virtual World Research Ethics and the Private/Public Distinction', *International Journal of Internet Research Ethics*, 3, pp. 23-37.

Rothman, K. (1990) 'No Adjustments Are Needed for Multiple Comparisons', *Epidemiology*, 1(1), pp. 43-46.

RTÉ. (2020) *Irish fastest growing language on Duolingo app*. Available at: https://www.rte.ie/news/ireland/2020/1223/1186111-duolingo-irish/ (Accessed: 8 March 2022).

Ruipérez-Valiente, J., Martin, S., Reich, J., and Castro, M. (2020) 'The UnMOOCing Process: Extending the Impact of MOOC Educational Resources as OERs', *Sustainability*, 12, Article. 7346. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12187346

Rusticus, S., and Lovato, C. (2014) 'Impact of Sample Size and Variability on the Power and Type I Error Rates of Equivalence Tests: A Simulation Study', *Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation*, 19(11). https://doi.org/10.7275/4s9m-4e81

Ryan, S. (2009) 'Self and Identity in L2 Motivation in Japan: the Ideal L2 Self and Japanese Learners of English', in Z. Dörnyei and E. Ushioda (eds) *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 120-143.

Ryan, S. (2019) 'Motivation and Individual Differences', in M. Lamb, K. Csizér, A. Henry, and S. Ryan (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning.* London: Springer International Publishing, pp. 163-182.

Ryan, S., and Dörnyei, Z. (2013) 'The long-term evolution of language motivation and the L2 Self', in *Fremdsprachen in der Perspektive lebenslangen Lernens*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, pp. 89-100.

Ryan, S., and Irie, K. (2014) 'Imagined and Possible Selves: Stories We Tell Ourselves About Ourselves', in S. Mercer and M. Williams (eds) *Multiple Perspectives on the Self in SLA.* Bristol: Multilingualism Matters, pp. 109-126.

Saffran, J., Senghas, A., and Trueswell, J. (2001) 'The acquisition of language by children', *PNAS*, 98, pp. 12874-12875. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.231498898

Sallam, M., Martín-Montje, E., and Li, Y. (2020) 'Research trends in language MOOC studies: a systematic review of the published literature (2012-2018)', *Computer Assisted Language Learning,* 35(4), pp. 764-791. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2020.1744668

Sandeen, C. (2013) 'Integrating MOOCs into Traditional Higher Education: The Emerging "MOOC 3.0" Era', *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 45(6), pp. 34-49. https://doi.org/10.1080/00091383.2013.842103

Sandelowski, M. (1993) 'Theory unmasked: the uses and guises of theory in qualitative research', *Research in Nursing & Health*, 16, pp. 213-218. https://doi.org/10.1002/nur.4770160308

Schoonenboom, J., and Burke-Johnson, R. (2017) 'How to Construct a Mixed Methods Research Design', *Kolner Zeitschrift fur Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, 69(2), pp. 107-131. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11577-017-0454-1

Schugurensky, D., and Myers, J. (2010) 'A framework to explore lifelong learning: The case of the civic education of civics teachers', *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 22(4), pp. 325-352. https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370304835

Schumann, J. (1986) 'Research on the acculturation model for second language acquisition', *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 7(5), pp. 379-392. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.1986.9994254

Schunk, D., and Zimmerman, B. (2012) *Motivation and Self-Regulated Learning: Theory, Research and Application.* New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Scott, L., and O'Hara, M. (1993) 'Self-discrepancies in clinically anxious and depressed university students', *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 102(2), pp. 282-287. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-843X.102.2.282

Scott, S. (2018) 'A Sociology of Nothing: Understanding the Unmarked', *Sociology*, 52(1), pp. 3-19. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038517690681

Seidman, I. (2006) *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences.* New York: Teachers College Press. 3rd Edition.

Selwyn, N. (2014a) 'Data entry: towards the critical study of digital data and education', *Learning, Media and Technology*, 40(1), pp. 64-82. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2014.921628

Selwyn, N. (2014b) '"So what?"…a question that every journal article needs to answer', *Learning, Media and Technology*, 39(1), pp. 1-5. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2013.848454

Seoighe, S. (2018) *Is libhse an chathair – Pop-Up Gaeltacht agus Nuachainteoirí na Gaeilge.* COMHARTaighde, Eagrán 4. Available at: https://comhartaighde.ie/eagrain/4/seoighe/ (Accessed: 5 May 2020).

Serafini, E. (2017) 'Exploring the Dynamic Long-Term Interaction Between Cognitive and Psychosocial Resources in Adult Second Language Development at Varying Proficiency', *The Modern Language Journal*, 101(2), pp. 369-390. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12400

Shah, D. (2017) 'MOOC Trends in 2017: Increased Flexibility and Convenience', *Classcentral.com*. Available at: https://www.classcentral.com/report/mooc-trends-increased-flexibility-and-convenience/ (Accessed: 4 January 2021).

Sheeran, P., and Webb, T. (2016) 'The Intention-Behavior Gap', *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 10(9), pp. 503-518. https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12265

Sheldon, K., and Elliott, A. (1999) 'Goal striving, need satisfaction, and longitudinal well-being. The self-concordance model', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 76(3), pp. 482-497. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.76.3.482

Sheldon, K., and Krieger, L. (2014) 'Walking the talk: Value importance, value enactment, and well-being', *Motivation and Emotion*, 38(5), pp. 609-619. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-014-9424-3

Shermer, M. (2014) 'How the Survivor Bias Distorts Reality', *Scientific American*. Available at: https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-the-survivor-bias-distorts-reality/ (Accessed: 15 January 2021).

Shoaib, A., and Dörnyei, Z. (2005) 'Affect in lifelong learning: exploring L2 motivation as a dynamic process', in P. Benson and D. Nunan (eds) *Learners' Stories: Difference and diversity in language learning.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 22-41.

Şimşek, E., and Dörnyei, Z. (2017) 'Anxiety and L2 self-images. The 'anxious self'' in C. Gkonou, M. Daubney and J. Dewaele (eds), *New insights into language anxiety: Theory, research and educational implications.* Bristol: Multilingualism Matters, pp. 51-68.

Singleton, D., and Záborská, D. (2020) 'Adults learning additional languages in their later years', *Journal of Multilingual Theories and Practices*, 1(1), pp. 112-124. https://doi.org/10.1558/jmtp.15361

Skehan, P. (1991) ‘Individual differences in second language learning’, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 13, pp. 275-298. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263100009979

Sokolik, M. (2014) ‘What constitutes an effective language MOOC?’ in E. Martin-Montje and E. Bárcena (eds) *Language MOOCs: Providing learning, transcending boundaries.* Warsaw/Berlin: DeGruyter Open, pp. 16-32.

Stockwell, G. (2013) ‘Technology and Motivation in English-language Teaching and learning’, in E. Ushioda (ed) *International Perspectives on Motivation: Language Learning and Professional Challenges.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 156-175.

Storr, W. (2017) *Selfie: How the West Became Self-Obsessed.* London: Pan MacMillan.

Sugita McEown, M., Noels, K., and Chaffee, K. (2014) ‘At the interface of the socioeducational model, self-determination theory and the L2 motivational self system models’, in K. Csizér and M. Magid (eds) *The Impact of Self-Concept on Language Learning.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 19-50.

Sugita McEown, M., and Oga-Baldwin, W.L. (2019) ‘Self-determination for all language learners: New applications in formal language education’, *System*, 86, No. 102124. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.102124

Tabachnick, B., and Fidell, L. (1996) *Using Multivariate Statistics.* New York: Harper Collins. 3rd Edition.

Taguchi, T., Magid, M., and Papi, M. (2009) ‘The L2 motivational self system among Japanese, Chinese and Iranian learners of English: a comparative study’, in Z. Dörnyei and E. Ushioda (eds) *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. PP. 66-97.

Takahashi, C., and Im, S. (2020) ‘Comparing self-determination theory and the L2 motivational self system and their relationships to L2 proficiency’, *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 10(4), pp. 673-696. https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2020.10.4.2

Tasker, I. (2017) ‘Temporal patterns of long-term engagement with learning an additional language’, *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 11(3), pp. 241-252. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2017.1317259

Taylor, C. (1989) *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Taylor, F. (2013) *Self and identity in adolescent foreign language learning*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Teddlie, C., and Tashakkori, A. (2009) *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative approaches in the Social and Behavioural Sciences.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Teimouri, Y. (2017) ‘L2 Selves, Emotions and Motivated Behaviour’, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 39(4), pp. 681-709. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263116000243

Teimouri, Y., Goetze, J., and Plonksy, L. (2019) ‘Second Language Anxiety and Achievement: A Meta-Analysis’, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 41(2), pp. 363-387. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263118000311

Teske, K. (2017) ‘Learning Technology Review: Duolingo’, *CALICO Journal*, 34(3), pp. 393-401. https://doi.org/10.1558/cj.32509

Thagard, P. (2014) ‘The self as a system of multilevel interacting mechanisms’, *Philosophical Psychology*, 27(2), pp. 145-163. https://doi.org/10.1080/09515089.2012.725715

Theodore, P., and Basow, S. (2000) ‘Heterosexual masculinity and homophobia: a reaction to the self?’*, Journal of Homosexuality,* 40(2), pp. 31-48. https://doi.org/10.1300/J082v40n02_03

Thompson, A. (2017) ‘Don’t tell me what to do! The anti-ought-to self and language learning motivation’*, System*, 67, pp. 38-49. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2017.04.004

Thompson, C., Kim, R., Aloe, A., and Becker, B. (2017) ‘Extracting the Variance Inflation Factor and Other Multicollinearity Diagnostics from Typical Regression Results’*, Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 39(2), pp. 81-90. https://doi.org/10.1080/01973533.2016.1277529

Thorne, S., Sauro, S., and Smith, S. (2015) ‘Technologies, Identities and Expressive Activities’, *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 35, pp. 215-233. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190514000257

Thorsen, C., Henry, A., and Cliffordson, C. (2020) ‘The case of the missing person? The current L2 self and the L2 Motivational Self System’, *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 23(5), pp. 584-600. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2017.1388356

Tseng, W., Cheng, H., and Gao, X. (2020) ‘Validating a Motivational Self-Guide Scale for Language Learners’, *Sustainability*, 12(16), pp. 1-20. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12166468

Ueki, M., and Takeuchi, O. (2013) ‘Forming a clearer image of the ideal L2 self: the L2 Motivational Self System and learner autonomy in a Japanese EFL context’, *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching,* 7(3), pp. 238-252. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2013.836205

UNESCO. (2010) *Atlas of Endangered Languages.* Available at: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000187026 (Accessed: 9 February 2019).

Uprichard, E., and Dawney, L. (2016) ‘Data Diffraction: Challenging Data Integration in Mixed Methods Research’, *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 13(1), pp. 19-32. https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689816674650

Ushioda, E. (1994) ‘L2 motivation as a qualitative construct’, *TEANGA*, 14. PP 76-84.

Ushioda, E. (2001) ‘Language learning at university: Exploring the role of motivational thinking’, in Z. Dörnyei and R. Schmidt (eds) *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition.* Hawai’i: University of Hawai’i Press, pp. 93-125.

Ushioda, E. (2006) ‘Language Motivation in a Reconfigured Europe: Access, Identity, Autonomy’, *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 27(2), pp. 148-161. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434630608668545

Ushioda, E. (2008) ‘Motivation and good language learners’, in C. Griffiths (ed), *Lessons from Good Language Learners.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 19-34.

Ushioda, E. (2009) ‘A Person-in-Context Relational View of Emergent Motivation, Self and Identity’, In Z. Dörnyei and E. Ushioda (eds), *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 215-228.

Ushioda, E. (2011a) ‘Why autonomy? Insights from motivation theory and research’, *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 5(2), pp. 221-232. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2011.577536

Ushioda, E. (2011b) ‘Motivating learners to speak as themselves’, in G. Murray, X. Gao and T. Lamb (eds) *Identity, Motivation and Autonomy in Language Learning.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 11-24.

Ushioda, E. (2011c) ‘Language learning motivation, self and identity: current theoretical perspectives’, *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 24(3), pp. 199-210. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2010.538701

Ushioda, E. (2012) ‘Motivation: L2 learning as a special case?’, in S. Mercer, S. Ryan and M. Williams (eds) *Psychology for Language Learning: Insights from Research, Theory and Practice.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 58-73.

Ushioda, E. (2013a) ‘Motivational Perspectives on the Self in SLA: A Developmental View’, in S. Mercer and M. Williams (eds) *Multiple Perspectives on the Self in SLA.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 127-142.

Ushioda, E. (2013b) ‘Motivation matters in mobile language learning: A brief commentary’, *Language Technology and Learning*, 17(3), pp. 1-5.

Ushioda, E. (2015) ‘Context and complex dynamic systems’, in Z. Dörnyei, P. MacIntyre and A. Henry (eds) *Motivational Dynamics in Language Learning.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 47-54.

Ushioda, E. (2016) ‘Language learning motivation through a small lens: a research agenda’, *Language Teaching*, 49(4), pp. 564-577. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444816000173

Ushioda, E. (2017) ‘The Impact of Global English on Motivation to Learn Other Languages: Towards an Ideal Multilingual Self’, *The Modern Language Journal*, 101(3), pp. 469-482. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12413

Ushioda, E. (2019a) ‘Researching L2 Motivation: Re-evaluating the role of Qualitative Inquiry, or the ‘Wine and Conversation’ approach’, in A. Al-Hoorie and P. MacIntyre (eds) *Contemporary Language Motivation Theory: Sixty Years Since Gardner and Lambert (1959).* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 194-211.

Ushioda, E. (2019b) ‘Researching L2 Motivation: Past, Present and Future’, in M. Lamb, K. Csizér, A. Henry and S. Ryan (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 661-682.

Ushioda, E. (2022) ‘Motivation in the Language Classroom: A Discourse of “Social Control”?’, in A. Al-Hoorie and F. Szabó (eds) *Researching Language Learning Motivation: A Concise Guide.* London: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 7-16.

Vaughan, J. (2016) ‘Landscapes of the Irish language: Discursive Constructions of Authenticity in the Irish Diaspora’, *Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies*, 16(1), pp. 56-76. https://doi.org/10.21427/D7JB0M

Vandellen, M., and Hoyle, R. (2008) ‘Possible selves as Behavioural Standards in Self-Regulation’, *Self and Identity*, 7(3), pp. 295-304. https://doi.org/10.1080/15298860701641108

Van Deusen-Scholl, N. (2003) ‘Towards a definition of Heritage Language: Sociopolitical and Pedagogical considerations’, *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, 2(3), pp. 211-230. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327701JLIE0203_4

Valdés, G. (2005) ‘Bilingualism, Heritage Language Learners, and SLA Research: Opportunities Lost or Seized?’, *The Modern Language Journal*, 89(3), pp. 410-426. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2005.00314.x

Vallerand, R., Pelletier, L., Blais, M., Brière, N., Senécal, C., and Valliéres, E. (1992) 'The Academic Motivation Scale: A Measure of Intrinsic, Extrinsic and Amotivation in Education', *Education and Psychological Measurement*, 52, pp. 1003-1017. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164492052004025

Van Lier, L. (2007) 'Action-based teaching, autonomy and identity', *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1(1), pp. 46-65. https://doi.org/10.2167/illt42.0

Van Lier, L. (2010) 'The ecology of language learning: Practice to theory, theory to practice', Procedia Social and Behavioural Sciences, 3, pp. 2-6. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.07.005

Veletsianos, G., Reich, J., and Pasquini, L. (2016) 'The Life Between Big Data Log Events: Learners' Strategies to Overcome Challenges in MOOCs', *AERA Open*, 2(3), pp. 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858416657002

Veresov, N., and Mok, N. (2018) 'Understanding development through the perezhivanie of learning', in Lantolf, J., Poehner, M., and Swain, M (eds) *The Routledge handbook of sociocultural theory and second language development*. New York: Routledge, pp. 89-101.

Vignoles V., Owe E., Becker, M., Smith P., Easterbrook M., Brown R., González R., Didier, N., Carrasco, D., Cadena, M., Lay, S., Schwartz, S., Des Rosiers, S., Villamar J., Gavreliuc, A., Zinkeng, M., Kreuzbauer, R., Baguma, P., Martin, M., Tatarko, A., Herman, G., de Sauvage, I., Courtois, M., Garðarsdóttir, R., Harb, C., Schweiger, Gallo I., Prieto Gil, P., Lorente Clemares, R., Campara, G., Nizharadze, G., Macapagal, M., Jalal, B., Bourguignon, D., Zhang J., Lv, S., Chybicka, A., Yuki, M., Zhang, X., Espinosa, A., Valk, A., Abuhamdeh, S., Amponsah, B., Özgen, E., Güner, E., Yamakoğlu, N., Chobthamkit, P., Pyszczynski, T., Kesebir, P., Vargas Trujillo, E., Balanta, P., Cendales Ayala, B., Koller, S., Jaafar, J., Gausel, N., Fischer, R., Milfont, T., Kusdil, E., Çağlar, S., Aldhafri, S., Ferreira, M., Mekonnen, K., Wang, Q., Fülöp, M., Torres, A., Camino, L., Lemos, F., Fritsche, I., Möller, B., Regalia, C., Manzi, C., Brambilla, M., Bond, M. (2016) 'Beyond the 'East-West' Dichotomy: Global Variation in Cultural Models of Selfhood', *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 145(8), pp. 966-1000. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/xge0000175

Walker, G. (2021) 'There are reasons why some Protestants fear Irish language (the phrase Tiocfaidh ar La being one) but the Irish language is neither republican nor unionist', *Belfast Telegraph*. Available at: https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/columnists/gail-walker/there-are-reasons-why-some-protestants-fear-irish-language-the-phrase-tiocfaidh-ar-la-being-one-but-the-irish-language-is-neither-republican-nor-unionist-40706210.html (Accessed: 10 January, 2021).

Walsh, J. (2017) 'The role of emotions and positionality in the trajectories of 'new speakers' of Irish', *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 23(1), pp. 221-235. https://doi.org/10.1177/1367006917720545

Walsh, J. (2019) 'National identity and belonging among gay 'new speakers' of Irish'', *Journal of Language and Sexuality*, 8(1), pp. 53-81. https://doi.org/10.1075/jls.18008.wal

Walsh, J (2020) 'The Irish Language and contemporary Irish identity', in R. Hickey and C. Amador-Moreno (eds) *Irish Identities: Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. Berlin: DeGruyter, pp. 22-44.

Walsh, J., and Day, R. (2021) ''New speakers' on Irish language community radio: new understandings of linguistic variation on Raidió na Life', *Journal of Multilingual and*

Multicultural Development, [published online]. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2021.1955893

Walsh, J., and Ní Dhúda, L. (2015) ''New speakers' of Irish in the United States: practices and motivations', *Applied Linguistics Review*, 6(2), pp. 173-193. https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2015-0009

Walsh, J., and O'Rourke, B. (2014) 'Becoming a new speaker of Irish: linguistic mudes throughout the lifecycle', *Digithum*, 16, pp. 67-74. https://doi.org/10.7238/d.v0i16.2186

Walsh, J., and O'Rourke, B. (2017) 'Census shows we must rethink our approach to Irish and the Gaeltacht', *The Irish Times*. Available at: https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/census-shows-we-must-rethink-our-approach-to-irish-and-the-gaeltacht-1.3040392 (Accessed: 12 March 2018).

Waninge, F., De Bot, K., and Dörnyei, Z. (2014) 'Motivational Dynamics in Language Learning: Change, Stability and Context', *The Modern Language Journal*, 98(3), pp. 704-723. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12118

Warren, S. (2012) 'The Making of Irish-Speaking Ireland: The Cultural Politics of Belonging, Diversity and Power', *Ethnicities*, 12(3), pp. 317-334. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796811419597

Watson, I. (2002) 'Irish Language Broadcasting: History, Ideology and Identity', *Media, Culture and Society,* 24(6), pp. 739-757. https://doi.org/10.1177/016344370202400601

Wen, Z., Biedroń, A., and Skehan, P. (2017) 'Foreign language aptitude theory: Yesterday, today and tomorrow', *Language Teaching*, 50(1), pp. 1-31. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444816000276

Wenden, C. (1981) 'The Processes of Self Directed Learning: A Study of Adult Language Learners', *The Annual Convention of Teachers of English to speakers of Other Languages.* Available at: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED221065.pdf (Accessed: 10 April 2020).

Wikipedia. (No date) 'Law of the instrument'. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_of_the_instrument (Accessed: 10 August 2022).

Wiley, N. (1994) 'History of the Self: From Primates to Present', *Sociological Perspectives*, 34(4), pp. 527-545. https://doi.org/10.2307/1389278

Williams, M. (2014) 'Is technology a silver bullet for language teaching and learning?*', The* Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2014/may/12/technology-language-teaching-learning-pedagogy (Accessed: 5 May 2020).

Williams, B., Onsman, A., and Brown, T. (2010) 'Exploratory factor analysis: A five-step guide for novices', *eJournal of Emergency Primary Care*, 8(3), pp. 1-13. https://doi.org/10.33151/ajp.8.3.93

Wright, M., & McGrory, O. (2005) 'Motivation and the adult Irish learner', *Educational Research*, 47(2), pp. 191-204. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131880500104317

Xie, Y. (2014) 'L2 Self of Beginning-Level Chinese and Nonheritage Postsecondary Learners of Chinese', *Foreign Language Annals*, 47(1), pp. 189-203. https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12074

Yashima, T. (2002) 'Willingness to Communicate in a Second Language: The Japanese EFL Context', *The Modern Language Journal*, 86(1), pp. 54-66. https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-4781.00136

Yashima, T. (2009) 'International posture and the Ideal L2 self in the Japanese EFL context', in Z. Dörnyei and E. Ushioda (eds) *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, pp. 144-163.

Yim, O., Clément, R., and MacIntyre, P. (2019) 'The Contexts of SLA Motivation; Linking Ideologies to Situational Variations', in M. Lamb, K. Czisér, A. Henry and S. Ryan (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning.* London: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 225-244.

Appendixes

Appendix A1 – Ethics Confirmation (Survey)

Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City University

Dr. Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl

Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge
National Institute of Digital Learning

Mr Conchúr Mac Lochlainn

National Institute of Digital Learning

20th June 2018

REC Reference:	**DCUREC/2018/106**
Proposal Title:	Motivational orientations of minority language learners in a massive open online course (MOOC)
Applicant(s):	Associate Professor Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl, Mr Conchúr Mac Lochlainn

Dear Colleagues,

This research proposal qualifies under our Notification Procedure, as a low risk social research project. Therefore, the DCU Research Ethics Committee approves this project.

Materials used to recruit participants should state that ethical approval for this project has been obtained from the Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee.

Should substantial modifications to the research protocol be required at a later stage, a further amendment submission should be made to the REC.

Yours sincerely,

Dónal O' Gorman

Dr Dónal O'Gorman
Chairperson
DCU Research Ethics Committee

Taighde & Nuálaíocht Tacaíocht
Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath,
Baile Átha Cliath, Éire

Research & Innovation Support
Dublin City University,
Dublin 9, Ireland

T +353 1 700 8000
F +353 1 700 8002
E research@dcu.ie

Appendix A2 – Consent form (Survey)

Name of principle investigator(s): Conchúr Mac Lochlainn (conchur.maclochlainn@dcu.ie)

Name of supervisor(s): Dr. Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl (mairead.nicgiollamhichil@dcu.ie)

Dr. Cólín Ó Floinn (colin.flynn@dcu.ie)

Department: Fiontar agus Scoil Na Gaeilge

What is this study?

This study aims to help us understand what motivates learners to learn the Irish language, and how they go about doing so. This research will improve our understanding of learners' goals and desires for learning the language, and ultimately to help us build better courses more suited to learner's needs, requests and hopes.

What we are asking of you

Participants of this survey will answer questions relating to their background, experience with languages and reasons for studying Irish. The survey should take about 10 minutes to finish. No questions will ask participants for their name or identity.

What we will use it for

Findings of this study will be used for publication purposes by the investigators named above Data will be stored on a secure, university-networked computer. Due to the anonymous nature of the data collected by this study it will not be destroyed on completion of the study, it will be kept and used as a baseline for future studies. These maintained soft copies will be stored on a secure, university-networked computer and there will be no record of the identities of respondents or ability to track the answers.

Your privacy

This survey is voluntary. You can decide to leave at any point and no responses will be recorded until a final submission. You may also withdraw after you have submitted if you so desire and your responses will be discarded and destroyed. Any hard copies will be shredded and soft copies will be deleted by the primary researcher. Please note, this information may be subject to Freedom of Information requests and Subpoena if a request is made on the university.

Results will be available upon request for any participant.

If you have any questions regarding this research, please contact one of the investigators (details above). If you have concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact The Secretary, Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee, c/o Research and Innovation Support, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel 01-7008000, e-mail rec@dcu.ie

Once again, thank you so much for your participation!

Appendix B1 – Ethics Confirmation (Interviews)

Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City University

Mr Conchúr MacLochlainn,
Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge

31st January 2019

REC Reference:	**DCUREC/2019_014**
Proposal Title:	**An investigation into the motivations and self-concepts of distance Irish language learners**
Applicant(s):	**Mr Conchúr MacLochlainn, Dr Mairead Nic Giolla Mhichil**

Dear Colleagues,

Further to expedited review, the DCU Research Ethics Committee approves this research proposal.

Materials used to recruit participants should note that ethical approval for this project has been obtained from the Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee.

Should substantial modifications to the research protocol be required at a later stage, a further amendment submission should be made to the REC.

Yours sincerely,

Dónal O Gorman

Dr Dónal O'Gorman
Chairperson
DCU Research Ethics Committee

Taighde & Nuálaíocht Tacaíocht
Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath,
Baile Átha Cliath, Éire

Research & Innovation Support
Dublin City University,
Dublin 9, Ireland

T +353 1 700 8000
F +353 1 700 8002
E research@dcu.ie
www.dcu.ie

Appendix B2 – PLS + IC (Interviews)

Plain language statement

This research and your role in it

Name of principal investigator: Conchúr Mac Lochlainn, B.A. (conchur.maclochlainn@dcu.ie)

Name of supervisors: Dr. Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl (mairead.nicgiollamhichil@dcu.ie)
Dr. Cóilín Ó Floinn (colin.flynn@dcu.ie)

Name of study – The motivations and self-concepts of distance Irish language learners.

This research is focused on understanding what motivates those who learn the Irish language, what ways they learn and what goals they have in doing so. We hope this research will help us gain a deeper understanding of the learners on the Irish language MOOC series and through this improve the experiences we provide to all learners. Your participation in an interview regarding your personal goals, experiences and thoughts can help us do so.

What we are asking of you

If you agree to participate, we will ask you firstly to provide some details regarding yourself in this short questionnaire. This will include personal questions such as where you live, your nationality, as well as two questions relating to your experiences with the Irish language and using Irish language online courses. The form will conclude with a request for your email address, so that the primary researcher can contact you regarding an interview.

If you are contacted, this is as the researcher believes your answers should be further explored in an interview setting. The researcher will then arrange an interview. As the researcher is resident in Ireland, if you are abroad it is highly likely the interview will be conducted over Skype or another internet service.

In the interview, you will be asked about the following aspects of your experiences learning Irish, including your family background, prior attempts to learn, your attitudes towards learning Irish and what goals or aims you have in so doing.

The interview will be recorded and then transcribed by the primary researcher. It is likely the interview will take approximately 30 minutes, though this may vary somewhat.

Your participation is voluntary

Participation in this process at all steps, including during an interview, is entirely voluntary and up to yourself. It is for this reason that it is important you understand the purpose and scope of this project. If you agree to participate, you will be asked prior to an interview to sign an informed consent form. If at any point you wish to withdraw this permission, you are free to do so and do not need to provide an explanation.

Your privacy is paramount

If you agree to participant, your anonymity will be protected at all steps. The personal information you include on the initial form will be stored and accessed on a secure, university-located computer. Any information linking your responses to interview data will be anonymised and only available to the primary researcher. This will be done by introducing a coding system to responses to ensure you are untraceable to anyone but the primary researcher, his supervisors and potentially an external review board.

It is important for you to note the possibility of the data collected during the study being subject to subpoena or freedom of information requests. **It is also the case that respondents should be aware the divulgence of any illicit statements oblige the researcher to report this information to the relevant authority/ies.**

In analysis, all references to names and families will be pseudonymised, and locations will likewise be unspecified/anonymised.

Data storage and protection

The data you provide with personal information (your email address) will be maintained for the course of the researcher's doctoral studies by the primary researcher, but will be destroyed following completion of the study (projected – August 2020) by the primary researcher. Interviews will be recorded (audio) and this will be maintained following the completion of the study for future academic publication. Transcripts of the conversation will also be maintained and may be used in future publication/academic research.

Legally, it is possible for the data collected during the study to be subject to subpoena or freedom of information claim. It is not envisaged that this is likely to occur.

If you have any questions regarding data storage or protection, please ensure to contact DCU's data protection officer, Mr. Martin Ward (*data.protection@dcu.ie*)

The benefits of participation

We hope that participating may prove an enriching experience, in allowing you to discuss your experiences, desires and goals in learning Irish.

Potential risks

It is not envisioned that your participation entails any risks, but safeguards have been put into place to ensure that if required you receive appropriate support. Should you feel any negative effects to your participation, please contact either the primary researcher or his supervisors.

It is also important to note once more that you may withdraw your consent at any point in this process, the right to participate, and to not participate, is entirely yours.

More information regarding the results of the research

It may be that you are interested in the research. We encourage this strongly and copies of the research will be provided to any participant upon request.

If you have any concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact The Secretary, Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee, c/o Research and Innovation Support, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel 01-7008000, e-mail rec@dcu.ie

Once again, thank you so much for your participation!

Informed consent form

1. Research study title

The motivations and self-concepts of distance Irish language learners.

Principle Investigator: Conchúr Mac Lochlainn B.A

Supervisors/Co-investigators: Dr. Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl

Dr. Cóilín Ó Floinn

Address: Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge,

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,

Dublin City University All Hallows Campus,

Dublin 9

Email - conchur.maclochlainn@dcu.ie

Mairead.nicgiollamhichil@dcu.ie

Colin.flynn@dcu.ie

2. The purpose of this research

This research is to understand what motivates those who learn the Irish language using distance methods, such as through online courses, applications and other forms of learning. Specifically, this study is aimed at understanding the motivations, self-concepts and identities learners have relating to the language, as well as what goals learners have. The findings of this research will be used to improve our online course offerings and to provide a deeper understanding to educators of the differing reasons people learn Irish.

3. Confirmation of particular requirements highlighted in the Plain Language Statement

I agree to take part in this research as an Irish language learner who uses distance methods as a part of the PhD studies of Conchúr Mac Lochlainn entitled 'The motivations and self-concepts of Irish language distance learners', conducted under the school of Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge at Dublin City University. As part of this study I will be interviewed about varying aspects of my experiences relating to the Irish language such as prior study, forms of learning I have utilised and how I view my learning of Irish.

Participant – please complete the following (Circle Yes or No for each question)

I have read the Plain Language Statement (or had it read to me) *Yes/No*

I understand the information provided *Yes/No*

I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study *Yes/No*

I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions *Yes/No*

I am aware what data will be collect about as specified in the plain language statement

Yes/No

I understand the researcher will publish his findings as a part of his Ph.D. *Yes/No*

4. Confirmation regarding the voluntary nature of the study

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You will be asked to sign this consent form prior to commencing an interview. You are entitled to withdraw your consent at any point. If you have any questions at any point, you may contact the primary researcher, his supervisors or the DCU Research Ethics Committee.

5. Confidentiality of data and data protection

Every effort will be made to secure and protect any data you generate at all points of this study. As detailed in the Plain language statement, you should be mindful of several aspects in this regard:

- As you are being recruited from a large sample of learners participating in one of FutureLearn's Irish language courses, your anonymity is less likely to be at risk, though it not possible to guarantee this with certainty.

- The possibility of the data collected during the study being subject to subpoena or freedom of information requests. **It is also the case that respondents should be aware the divulgence of any illicit statements oblige the researcher to report this information to the relevant authority/ies.**

In order to mitigate risks to participants' anonymity, the principal investigator will apply pseudonyms to each participant that will apply to every piece of data collected at each point of the process. Data will only be shared without such protection with the investigators supervisors and potentially an external review board for the researcher's doctoral confirmation.

The data generated in the study shall be securely stored using IT services provided by Dublin City University. Observational notes will be stored on the same machine also. Interview transcripts will be maintained for potential future academic publication (estimated completion of doctoral studies is August 2020).

6. Signature:

I have read and understood the information in this form. My questions and concerns have been answered by the researchers, and I have a copy of this consent form. Therefore, I consent to take part in this research project

Participants Signature: ______________________________

Name in Block Capitals: ______________________________

Witness: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

Appendix C1 – Item listings (S3)

Future L2 Selves Scales (7pt scale)

Item text	Scale
I can imagine a day when I will use my Irish a lot.	Ideal Own
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish fluently.	Ideal Own
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish to people around me.	Ideal Own
I often imagine myself becoming an Irish speaker.	Ideal Own
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a personal responsibility to myself.	Ought-to Own
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will be disappointed in myself.	Ought-to Own
If I don't learn Irish, I will fail to fulfil an obligation to myself.	Ought-to Own
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a sense of duty I feel within myself.	Ought-to Own
My family will be proud of me if one day I learn to speak Irish fluently.	Ideal Other
Those around me will be happy if I learn Irish.	Ideal Other
My friends will be proud of me if one day I learn Irish fluently.	Ideal Other
The people who are important to me will be happy if one day I learn to speak Irish.	Ideal Other
My friends would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.	Ought-to Other
If I don't learn Irish, others will be disappointed.	Ought-to Other
My family would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.	Ought-to Other
Those around me will be disappointed if I never learn Irish.	Ought-to Other

L2 Criterion – Learning Effort (7pt scale)

I constantly think about my Irish learning activities.	L2 learning effort
I work hard at studying Irish.	L2 learning effort
Studying Irish is very important to me these days.	L2 learning effort
I put a lot of effort into studying Irish.	L2 learning effort
I spend a lot of time studying Irish.	L2 learning effort

Have you ever encountered Irish before?	Definitely not/Definitely, yes (5pt)
Have you ever studied Irish before?	Yes, formally/Yes, informally/Yes, both/No/Other
If you have studied Irish formally, to what level have you studied?	Primary-school/Secondary-School/ College/Post-college/Other
If you selected 'Other' to the above questions, please specify here:	Open-ended
Are you of Irish Heritage?	Yes/No/I don't know
If you are of Irish heritage, but are not Irish-born/raised, what is your most recent familial link with Ireland?	Parent/Grandparent/Great-Grandparent/More distant than Great-grandparent
How would describe your current level of Irish? 'I can speak...:	No Irish/A few words/A few simple sentences/Parts of conversations/Most conversations/Native speaker ability

Current L2 Self-Concept, Integrative Orientation, and L2 Speaker Self-Concept (7pt scale)

I see myself as someone who is good at speaking Irish at present.	Current L2 Self
I feel comfortable using Irish in different contexts at present.	Current L2 Self
Communicating in Irish is not a problem for me.	Current L2 Self
Being someone who can speak/use Irish is part of the person I am now.	Current L2 Self
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to experience Irish culture more deeply.	Integrative Orientation

Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to take part in Irish cultural activities.	Integrative Orientation
I want to learn Irish because then I will feel more comfortable around people who speak Irish.	Integrative Orientation
I want to become similar to the people who speak Irish.	Integrative Orientation
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to understand Irish cultural works (such as books, music, and television).	Integrative Orientation
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to speak to different people.	Integrative Orientation
I believe I can become an Irish speaker.	L2 Speaker Self-Concept
I want to become an Irish speaker.	L2 Speaker Self-Concept
Becoming an Irish speaker is important to me.	L2 Speaker Self-Concept
I will work hard at becoming an Irish speaker.	L2 Speaker Self-Concept

L2 Use variables (7pt scale)

I seek out opportunities to use my Irish in face-to-face situations.	Current F2F L2 Use
I try to use my Irish in face-to-face situations.	Current F2F L2 Use
I attend face-to-face situations where I can speak the language.	Current F2F L2 Use
I want to use Irish in face-to-face situations.	Current F2F L2 Use
I frequently write text written in Irish online.	Current Online Use
I visit different websites on which I can use my Irish online.	Current Online Use
I seek out opportunities to interact with other Irish learners online.	Current Online Use
I make use of a lot of online resources for learning Irish.	Current Online Use

I am afraid of speaking Irish in face-to-face situations.	L2 Anxiety
I am worried about making a mistake if I practice Irish with someone online.	L2 Anxiety
I am worried about making a mistake if I speak in Irish to someone face to face.	L2 Anxiety
I am nervous about practicing my Irish with other learners online.	L2 Anxiety
I only write text in Irish online if I am sure it has no mistakes.	L2 Anxiety

Ideally, what standard of proficiency would you like to achieve in Irish? I would like to listen/read/write/speak	A few words/A few simple sentences/Parts of conversations/Most conversations/Become like a native speaker
For you, how difficult do you believe learning Irish is?	7pt scale

Background and criterion variables

Question text	**Options**
What is your nationality?	List selection
In what country do you currently live?	List selection
In what age group are you?	Various categories (from 18-24 to 85+)
What is your gender?	Male/Female/Other/Prefer not to say
On which course did you answer this survey?	Irish 101/Irish 102/Irish 103
Were the questions on this survey clear?	Yes, very/Not at all (5pt)
Were any questions unclear or problematic?	Open-ended

Appendix C2 – Invitation (on FL) (S3)

Can you help us?

Dublin City University (DCU) is investigating the motivations and experiences of those who are learning the Irish language online. This research will inform the design of our future Irish language courses. This is an optional study that you can take part in. Findings will be published as part of academic and doctoral research by the course educators. The use of survey data adheres to Dublin City University's stringent ethical research practices, and the privacy of respondents will be respected and protected according to DCU's Data Protection Policy. Institutional ethical approval was renewed: 15/12/20

Link – Take part in the study

This study is being undertaken independently by Dublin City University to enhance the learner experience. Your responses will not be linked to your FutureLearn identity or your course activity. We will request some information on your age, nationality, and gender. Your participation in the research will have no effect on your course progress, marks, or FutureLearn profile, and FutureLearn does not take responsibility for the contents or the consequences of your participation in the study.

Appendix C3 – Item listings (S2)

Question text	Options
What is your nationality?	List selection
In what country do you currently live?	List selection
What is your age?	Various categories (Under 18-85+)
What is your gender?	Male/Female/Other/Prefer not to say

L2 Selves (7pt scale)

Item text	Scale
I can imagine a day where I use my Irish a lot	Ideal Own
I can imagine a day when I speak Irish fluently	Ideal Own
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish to people around me	Ideal Own
I imagine myself becoming an Irish speaker a lot	Ideal Own
If I don’t learn Irish, I feel it will have a negative impact on my future	Ought-to Own
If I don’t become an Irish speaker, I will be disappointed	Ought-to Own
If I don’t learn Irish, I will feel a sense of shame	Ought-to Own
If I don’t learn Irish, I will fail to fulfil an obligation to myself	Ought-to Own
My family will be proud of me if one day I learn to speak Irish fluently	Ideal Other
Those around me will be happy if I learn Irish	Ideal Other
My friends will be proud of me if one day I learn Irish fluently	Ideal Other
The people who are important to me hope that one day I will learn Irish	Ideal Other
My friends would be disappointed if I never learned Irish	Ought-to Other

If I don't learn Irish, others will be disappointed	Ought-to Other
My family would be disappointed if I never learned Irish	Ought-to Other
Those around me want me to learn Irish	Ought-to Other

I constantly think about my Irish learning activities.	L2 learning effort
I work hard at studying Irish.	L2 learning effort
Studying Irish is very important to me these days.	L2 learning effort
I put a lot of effort into studying Irish.	L2 learning effort
I spent a lot of time studying Irish.	L2 learning effort

Have you ever encountered Irish before?	Definitely not/Definitely, yes (5pt)
Have you ever studied Irish before?	Yes, formally/Yes, informally/Yes, both/No/Not sure
If you have studied Irish formally, to what level?	Primary-school/Secondary-School/Some College/College Degree/Other
If you ticked 'other' to the above please specify here	Open-ended
Have you previously taken any of Fáilte ar Líne's courses on the FutureLearn platform? (tick all that apply)	List options
If you have learned on any of the other Fáilte ar Líne courses, can you describe what impact/s this has had on your motivation to learn Irish, if any?	Open-ended
Are you of Irish Heritage?	Yes/No/I am Irish/I don't know
If so, do you know of any members of your family who spoke or speaks Irish?	Yes/No/I don't know
If yes, can you elaborate on this person/these people and their relationship with you?	Open-ended
How would you describe your current level of Irish? I can speak:	No Irish/A few words/A few simple sentences/Parts of conversations/Most conversations/Native speaker ability

Current L2 Self-Concept, Integrative Orientation, and L2 Speaker Self-Concept (7pt scale)

I see myself as someone who is good at speaking Irish at present	Current L2 Self
I feel comfortable using Irish in different contexts at present	Current L2 Self
Communicating in Irish is not a problem for me	Current L2 Self
Being someone who can speak/use Irish is part of the person I am now	Current L2 Self
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to experience Irish culture more deeply	Integrative Orientation
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to take part in Irish cultural activities	Integrative Orientation
I want to learn Irish because then I will feel more comfortable around people who speak Irish	Integrative Orientation
I want to become like an Irish speaker	Integrative Orientation
I believe I can become an Irish speaker	L2 Speaker Self-Concept
I want to become an Irish speaker	L2 Speaker Self-Concept
Becoming an Irish speaker is important to me	L2 Speaker Self-Concept
I will work hard at becoming an Irish speaker	L2 Speaker Self-Concept

L2 Use variables (7pt scale)

I need to use my Irish in face-to-face situations to learn the language properly	Eager F2F L2 Use
I try to use my Irish in face-to-face situations	Eager F2F L2 Use
I attend face-to-face situations where I can speak the language	Eager F2F L2 Use
I want to use Irish in face-to-face situations	Eager F2F L2 Use
I frequently post comments on the course written in Irish	Eager Online Use

I visit different websites on which I can use my Irish online	Eager Online Use
I seek out opportunities to interact with other Irish learners online	Eager Online Use
I make use of a lot of online resources for learning Irish	Eager Online Use
I'm afraid of speaking Irish in face-to-face situations	Vigilant F2F L2 Use
I don’t seek out face-to-face situations to use my Irish	Vigilant F2F L2 Use
I am worried about making a mistake if I speak in Irish to someone face to face	Vigilant F2F L2 Use
I have attended a face-to-face situation at which I could have, but didn’t, use my Irish	Vigilant F2F L2 Use
I avoid typing my answers in Irish on the course	Vigilant Online L2 Use
I’m nervous about practicing my Irish with other learners online	Vigilant Online L2 Use
I only write an answer on the course in Irish if I am sure it has no mistakes	Vigilant Online L2 Use
I don’t seek out other places I can use my Irish online	Vigilant Online L2 Use

Attitudes towards the L2 Community (7pt scale)

Most people who speak Irish are friendly and easy to get on with.
The more I get to know Irish speakers, the more I want to speak the language.
The Irish language is an important part of life in Ireland.
The Irish language is an important part of Irish culture
If Ireland lost the Irish langage it would be a great loss.
People in Ireland who cannot speak Irish should try to learn the language
People who speak Irish help to make Ireland special and different from other countries.
I would like to meet more Irish speakers.

Orientations (7pt scale)

I want to visit Ireland
It is important to me to speak Irish
I want to speak Irish to Irish people
I want to understand place names
I want to study Irish formally
To connect with my heritage
For the challenge of it
I enjoy learning in general
I want use it in a place of work
I have a general interest in Irish culture
I enjoy learning languages
To understand Irish music
To read Irish books
To help preserve the language
I would like to speak Irish to members of my family
I would like to speak Irish to my friends
To honour my ancestors
Learning the language is useful to me
Do you have another reason not mentioned in the options above? If so, please elaborate.

General Prevention and Promotion Focus (7pt scale)

Item	Scale
When I see an opportunity for something I like, I get excited right away	Promotion
I frequently think about how I will achieve my hopes and aspirations	Promotion
I see myself as someone who is primarily striving to reach my “Ideal-self” to fulfil my hopes, wishes and aspirations	Promotion
I feel like I have made progress towards being successful in my life	Promotion

When it comes to achieving things that are important to me, I find I don't perform as well as I would ideally like to	Promotion
I usually obey rules and regulations established by others	Prevention
I see myself as someone who is primarily striving to become to the self I "Ought to be", to fulfil my duties, responsibilities and obligations	Prevention
I worry about making mistakes	Prevention
I frequently think about how I can prevent failure in my life	Prevention
Not being careful enough has got me into trouble before	Prevention

L2 Target

I want to be able to (speak/read/write/listen)	7pt scale
Standard of Irish (I would like to speak/read/write/listen)	The odd word/A few simple sentences/parts of conversations/Most conversations/Become a fluent speaker

Background and open-ended items

For you, how difficult do you believe learning Irish is?	7pt scale
What is the highest level of education you have achieved?	Various categories (from primary to postgraduate)
If "other" to highest level of education, please specify	Open-ended
What is your native language?	Open-ended
Can you speak any other languages?	Open-ended
If yes, how many other languages?	Listed options (1 to more than 5)
Please describe your level of fluency in each:	Open-ended
Finally, in your own words, can you please describe your motivations to learn Irish?	Open-ended
Were the questions on this survey clear?	Very clear/Not clear at all (5pt)

Were any questions unclear or problematic?	Open-ended
We are also seeking respondents for extended interview. In this we will be asking about a person's self-concept, motivations and identity as an Irish learner. This process received ethical approval from DCU on the 31/01/19. If you would be interested in taking part, you can contact the primary researcher at conchur.maclochlainn@dcu.ie. Additionally if you are comfortable so-doing you can provide your email address below, following which we will be in contact:	Open-ended

Appendix C4 – Item listings (S1)

Question text	Options
What is your nationality?	List selection
In what country do you currently live?	List selection
What age are you?	Various categories (from Under 18 to 85+)
What is you gender	Male/Female/Other/Prefer not to say
What is the highest level of education you have achieved?	Various categories (from primary to postgraduate)
If "other" to highest level of education, please specify	Open-ended
What is your native language?	Open-ended
Can you speak any other languages?	Yes/No/I don't know
If yes, how many other languages?	List selection (1 to more than five)
Please describe your level of fluency in each:	Open-ended

On a scale of one to seven (one being least enjoy, seven most enjoy), how much do you enjoy learning in general?
On a scale of one to seven (one being least enjoy, seven most enjoy), how much would you agree with the following statement, "I enjoy learning languages"?
On a scale of one to seven (one being least enjoy, seven most enjoy), how much would you agree with the following statement, "I enjoy learning languages more than other subjects"?

Are you currently studying any other languages?	Yes/No/I don't know
If so, what ones?	Open-ended
Have you ever encountered Irish before?	Definitely Not/Definitely Yes (5pt)
Have you ever studied Irish before?	Yes, formally/Yes, informally/Yes, both/No/Other
If you have studied Irish formally, to what level?	Primary-school/Secondary-School/Some College/College Degree/Other
If you ticked 'other' to the above, please specify:	Open-ended

Have you previously taken any of Fáilte ar Líne's MOOCs on the FutureLearn platform? (tick all that apply)	Listed options
Are you of Irish Heritage?	Yes/No/I don't know
If so, do you know of any members of your family who spoke or speaks Irish?	Yes/No/I don't know
How would you describe your current level of Irish? I can speak:	No Irish/A few words/a few simple sentences/parts of conversations/Most conversations/Native speaker ability

When studying languages, have you used the following supports? (5pt, Yes a lot to Never)
Books
Applications
Audio files
Videos
An online course
face-to-face classes
Other methods

How useful do you find the following supports? (5 pt, Very useful to Not at all useful)
Books
Applications
Audio files
Videos
An online course
face-to-face classes
Other methods

If you have used other methods, what are they?

Attitudes Towards the L2 Community (7pt scale)

Most people who speak Irish are friendly and easy to get on with.
The more I get to know Irish speakers, the more I want to speak the language.
The Irish language is an important part of life in Ireland.
The Irish language is an important part of Irish culture
If Ireland lost the Irish langage it would be a great loss.
People in Ireland who cannot speak Irish should try to learn the language
People who speak Irish help to make Ireland special and different from other countries.
I would like to meet more Irish speakers.

Orientations (7pt scale)

I want to visit Ireland
It is important to me to speak Irish
I want to speak Irish to Irish people
I want understand place names
I want to study Irish formally
I am of Irish heritage
For the challenge of it
I enjoy learning in general
I want use it in a place of work
I have a general interest in Irish culture
I enjoy learning languages
Do you have another reason not mentioned in the options above? If so, please elaborate.

L2 Target

I want to be able to (speak/read/write/listen)	7pt scale (completely disagree-completely agree)
Standard of Irish (I would like to speak/read/write/listen)	The odd word/A few simple sentences/parts of conversations/Most conversations/Become a fluent speaker
For you, how difficult do you believe learning Irish is?	7pt scale

L2 Speaker Self-Concept (7pt scale)

I believe I can become an Irish speaker	L2 Speaker Self-Concept
I want to become an Irish speaker	L2 Speaker Self-Concept
Becoming an Irish speaker is important to me	L2 Speaker Self-Concept
I will work hard at becoming an Irish speaker	L2 Speaker Self-Concept

L2 Selves scales (7pt scale)

Item	Scale
I feel I should become an Irish speaker	Ought-to L2 Self
I feel I have an obligation to become an Irish speaker	Ought-to L2 Self
I would be dissapointed if I never learned Irish	Ought-to L2 Self
I am expected to learn Irish	Ought-to L2 Self
I can imagine myself using Irish in many contexts	Ideal L2 Self
I have a picture of mtself as an Irish speaker	Ideal L2 Self
I think about becoming an Irish speaker a lot	Ideal L2 Self

Open-ended items

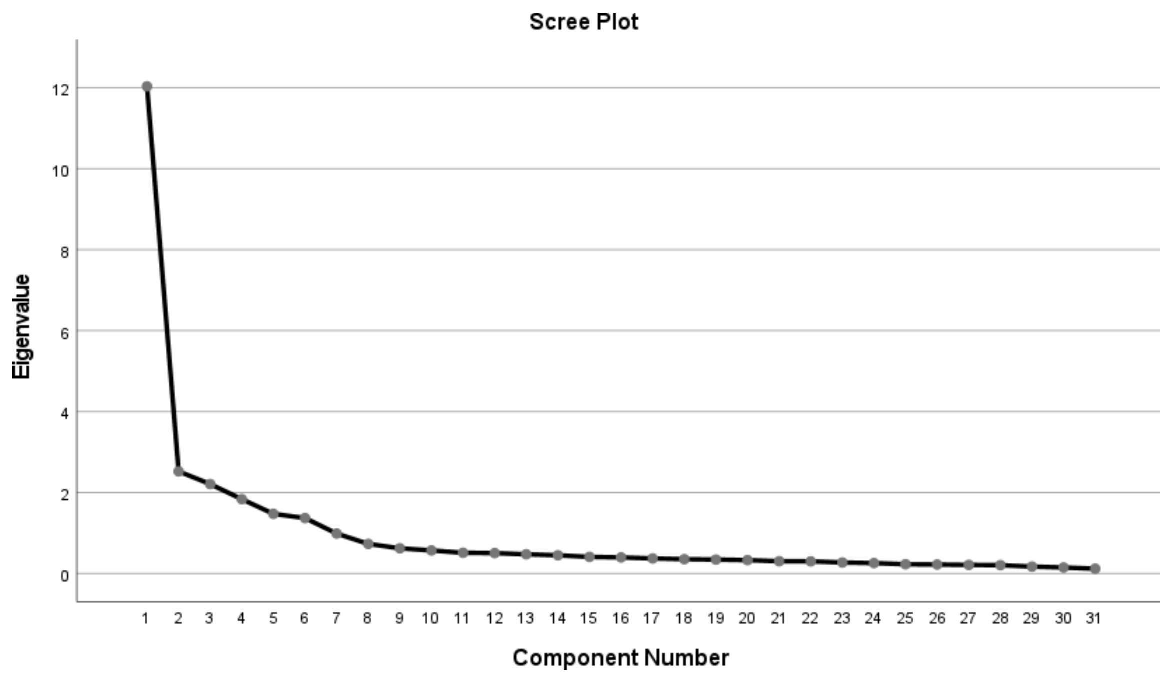
Question text	**Options**
In your own words, can you please describe your motivations to learn Irish?	Open-ended
Were the questions on this survey clear?	Yes, very/Not at all (5pt)
Were any questions unclear or problematic?	Open-ended

Appendix D1 – EFA Models (S3)

Descriptive Statistics – Items loaded			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
I can imagine a day when I will use my Irish a lot.	**4.32**	**1.75**	618
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish fluently.	**4.62**	**1.73**	618
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish to people around me.	**4.57**	**1.72**	618
I often imagine myself becoming an Irish speaker.	**5.02**	**1.65**	618
My family will be proud of me if one day I learn to speak Irish fluently.	**4.71**	**1.75**	618
Those around me will be happy if I learn Irish.	**4.45**	**1.57**	618
My friends will be proud of me if one day I learn Irish fluently.	**4.41**	**1.70**	618
The people who are important to me will be happy if one day I learn to speak Irish.	**4.37**	**1.72**	618
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a personal responsibility to myself.	**3.76**	**1.98**	618
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will be disappointed in myself.	**4.26**	**1.87**	618
If I don't learn Irish, I will fail to fulfil an obligation to myself.	**3.90**	**2.02**	618
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a sense of duty I feel within myself.	**3.78**	**1.97**	618
My friends would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.	**1.96**	**1.19**	618
If I don't learn Irish, others will be disappointed.	**1.95**	**1.22**	618
My family would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.	**2.08**	**1.30**	618
Those around me will be disappointed if I never learn Irish.	**2.12**	**1.26**	618

I constantly think about my Irish learning activities.	**4.05**	**1.76**	618
I work hard at studying Irish.	**4.66**	**1.43**	618
Studying Irish is very important to me these days.	**4.95**	**1.49**	618
I put a lot of effort into studying Irish.	**4.53**	**1.49**	618
I spend a lot of time studying Irish.	**4.11**	**1.55**	618
I want to become similar to the people who speak Irish.	**4.27**	**1.71**	618
I want to learn Irish because then I will feel more comfortable around people who speak Irish.	**4.69**	**1.75**	618
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to experience Irish culture more deeply.	**5.96**	**1.15**	618
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to take part in Irish cultural activities.	**5.16**	**1.49**	618
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to speak to different people.	**5.26**	**1.49**	618
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to understand Irish cultural works (such as books, music, and television).	**5.85**	**1.22**	618
I see myself as someone who is good at speaking Irish at present.	**1.62**	**1.09**	618
I feel comfortable using Irish in different contexts at present.	**2.11**	**1.45**	618
Communicating in Irish is not a problem for me.	**1.73**	**1.13**	618
Being someone who can speak/use Irish is part of the person I am now.	**3.01**	**1.80**	618

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.942
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	13069.348
	df	465
	Sig.	0.000



Communalities – Model 1		
	Initial	Extraction
I can imagine a day when I will use my Irish a lot.	1.000	0.602
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish fluently.	1.000	0.635
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish to people around me.	1.000	0.621
I often imagine myself becoming an Irish speaker.	1.000	0.614
My family will be proud of me if one day I learn to speak Irish fluently.	1.000	0.719
Those around me will be happy if I learn Irish.	1.000	0.749
My friends will be proud of me if one day I learn Irish fluently.	1.000	0.622
The people who are important to me will be happy if one day I learn to speak Irish.	1.000	0.685
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a personal responsibility to myself.	1.000	0.802
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will be disappointed in myself.	1.000	0.759
If I don't learn Irish, I will fail to fulfil an obligation to myself.	1.000	0.801
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a sense of duty I feel within myself.	1.000	0.812
My friends would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.	1.000	0.683
If I don't learn Irish, others will be disappointed.	1.000	0.721
My family would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.	1.000	0.777
Those around me will be disappointed if I never learn Irish.	1.000	0.794
I constantly think about my Irish learning activities.	1.000	0.586
I work hard at studying Irish.	1.000	0.838
Studying Irish is very important to me these days.	1.000	0.762

I put a lot of effort into studying Irish.	1.000	0.890
I spend a lot of time studying Irish.	1.000	0.835
I want to become similar to the people who speak Irish.	1.000	0.495
I want to learn Irish because then I will feel more comfortable around people who speak Irish.	1.000	0.540
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to experience Irish culture more deeply.	1.000	0.632
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to take part in Irish cultural activities.	1.000	0.723
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to speak to different people.	1.000	0.617
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to understand Irish cultural works (such as books, music, and television).	1.000	0.634
I see myself as someone who is good at speaking Irish at present.	1.000	0.694
I feel comfortable using Irish in different contexts at present.	1.000	0.685
Communicating in Irish is not a problem for me.	1.000	0.604
Being someone who can speak/use Irish is part of the person I am now.	1.000	0.523
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

Total Variance Explained – Model 1								
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings[a]	
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	
1	**12.034**	**38.821**	**38.821**	**12.034**	**38.821**	**38.821**	**7.545**	
2	**2.525**	**8.145**	**46.966**	**2.525**	**8.145**	**46.966**	**4.622**	
3	**2.211**	**7.132**	**54.098**	**2.211**	**7.132**	**54.098**	**6.242**	
4	**1.838**	**5.930**	**60.028**	**1.838**	**5.930**	**60.028**	**4.559**	
5	**1.475**	**4.759**	**64.786**	**1.475**	**4.759**	**64.786**	**7.177**	
6	**1.371**	**4.423**	**69.209**	**1.371**	**4.423**	**69.209**	**8.507**	
7	0.989	3.191	72.400					
8	0.733	2.364	74.764					
9	0.624	2.014	76.778					
10	0.572	1.845	78.623					
11	0.513	1.655	80.278					
12	0.506	1.633	81.911					
13	0.477	1.538	83.449					
14	0.452	1.458	84.907					
15	0.412	1.330	86.236					
16	0.399	1.288	87.524					
17	0.374	1.208	88.732					
18	0.356	1.147	89.879					
19	0.346	1.115	90.994					
20	0.332	1.072	92.066					
21	0.306	0.986	93.052					
22	0.302	0.975	94.027					
23	0.274	0.882	94.909					

24	0.259	0.836	95.745					
25	0.230	0.743	96.488					
26	0.223	0.721	97.209					
27	0.214	0.689	97.898					
28	0.207	0.669	98.567					
29	0.172	0.556	99.124					
30	0.150	0.485	99.609					
31	0.121	0.391	100.000					
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.								
a. When components are correlated, sums of squared loadings cannot be added to obtain a total variance.								

Pattern Matrix[a] – Model 1						
	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
I can imagine a day when I will use my Irish a lot.						
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish fluently.						
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish to people around me.						
I often imagine myself becoming an Irish speaker.						**-0.548**
My family will be proud of me if one day I learn to speak Irish fluently.			**-0.846**			
Those around me will be happy if I learn Irish.			**-0.879**			
My friends will be proud of me if one day I learn Irish fluently.			**-0.764**			
The people who are important to me will be happy if one day I learn to speak Irish.			**-0.793**			
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a personal responsibility to myself.						**-0.873**
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will be disappointed in myself.						**-0.836**
If I don't learn Irish, I will fail to fulfil an obligation to myself.						**-0.829**
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a sense of duty I feel within myself.						**-0.855**
My friends would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.		**0.818**				
If I don't learn Irish, others will be disappointed.		**0.815**				

My family would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.		**0.797**				
Those around me will be disappointed if I never learn Irish.		**0.834**				
I constantly think about my Irish learning activities.						**-0.409**
I work hard at studying Irish.					**-0.954**	
Studying Irish is very important to me these days.					**-0.494**	
I put a lot of effort into studying Irish.					**-0.954**	
I spend a lot of time studying Irish.					**-0.891**	
I want to become similar to the people who speak Irish.	**0.436**					
I want to learn Irish because then I will feel more comfortable around people who speak Irish.	**0.649**					
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to experience Irish culture more deeply.	**0.848**					
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to take part in Irish cultural activities.	**0.832**					
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to speak to different people.	**0.625**					
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to understand Irish cultural works (such as books, music, and television).	**0.809**					
I see myself as someone who is good at speaking Irish at present.				**0.837**		

I feel comfortable using Irish in different contexts at present.				**0.833**		
Communicating in Irish is not a problem for me.				**0.810**		
Being someone who can speak/use Irish is part of the person I am now.				**0.585**		
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.[a]						
a. Rotation converged in 10 iterations.						

Structure Matrix – Model 1						
	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
I can imagine a day when I will use my Irish a lot.	**0.596**		**-0.522**	**0.427**	**-0.584**	**-0.585**
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish fluently.	**0.581**		**-0.484**	**0.405**	**-0.610**	**-0.657**
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish to people around me.	**0.627**		**-0.605**	**0.412**	**-0.507**	**-0.558**
I often imagine myself becoming an Irish speaker.	**0.508**		**-0.475**		**-0.499**	**-0.705**
My family will be proud of me if one day I learn to speak Irish fluently.			**-0.839**			
Those around me will be happy if I learn Irish.			**-0.863**			
My friends will be proud of me if one day I learn Irish fluently.			**-0.782**			
The people who are important to me will be happy if one day I learn to speak Irish.			**-0.818**			
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a personal responsibility to myself.	**0.425**	**0.402**			**-0.411**	**-0.889**
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will be disappointed in myself.	**0.449**				**-0.430**	**-0.868**
If I don't learn Irish, I will fail to fulfil an obligation to myself.	**0.456**	**0.416**			**-0.449**	**-0.887**
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a sense of duty I feel within myself.	**0.445**	**0.411**			**-0.414**	**-0.894**

My friends would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.		**0.822**				
If I don't learn Irish, others will be disappointed.		**0.843**				
My family would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.		**0.866**				**-0.445**
Those around me will be disappointed if I never learn Irish.		**0.882**				**-0.416**
I constantly think about my Irish learning activities.	**0.454**				**-0.651**	**-0.649**
I work hard at studying Irish.					**-0.913**	
Studying Irish is very important to me these days.	**0.613**		**-0.477**		**-0.770**	**-0.683**
I put a lot of effort into studying Irish.	**0.433**				**-0.941**	**-0.430**
I spend a lot of time studying Irish.	**0.451**				**-0.910**	**-0.457**
I want to become similar to the people who speak Irish.	**0.623**		**-0.425**			**-0.537**
I want to learn Irish because then I will feel more comfortable around people who speak Irish.	**0.716**					
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to experience Irish culture more deeply.	**0.786**					
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to take part in Irish cultural activities.	**0.848**					**-0.435**
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to speak to different people.	**0.753**		**-0.519**		**-0.408**	**-0.441**

Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to understand Irish cultural works (such as books, music, and television).	**0.784**				**-0.414**	
I see myself as someone who is good at speaking Irish at present.				**0.829**		
I feel comfortable using Irish in different contexts at present.				**0.824**		
Communicating in Irish is not a problem for me.				**0.759**		
Being someone who can speak/use Irish is part of the person I am now.				**0.679**		**-0.448**
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.						

Communalities – Model 2		
	Initial	Extraction
I can imagine a day when I will use my Irish a lot.	1.000	0.780
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish fluently.	1.000	0.766
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish to people around me.	1.000	0.790
I often imagine myself becoming an Irish speaker.	1.000	0.672
My family will be proud of me if one day I learn to speak Irish fluently.	1.000	0.748
Those around me will be happy if I learn Irish.	1.000	0.769
My friends will be proud of me if one day I learn Irish fluently.	1.000	0.657
The people who are important to me will be happy if one day I learn to speak Irish.	1.000	0.690
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a personal responsibility to myself.	1.000	0.828
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will be disappointed in myself.	1.000	0.759
If I don't learn Irish, I will fail to fulfil an obligation to myself.	1.000	0.825
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a sense of duty I feel within myself.	1.000	0.829
My friends would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.	1.000	0.698
If I don't learn Irish, others will be disappointed.	1.000	0.723
My family would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.	1.000	0.778
Those around me will be disappointed if I never learn Irish.	1.000	0.794
I constantly think about my Irish learning activities.	1.000	0.586

I work hard at studying Irish.	1.000	0.842
Studying Irish is very important to me these days.	1.000	0.765
I put a lot of effort into studying Irish.	1.000	0.898
I spend a lot of time studying Irish.	1.000	0.842
I want to become similar to the people who speak Irish.	1.000	0.499
I want to learn Irish because then I will feel more comfortable around people who speak Irish.	1.000	0.555
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to experience Irish culture more deeply.	1.000	0.718
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to take part in Irish cultural activities.	1.000	0.729
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to speak to different people.	1.000	0.662
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to understand Irish cultural works (such as books, music, and television).	1.000	0.699
I see myself as someone who is good at speaking Irish at present.	1.000	0.695
I feel comfortable using Irish in different contexts at present.	1.000	0.696
Communicating in Irish is not a problem for me.	1.000	0.618
Being someone who can speak/use Irish is part of the person I am now.	1.000	0.534
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

Total Variance Explained – Model 2							
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings [a]
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	**12.034**	**38.821**	**38.821**	**12.034**	**38.821**	**38.821**	**6.989**
2	**2.525**	**8.145**	**46.966**	**2.525**	**8.145**	**46.966**	**5.140**
3	**2.211**	**7.132**	**54.098**	**2.211**	**7.132**	**54.098**	**6.051**
4	**1.838**	**5.930**	**60.028**	**1.838**	**5.930**	**60.028**	**4.282**
5	**1.475**	**4.759**	**64.786**	**1.475**	**4.759**	**64.786**	**6.841**
6	**1.371**	**4.423**	**69.209**	**1.371**	**4.423**	**69.209**	**5.946**
7	**0.989**	**3.191**	**72.400**	**0.989**	**3.191**	**72.400**	**7.356**
8	0.733	2.364	74.764				
9	0.624	2.014	76.778				
10	0.572	1.845	78.623				
11	0.513	1.655	80.278				
12	0.506	1.633	81.911				
13	0.477	1.538	83.449				
14	0.452	1.458	84.907				
15	0.412	1.330	86.236				
16	0.399	1.288	87.524				
17	0.374	1.208	88.732				
18	0.356	1.147	89.879				
19	0.346	1.115	90.994				
20	0.332	1.072	92.066				
21	0.306	0.986	93.052				
22	0.302	0.975	94.027				
23	0.274	0.882	94.909				
24	0.259	0.836	95.745				

25	0.230	0.743	96.488				
26	0.223	0.721	97.209				
27	0.214	0.689	97.898				
28	0.207	0.669	98.567				
29	0.172	0.556	99.124				
30	0.150	0.485	99.609				
31	0.121	0.391	100.000				
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.							
a. When components are correlated, sums of squared loadings cannot be added to obtain a total variance.							

Pattern Matrix[a] – Model 2							
	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I can imagine a day when I will use my Irish a lot.	**0.726**						
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish fluently.	**0.666**						
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish to people around me.	**0.725**						
I often imagine myself becoming an Irish speaker.	**0.531**						
My family will be proud of me if one day I learn to speak Irish fluently.			**-0.868**				
Those around me will be happy if I learn Irish.			**-0.888**				
My friends will be proud of me if one day I learn Irish fluently.			**-0.796**				
The people who are important to me will be happy if one day I learn to speak Irish.			**-0.778**				
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a personal responsibility to myself.							**0.839**
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will be disappointed in myself.							**0.758**
If I don't learn Irish, I will fail to fulfil an obligation to myself.							**0.796**
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil							**0.811**

a sense of duty I feel within myself.							
My friends would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.		**0.854**					
If I don't learn Irish, others will be disappointed.		**0.832**					
My family would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.		**0.813**					
Those around me will be disappointed if I never learn Irish.		**0.848**					
I constantly think about my Irish learning activities.							
I work hard at studying Irish.					**-0.934**		
Studying Irish is very important to me these days.					**-0.484**		
I put a lot of effort into studying Irish.					**-0.939**		
I spend a lot of time studying Irish.					**-0.877**		
I want to become similar to the people who speak Irish.							
I want to learn Irish because then I will feel more comfortable around people who speak Irish.						**0.485**	
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to experience Irish culture more deeply.						**0.849**	
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to take part in Irish cultural activities.						**0.734**	
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow	**0.502**					**0.416**	

me to speak to different people.							
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to understand Irish cultural works (such as books, music, and television).						**0.803**	
I see myself as someone who is good at speaking Irish at present.				**0.820**			
I feel comfortable using Irish in different contexts at present.				**0.831**			
Communicating in Irish is not a problem for me.				**0.817**			
Being someone who can speak/use Irish is part of the person I am now.				**0.591**			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.[a]							
a. Rotation converged in 14 iterations.							

Structure Matrix – Model 2							
	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I can imagine a day when I will use my Irish a lot.	**0.857**		**-0.435**		**-0.526**	**0.411**	**0.457**
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish fluently.	**0.828**		**-0.405**		**-0.559**	**0.407**	**0.544**
I can imagine a day when I will speak Irish to people around me.	**0.861**		**-0.520**		**-0.446**	**0.447**	**0.426**
I often imagine myself becoming an Irish speaker.	**0.724**		**-0.416**		**-0.459**		**0.623**
My family will be proud of me if one day I learn to speak Irish fluently.			**-0.854**				
Those around me will be happy if I learn Irish.			**-0.875**				
My friends will be proud of me if one day I learn Irish fluently.			**-0.803**				
The people who are important to me will be happy if one day I learn to speak Irish.	**0.402**		**-0.820**				
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a personal responsibility to myself.		**0.416**			**-0.417**		**0.901**
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will be disappointed in myself.	**0.496**				**-0.421**		**0.853**
If I don't learn Irish, I will fail to fulfil an obligation to myself.	**0.413**	**0.433**			**-0.454**	**0.408**	**0.894**

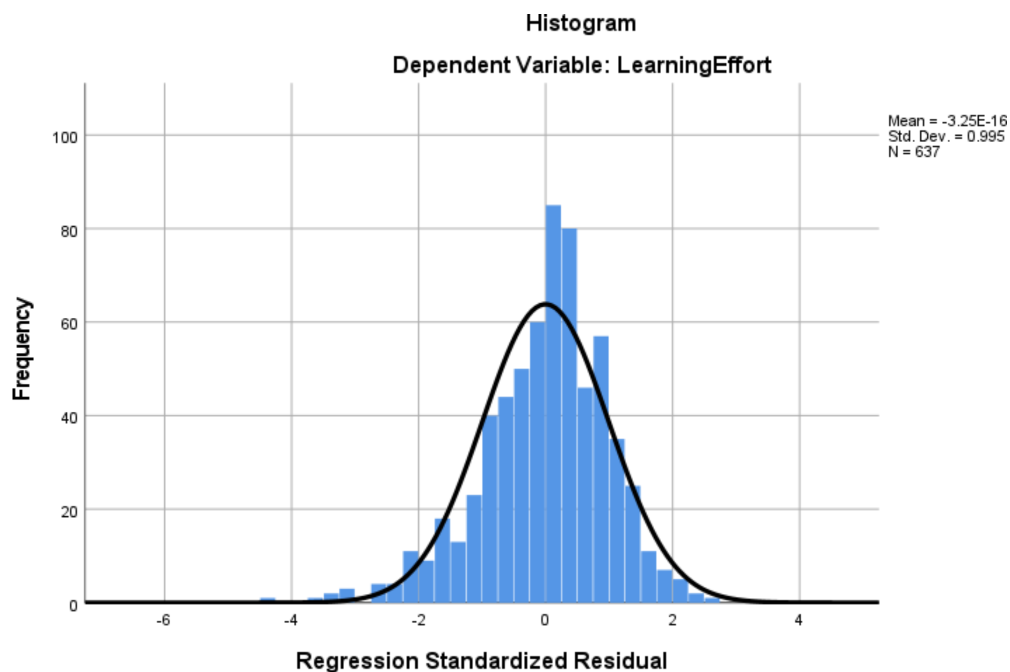
If I don't become an Irish speaker, I will fail to fulfil a sense of duty I feel within myself.	**0.428**	**0.429**			**-0.416**		**0.898**
My friends would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.		**0.831**					
If I don't learn Irish, others will be disappointed.		**0.847**					
My family would be disappointed if I never learned Irish.		**0.871**					**0.428**
Those around me will be disappointed if I never learn Irish.		**0.884**					**0.403**
I constantly think about my Irish learning activities.	**0.506**				**-0.642**		**0.611**
I work hard at studying Irish.					**-0.916**		
Studying Irish is very important to me these days.	**0.580**		**-0.473**		**-0.760**	**0.534**	**0.634**
I put a lot of effort into studying Irish.	**0.410**				**-0.946**		
I spend a lot of time studying Irish.	**0.418**				**-0.914**		**0.418**
I want to become similar to the people who speak Irish.	**0.484**		**-0.426**			**0.579**	**0.493**
I want to learn Irish because then I will feel more comfortable around people who speak Irish.	**0.576**					**0.647**	
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to experience Irish culture more deeply.						**0.838**	
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow	**0.506**					**0.833**	

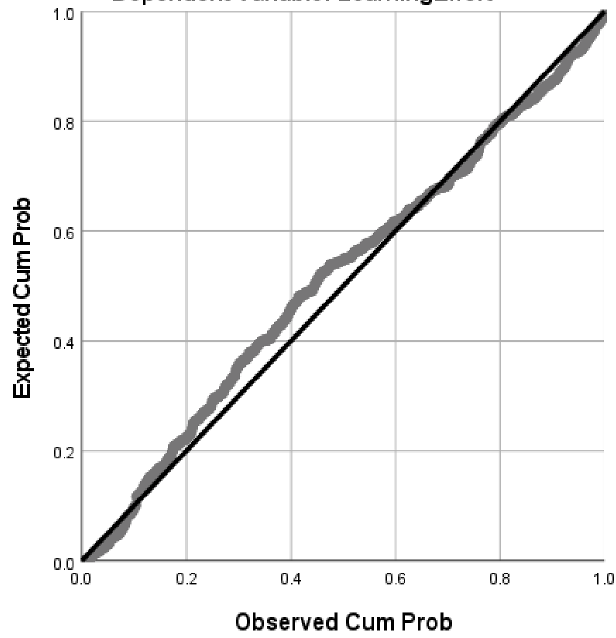
me to take part in Irish cultural activities.							
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to speak to different people.	**0.701**		**-0.471**			**0.651**	
Learning Irish is important to me because it will allow me to understand Irish cultural works (such as books, music, and television).					**-0.417**	**0.823**	
I see myself as someone who is good at speaking Irish at present.				**0.827**			
I feel comfortable using Irish in different contexts at present.				**0.829**			
Communicating in Irish is not a problem for me.				**0.773**			
Being someone who can speak/use Irish is part of the person I am now.				**0.682**			**0.430**
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.							

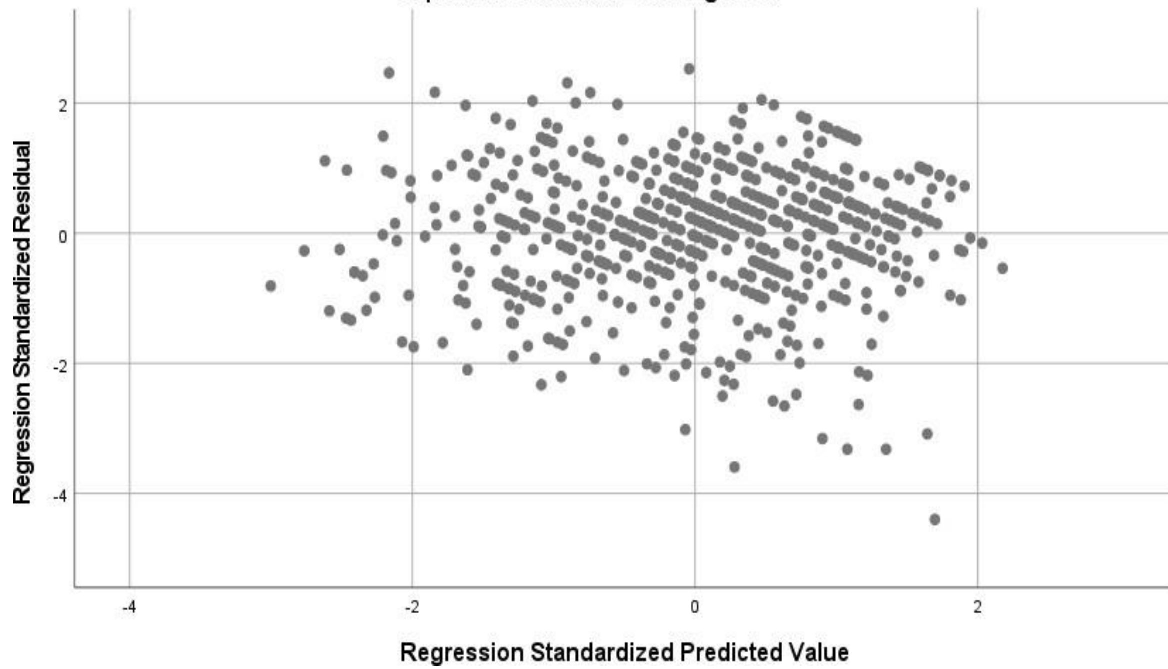
Appendix D2 – Regression model (Learning Effort)

Model Summary[b]										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	**.681[a]**	**0.464**	**0.459**	**0.98748**	**0.464**	**90.763**	**6**	**630**	**0.000**	**1.939**
a. Predictors: (Constant), **Integrative, CurrentL2Self, OughttoOther, IdealOther, OughttoOwn, IdealOwn**										
b. Dependent Variable: **LearningEffort**										

Coefficients[a]											
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.002	0.201		4.983	0.000					
	Ideal Own	0.320	0.040	0.357	7.971	0.000	0.634	0.303	0.233	0.425	2.351
	Ideal Other	0.035	0.033	0.037	1.052	0.293	0.396	0.042	0.031	0.674	1.483
	Ought-to Own	0.143	0.031	0.190	4.572	0.000	0.547	0.179	0.133	0.493	2.028
	Ought-to Other	-0.010	0.042	-0.008	-0.244	0.807	0.300	-0.010	-0.007	0.720	1.389
	Current L2 Self	0.093	0.041	0.075	2.267	0.024	0.351	0.090	0.066	0.788	1.269
	Integrative	0.216	0.045	0.182	4.839	0.000	0.524	0.189	0.141	0.602	1.661
a. Dependent Variable: **LearningEffort**											




Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual
Dependent Variable: LearningEffort
Expected Cum Prob
Observed Cum Prob
0.0
0.2
0.4
0.6
0.8
1.0


Scatterplot
Dependent Variable: LearningEffort
Regression Standardized Residual
Regression Standardized Predicted Value
-4
-2
0
2

Appendix E1 – Question Text for Interviewee Prompt

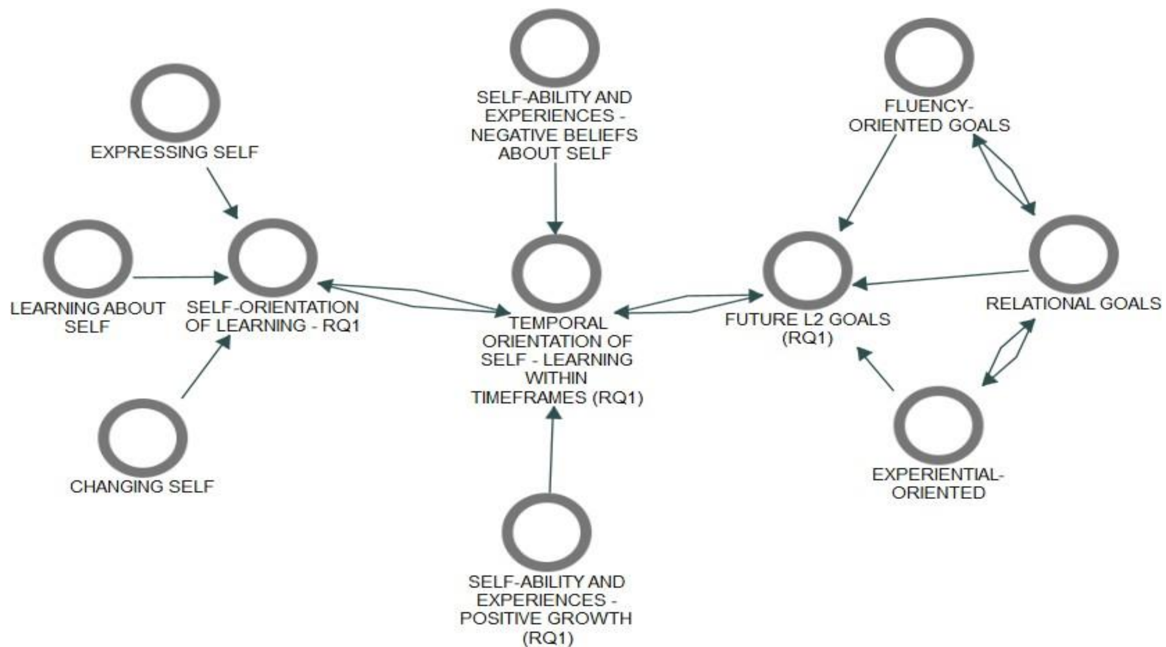
Question	**Options**
What is your nationality?	List
In what country do you live?	List
In what age range do you fall?	Various options (Under 18 to 85+)
What is your gender?	Male/Female/Other/Prefer not to say
Can you briefly describe your experiences learning Irish to this point?	Open-ended
Can you briefly describe your goals in relation to learning Irish?	Open-ended
Would you be willing to be interviewed regarding the above?	Yes/No/Maybe
If yes, please provide an email address at which the researcher can contact you	Open-ended

Appendix E2 – Semi-structured Interview Prompts

- Can you tell me about your family background – have you any links with Ireland?
- If so, did anyone in your family ever speak Irish?
- Can you give me an overview of your personal history with the Irish language?
- Have you ever visited Ireland before?
- Have you ever learned Irish before?
- If you have learned Irish before, in what contexts?
- If you have learned Irish before, how did you find it?
- Were certain aspects easy or difficult?
- Has your desire to learn Irish changed over time (either positively or negatively)?
- Do you enjoy learning Irish online?
- What are the other ways you learn – do you use different tools or methods?
- Can you tell me what learning Irish means to you?
- Do you have any goals or long-term aims in learning Irish?
- Is there anything else you'd like to elaborate on?

Appendix E3 – Top-level concept maps and coding frames (NVIVO)

RQ1: L2 Selves in context



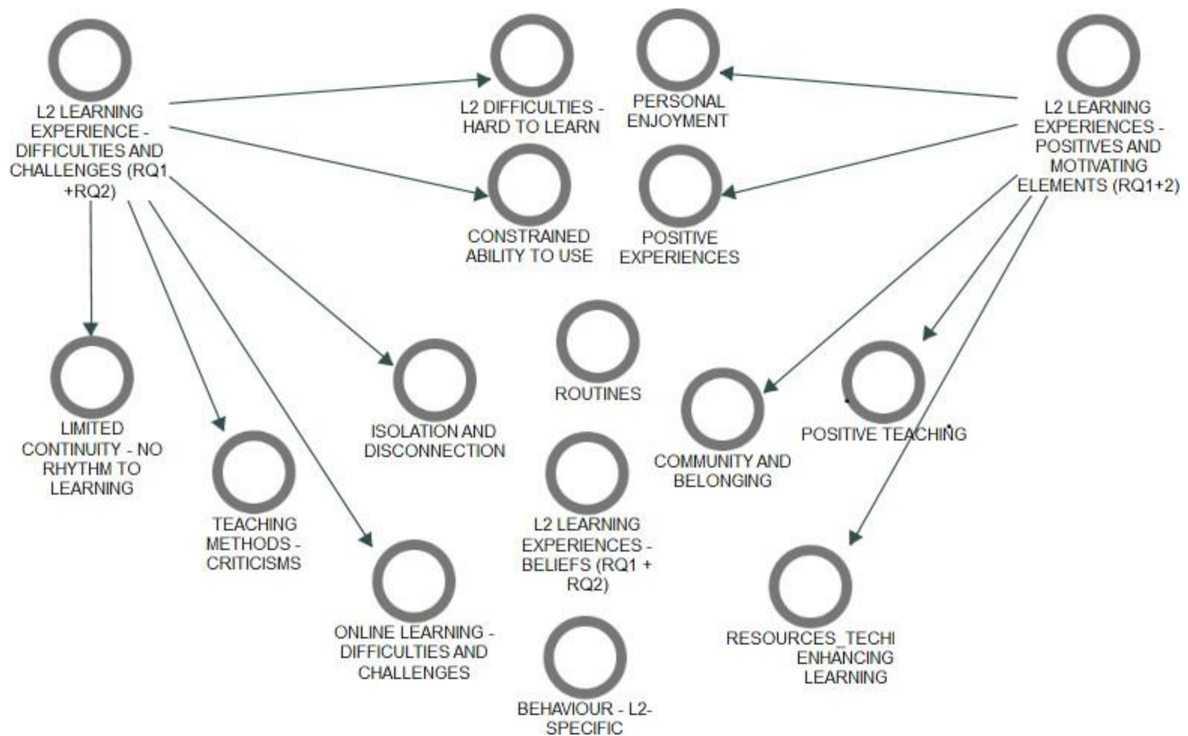
RQ1 - files and codes

Search Project

Name	Files	Referen	Created on	Created	Modified on	Modified
SELF-REGULATION IN LEARNING (RQ1)	0	0	15/10/2021 1	CM	09/08/2021 1	CM
SELF-ORIENTATION OF LEARNING - RQ1	0	0	15/10/2021 1	CM	10/08/2021 1	CM
METALINGUISTIC COMPARISON AND SELF-ASSESSMENT (RQ1	0	0	15/10/2021 1	CM	09/08/2021 1	CM
LIFE CONTEXT - ASPECT OF SELF NOTED (RQ1)	0	0	15/10/2021 1	CM	09/08/2021 1	CM
LIFE CONTEXT - SOCIAL OTHERS AND SUPPORTS (RQ1)	0	0	15/10/2021 1	CM	12/08/2021 1	CM
LIFE CONTEXT - OPPORTUNITIES AND POSITIVES	0	0	15/10/2021 1	CM	12/08/2021 1	CM
LIFE CONTEXT - DIFFICULTIES AND CHALLENGES (RQ1)	0	0	15/10/2021 1	CM	09/08/2021 1	CM
SELF-ABILITY AND EXPERIENCES - POSITIVE GROWTH (RQ1)	0	0	15/10/2021 1	CM	09/08/2021 1	CM
SELF-ABILITY AND EXPERIENCES - NEGATIVE BELIEFS ABOUT S	0	0	15/10/2021 1	CM	12/08/2021 1	CM
TEMPORAL ORIENTATION OF SELF - LEARNING WITHIN TIMEF	0	0	15/10/2021 1	CM	12/08/2021 1	CM
FUTURE L2 GOALS (RQ1)	0	0	15/10/2021 1	CM	11/08/2021 1	CM
FUTURE L2 USE - DESIRES (RQ1)	0	0	15/10/2021 1	CM	09/08/2021 1	CM

Explanatory note: One element woven through RQ1, though not emphasised as directly in results, is the importance of wider life context. For brevity's sake, much of the coding reflecting both supportive and constraining life contexts was not elaborated upon. Similarly, metalinguistic comparison and self-assessment, as well as self-regulation, were all related concepts which had to be left relatively underexplored in reporting.

RQ2: The L2 Learning Experience



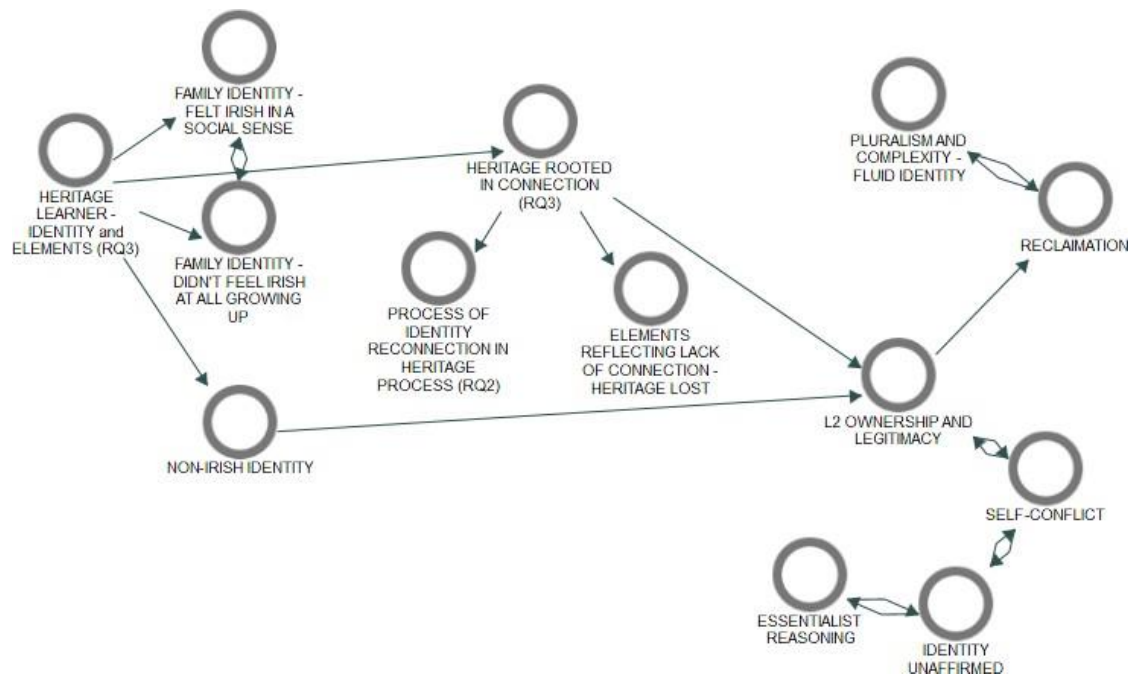
RQ2 - files and codes

Search Project

	Name	Files	Referen	Created on	Created	Modified on	Modified
+	L2 LEARNING EXPERIENCE - DIFFICULTIES AND CHALLENGES (R	0	0	20/10/2021 1	CM	09/08/2021 1	CM
+	L2 LEARNING EXPERIENCES - POSITIVES AND MOTIVATING ELE	0	0	20/10/2021 1	CM	09/08/2021 1	CM
+	L2 LEARNING EXPERIENCE - ROUTINES AND HABITS (RQ2)	0	0	20/10/2021 1	CM	09/08/2021 1	CM
+	L2 LEARNING EXPERIENCES - RESOURCES (RQ2)	0	0	20/10/2021 1	CM	12/08/2021 1	CM
+	L2 LEARNING EXPERIENCES - BELIEFS (RQ1 + RQ2)	0	0	20/10/2021 1	CM	10/08/2021 1	CM

Explanatory note: In reporting RQ2, an initial binary framing of positive and negative elements was useful to make sense of learner experiences. As can be seen in the concept map, these binaries demonstrated how what was "positive" or "negative" related to three broad themes – attitudes towards learning, connection with social others, and sense of progress and belief. Each of these elements provided useful scaffolding for the development of the notion of **possibility space**, through highlighting a distinction between enjoyment and identity fulfilment, with expressive affordances. Particular note should be made of codes referencing constrained abilities to use, and their distinction from negative experiences. These are rather different aspects which illustrate that where a learner had low belief in the plausibility of learning Irish it can be due to various reasons, such as a setback or negative experience, versus *never* having believed it plausible due to isolation.

RQ3: Social and Heritage Identities



RQ3 - files and codes

Search Project

Name		Files	Referen	Created on	Created	Modified on	Modified	
CULTURAL ELEMENTS OF LEARNING (RQ3)		0	0	24/10/2021 1	CM	11/08/2021 1	CM	
HERITAGE LEARNER - IDENTITY and ELEMENTS (RQ3)		0	0	24/10/2021 1	CM	09/08/2021 1	CM	
CONNECTION BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND UNDERSTANDING C		0	0	24/10/2021 1	CM	13/08/2021 1	CM	
HERITAGE ROOTED IN CONNECTION (RQ3)		0	0	24/10/2021 1	CM	10/08/2021 1	CM	
SOCIAL IDENTITY ELEMENTS (RQ3)		0	0	24/10/2021 1	CM	11/08/2021 1	CM	

Explanatory note: The concept map of RQ3 is useful in distinguishing personal from social forms of identity. Particular emphasis was placed on LIH experiences, and the processes of identity (dis)connection that they described. This developed into the conceptual distinction of connection within heritage, and within wider L2 ownership and legitimacy. Cultural elements of learning, such as an admiration of Irish culture, was also common, with learners describing an array of social and cultural practices they engaged in.

Appendix F1 – Overview of course content and sample Week (Week 1, Irish 101)

Online Courses / History

Irish 101: An Introduction to Irish Language and Culture

Get an introduction to Ireland's culture by learning the basics of the Irish language.

★★★★★ 4.8 (243 reviews) **62,390** enrolled on this course

You have already joined this course

Go to course

Duration **4 weeks**	Weekly study **4 hours**	100% online How it works	Unlimited subscription **€23.99/month** Learn more

Learn the basics of Irish language

If you've always wanted to learn how to speak Irish, this course is the ideal place to start. You'll master some of the basics of Irish, including greetings, introductions, Irish names, numbers, and other essentials.

By the time you're finished, you'll have a deeper understanding of the origins and cultural significance of one of the oldest literary languages in Europe.

Explore the history of the Irish language

Ireland is home to a unique language and a vibrant Gaelic culture.

On this course, you'll discover how Irish people drew inspiration from nature to create their own unique script and alphabet. You'll explore the origins of Ogham, and how the Irish alphabet developed.

Engage with Irish culture through language

As well as looking at the basics of the language, you'll explore Ireland's rich culture of dance, Gaelic games, music, storytelling and literature. You'll gain an insight into the language of Ireland and the people who speak it.

You'll also learn about the Gaeltachtaí – the places in Ireland where or Irish is the main language of communication.

Improve your Irish pronunciation

If you're hoping to understand the basics of Irish pronunciation, this course gives you the chance to do so. As well as looking at things like Irish blessings and curses, you'll also delve into some of the naming conventions used in the language.

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4

Hi Conchúr, here's the last step you visited:

3.22 **Béaloideas agus Treoracha/Folklore and Directions** ARTICLE

Continue

Using FutureLearn

Need help using FutureLearn? We've put together a help page with all the information you need to get the most out of FutureLearn.

Week 1: Beannachtaí/Greetings

Fáilte/Welcome

This activity is a short introduction to what you can expect throughout this course, in terms of structure, content, and workload.

- 1.1 **Fáilte/Welcome** VIDEO (01:55)
- 1.2 **Ag tosú/Getting started** VIDEO (01:05)
- 1.3 **An Ghaeilge/The Irish Language** ARTICLE
- 1.4 **Cé tusa?/Who are you?** DISCUSSION

Litreacha/Let's start with letters!

In this activity we will look at the Irish alphabet, sounds, and pronunciation.

- 1.5 **Ogham** VIDEO (02:37)
- 1.6 **Crainn & Ogham/Trees & Ogham** DISCUSSION
- 1.7 **An Aibítir/The Alphabet** VIDEO (02:42)
- 1.8 **Céard é an focal?/What is the word?** QUIZ
- 1.9 **Déanaimis gleo!/Let's make some noise!** ARTICLE

Deas bualadh leat/Nice to meet you

We will learn important phrases, such as, 'Hello', 'What is your name?', and 'Goodbye' in Irish.

- 1.10 **Dia duit/Hello** ARTICLE
- 1.11 **Beannachtaí/Greetings** VIDEO (00:36)
- 1.12 **Éist agus Aithin/Listen and Identify** QUIZ
- 1.13 **Conas atá tú?/How are you?** ARTICLE
- 1.14 **Éist agus Aithin/Listen and Identify** QUIZ
- 1.15 **Céard is ainm duit?/What is your name?** ARTICLE
- 1.16 **Éist agus Aithin/Listen and Identify** QUIZ

Ainmneacha/Names

Let's discuss all things regarding Irish names - first names, naming conventions, surnames, and the vocative case!

- 1.17 **Cú Chulainn/The Hound of Culann** VIDEO (02:15)
- 1.18 **Ainmneacha & Nósanna/Names & Customs** ARTICLE
- 1.19 **Sloinnte Gaeilge/Irish Surnames** ARTICLE
- 1.20 **Sloinnte/Surnames** DISCUSSION
- 1.21 **An Tuiseal Gairmeach/The Vocative Case** ARTICLE
- 1.22 **Líon na Bearnaí/Fill in the Gaps** QUIZ

Beannachtaí agus Mallachtaí/Blessings and Curses

This activity covers blessings and curses, a rich heritage, and part of Irish traditions and superstitions.

1.23	**Beannachtaí & Mallachtaí/Blessings and Curses**	ARTICLE
1.24	**Mallacht Mhaigh Eo/The Curse of Mayo**	DISCUSSION
1.25	**Bean Pháidín & Mallachtaí/Páidín's Wife & Curses**	VIDEO (03:29)

Céard atá foghlamtha agat?/What have you learnt?

Now that we've finished the core activities we are very curious - how have you found it and what have you learnt?

1.26	**Cuir tú féin in aithne arís!/Introduce yourself again!**	DISCUSSION
1.27	**Súil Siar ar an tSeachtain/Review of the Week**	DISCUSSION
1.28	**Labhair Le/Talk to Oscar and Niamh**	VIDEO (04:13)
1.29	**Seanfhocal na Seachtaine/Proverb of the Week**	ARTICLE
1.30	**An tSeachtain Seo Chugainn/Next Week**	ARTICLE