

**A Question of Meaning:
Motivation as a Meaning-Making Process for Late Adolescent Learners Engaged in
Multilingual Language Learning**

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Carlos R. Oliveras

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Abstract

Although we have advanced our knowledge of language learning motivation, there are still many elements that have not been sufficiently considered. Within the existing research, there is a lack of perspectives that focus on languages other than English (LOTE) and multilingualism, as well as a need for studies that examine the relationship between learners and factors such as emotions, time, and the sociocultural environment. Ushioda (2009) has advocated for a person-in-context view of motivation, which understands motivation as an emergent property that results from the relationship between the person, as an intentional agent, and the different contextual elements that compose the environment in which the person functions. This study adopts this framework with the purpose of investigating the relationship between how individuals interpret and use their language learning experiences from adolescence, particularly from secondary school, and their motivation to continue learning languages in becoming a multilingual subject.

The research questions of this study are as follows:

1. What do young multilingual subjects remember about their language learning experiences, especially of those languages they learned in secondary school, and in what manner do they recall these memories? To what extent are emotions represented in these memories?
2. How do these memories of their language learning experiences continue to impact the motivation to learn, develop and use different languages (i.e., practice their multilingualism)?

The study comprises data taken from a series of semi-structured interviews with ten university students (five attending college in South Korea and five attending college in Ireland) and uses a methodological approach based on the principles of Interpretative

Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to examine the nature of their language learning motivation. It interprets participant accounts through the lens of meaning-making, a process of constructing meaning out of the series of events in one's life in order to make sense of the events and construct an *ipse* identity for oneself.

An analysis of participant narratives illustrates that motivation is a dynamic, relational, and idiosyncratic construct that reflects the presence and influence of memories from school, several of which are emotionally-tinged, as well as a range of social and psychological factors such as personal relationships, values, social mores, and educational background. Moreover, motivation finds further complexity with the introduction of multilingualism as a factor. The participants demonstrated various approaches to how they dealt with their memories as they each continued to make decisions regarding their further language learning.

The complexity of motivation makes it difficult to predict whether and in what way language learning and development might continue after secondary education, although students' language learning experiences influence students' motivation to engage in further opportunities for multilingual development. Holistic approaches such as the one adopted by this study may generate further insight into language learning motivation that may be used to impact educational policy and pedagogy.

This study suggests that learners may benefit from approaches that conceive of them as individuals and include them in the research process because it allows them to reflect on their learning with a more knowledgeable other as a foil, helping them understand their language learning trajectories. Teachers can use approaches like that described in this study to conduct action-research in their own classes that can then inform their pedagogical and curricular choices. Policy makers can use this information to

better understand and prepare for long-term language learning as a gateway to multilingualism.

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Introduction

This dissertation is, above all, about people, specifically students. It explores how motivation manifests itself within students in their multilingual language development and attempts to offer a description of how the motivation to become bi- or multilingual is experienced by adolescent and young adult learners, focusing primarily on their language learning experiences in secondary school and the relationship of those experiences to the motivation to learn languages. This description is presented through several narrative accounts that highlight salient memories recalled by the participants and the meaning these memories bear, insofar as the participants' development into multilingual subjects is concerned.

This project adopts a person-in-context relational approach to motivation (Ushioda, 2009), which differs from other, separationist accounts of language learning motivation. A person-in-context relational approach understands the individual as intricately tied to their spatiotemporal environment, and vice versa. It is a holistic view that attempts to “capture the mutually constitutive relationship between persons and the contexts in which they act – a relationship that is dynamic, complex and non-linear” (Ushioda, 2009, p. 218). Ushioda defines this approach in the following way:

Let me summarise then what I mean by a person-in-context relational view of motivation. I mean a focus on real persons, rather than on learners as theoretical abstractions; a focus on the agency of the individual person as a thinking, feeling human being, with an identity, a personality, a unique history and background, a person with goals, motives and intentions; a focus on the interaction between this self-reflective intentional agent, and the fluid and complex system of social relations, activities, experiences, and multiple micro- and macro-contexts in which the person is embedded, moves, and is inherently part of. My argument is that we need to take a relational (rather than linear) view of these multiple contextual elements, and view motivation as an organic process that emerges through the complex system of interrelations. (p. 220)

Influenced by complexity theory (Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2002, 2011, 2017), this type of approach does not assume motivation to be a static psychological construct but instead appreciates the complex, non-linear nature of the human drive to act in accordance with one's desires. It understands that one's environment can influence one's actions, while at the same time allowing for the possibility that one's actions can influence the environment. Moreover, an additional benefit gained by conceiving of motivation in such a way is that, rather than simply looking forward, a person-in-context view also encourages the researcher to look around and look backward to understand how and why a person is moving forward in their language learning. Ushioda (2009), for example, mentions the individual's "unique history and background," things which often influence future decisions. By looking holistically at the individual's context, their history, present, and possible futures, the result is in an idiosyncratic view of motivation, in that what is found in the course of research is a unique individual's specific intentions in language development and the meaning they create for themselves in the process.

Motivation to become multilingual

There are two key premises undergirding this dissertation. The first is that it looks at motivation as motivation to become a bi- or multilingual subject (Wei, 2018) rather than simply motivation to learn a language or languages. The question of motivation has traditionally been framed as the latter, primarily because of a dualist view of language whereby a language learned later in life is "othered," somehow kept separate from one's first language(s). Essentially, learning a language is typically framed as learning to be monolingual in a new language, rather than becoming bi- or multilingual. However,

learning a new language does not entail forgetting previously acquired languages. Instead, becoming proficient in a new language results in becoming bi- or multilingual. Moreover, like the idiosyncratic nature of motivation, an individual's identification as bi- or multilingual is specific to themselves; in other words, while multilingualism may be common in the world, there is no universally singular experience of multilingualism. A person's multilinguality (Aronin, 2016; Aronin & Ó Laoire, 2004) is their own.

The second key premise is closely tied to the first and reflects the holistic approach afforded by the adopted framework. The premise is that learning and developing a new language is not simply an additive process but a reconstitutive one. In contrast to a "multiple monolingual" view of multilingualism (Grosjean, 1989, 1997), this project understands the learning of a new language or languages as affecting and modifying an individual's entire linguistic system. Furthermore, not only is the linguistic system affected, but the learning of new language(s) arguably changes the course of one's life. Whether the change is small or large, different languages can present new possibilities. This view is based on ecological theories of language (Kramsch, 2008; Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 2005) that compare a linguistic system to an ecosystem, whereby the introduction of a new presence alters the entire system.

Guided by these two premises, the research project detailed in this dissertation sought to understand how our experiences with learning and using languages, including experiences we have just because we can use a specific language or languages, bear on our motivation to become multilingual, and later to practice that multilinguality. It does so by taking an idiosyncratic look at how the process of becoming multilingual, and later practicing that multilinguality, was experienced by several participants who each had their own reasons and motivation.

Adolescent learners

It remains a curiosity that while adolescence is a time of life where a significant amount of additional language learning takes place, the concept of adolescent language acquisition and development remains relatively under-researched. The field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) has sub-disciplines dedicated to childhood SLA and bilingualism, and there is a wealth of information available on additional language learning for adults, but adolescent language learning has not attracted as much attention. This may be due partly to the fact that much of the language learning done in adolescence happens in a classroom, and classrooms are not always seen as the most efficacious or authentic places to learn language. The nature and role of language learning is a complicating factor: in some contexts, languages are learned to pass exams, and questions of retention need to be raised. There are also issues of class, race, and ethnicity involved in language education in formal educational contexts; the questions of who is doing the learning and what languages are being offered often lead to larger considerations of whose bi- or multilingualism is celebrated and whose is denigrated.

But these questions, while vital, do not always consider the agency that adolescents are experiencing for one of the first times in their lives. While it is true that adolescents are grappling with those same issues of class, race, and ethnicity, they are also learning, in a larger sense, what it means to be a person in the world. This involves being able to experience things first-hand and make decisions based on those experiences, sometimes without the influence of a parent or other adult. While adolescents may heed their parents' advice, sometimes they make decisions against that advice. Adolescents are learning how to be autonomous; although the level of autonomy

may differ based on specific social norms, adolescents generally find greater autonomy than they did as children. They are asked to be increasingly more responsible for themselves and their choices. In a sense, they are finding their voice in the world. This search for one's voice happens against the backdrop of significant developmental changes that affect an adolescent's psychological and physiological processes, all of which exert an undeniable impact on how they make decisions.

The process of becoming a person in the world encompasses answering for oneself questions of class, race, and ethnicity, and runs parallel with questions about which languages to speak, how to speak (i.e., registers and dialects) and with whom they should be used. If, as a child, an individual was raised in a "one parent, one language" household, as an adolescent that individual may choose to use a different language for any number of reasons: to rebel, to conceal, to provoke, and so on. This question of language extends into choosing subjects in school, such as which language to study, which is a choice one may have never had before. Although it can be said that such a choice is not formative in the sense that what is learned in secondary school is not always retained, the experience of language learning is something that will remain and can serve as an influence later in life.

Language learning memories and motivation

According to a 2012 report on languages in Europe, although a vast majority of Europeans believe that people should be able to speak at least one language in addition to their mother tongue, and that being multilingual brings on a host of personal and professional benefits, many cite a lack of motivation for not attempting to learn more languages (Council of Europe, 2012). Furthermore, approximately 8% of respondents

mention poor teaching methods and materials as a reason for not wanting to learn, and 3% note how negative experiences have discouraged them from learning additional languages. While these numbers may appear small, their significance should not be underestimated. Taking the Republic of Ireland as a case, the numbers are 12% and 6%, respectively, both above the EU average, and both about 4 percentage points higher than previous levels measured in 2005 (Council of Europe, 2012). This, taken in conjunction with anecdotes about the state of language teaching and learning in Ireland, reveals the beginning of a concerning situation. It should also be mentioned that, in the case of Ireland, it is not only foreign language learning that is included in these statistics: Irish language learning also has well-documented difficulties in terms of the perceived quality of instruction and associated negative experiences. Although state bilingualism is a value enshrined in the Irish constitution and multilingualism is perceived as a profitable practice for the individual, there are several obstacles preventing people from achieving it.

European countries and the citizens living there are not alone in seeing the benefits of being multilingual and in trying to achieve those benefits. Countries in East Asia have also emphasized language ability, often requiring proficiency in multiple languages simply to graduate university or earn a job. The Republic of Korea, for example, asks its people to study English beginning in primary school, with some type of English learning remaining mandatory through their undergraduate years at university. Proficiency in another foreign language (aside from English) is often seen as an additional boon and can further set one apart when looking for a job; at times, proficiency in English and another foreign language can even help a student earn a place in a top university. However, these demands typically go together with a traditionally competitive

atmosphere built on high-stakes testing. In other words, not only does one need to have proficiency in a language, but one must also demonstrate that proficiency via standardized test scores. To achieve those scores, young people in Korea will attend language schools and may even arrange for a year off from university to travel to a country where the language is used. Such a competitive atmosphere is often blamed, at least in part, for the country's comparatively high youth suicide rate and has led to the nickname "Hell Joseon" (Joseon being the traditional name of the country, when it was unified under the Joseon dynasty).

Of course, language learning is not solely to blame for such an environment, but language education, especially English language education, does factor significantly into the stress and anxiety present. It also suffers from some of the same criticisms that the European report exposed, such as dissatisfaction with teaching methods and poor previous experiences, so much so that despite years of instruction many Koreans are apprehensive about their English ability, saying they have "trauma" from their language classes and suffer "English sickness," a nauseous anxiety brought upon by the prospect of having to use it. Cho (2004) suggests that one reason Korean students might find the experience daunting is that, compared to other subjects, progress in learning a language and becoming multilingual is slower; without visible results, students might find it difficult to stay motivated.

This project

When it comes to investigating how people decide whether to begin or continue learning languages later in life, the kinds of experiences they have had are not always discussed, although experience shapes an individual's decisions and actions, sometimes

consciously and sometimes subconsciously. How an event is remembered, including the emotions associated with those memories, can impact whether an individual decides to undergo the same thing again, and learning a language, or trying to become multilingual, is no exception. If previous attempts were perceived failures, does one continue trying? If they were perceived as a success, does one want to reenact those experiences?

The primary question I wanted to answer was, “What is the nature of motivation to become multilingual?” To put it another way, why do some people work to become proficient in multiple languages, all the while undergoing a transformative and reconstitutive process by which they learn to be in the world in new and different ways? Much of this transformation is not often covered in language instruction classes and is instead hidden under the prominent view of multilingualism as multiple monolingualism; yet whether students know it or not, the development and use of different languages with different interlocutors is changing them on several levels. I was especially interested in investigating this phenomenon on the secondary school level, since this is where much language-related study takes place.

To answer this question, I developed two questions that provided more focus for this project. They are as follows:

1. What do young multilingual subjects remember about their language learning experiences, especially of those languages they learned in secondary school, and in what manner do they recall these memories? To what extent are emotions represented in these memories?
2. How do these memories of their language learning experiences continue to impact the motivation to learn, develop and use different languages (i.e., practice their multilingualism)?

My intention in undertaking this project was to investigate how, in becoming multilingual, memory of experiences relates to motivation and action. By working with participants and discussing their language learning journeys, I sought to find out what they considered significant memories in becoming a multilingual and how they recalled those memories, including the kinds of emotions they associate with those memories. The stories collected from these discussions and the accompanying analyses are presented here as case studies that, while showing common elements experienced by the array of participants, protect the integrity of each individual's idiosyncratic development into a multilingual subject.

1. Motivation

1.1. Introduction

Despite the long history of research into individual difference (IDs) and its place as “one of the most thoroughly studied psychological aspects of SLA” (Dörnyei, 2014, p. 6), properties such as motivation, aptitude, and affect tend to remain on the outside of mainstream language acquisition research. Dörnyei (2014) argues that this position is perhaps due the fact that aspects such as motivation tend to relate more to the end product of language acquisition rather than the actual process. Ushioda (2016) concurs with the sentiment, saying that motivation is often studied in a broad way that fails to take the particular context of the subjects into account. However, reflecting the influence of Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2002, 2011, 2017) on applied linguistics, recent insight into how IDs, motivation in particular, are themselves dynamic processes related to other aspects of language acquisition have brought research into IDs closer in line with developments in other aspects of applied linguistics research.

This chapter will provide a review of the theories that have contributed to research on language learning motivation, beginning with traditional theories such as the socio-educational model and moving on to describe current trends in research influenced by complex dynamic systems theory and dialogical processes of becoming.

1.2. Key theories in traditional L2 motivation research

This section will provide a summary of the major theories and concepts that have formed the basis for studies on language learning motivation. It begins with an overview of integrative motivation and explains that, while it is a useful concept, it has room for

further development. The section then reviews other seminal concepts in psychological theories of language learning motivation before introducing theories based in sociocultural thought. It ends with a look at some more contemporary framings of motivation and suggests that, for individuals such as those at the core of the present study, what we currently think we know about motivation in language learning may benefit from a more varied and dynamic set of perspectives.

1.2.1. Integrative motivation, or Integrativeness

In a framework that remains influential in language learning motivation studies, Gardner and Lambert (1972) identified two types of motivation within second language learners. One is instrumental motivation; this suggests that learners are motivated by the practical utility of a language, such as being able to use a language to procure employment or achieve academic success (Lambert, 1974). The second is integrative motivation, which can be best understood as a “sincere and personal interest in the people and culture” of the target language group (Lambert, 1974, p. 98). Gardner (2006) elaborates on this, defining integrative motivation, or integrativeness as it is labelled, as “being interested in learning the language in order to interact with valued members of the other community and/or to learn more about that community” as well as “an open interest in other cultural communities in general” (p. 7).

Both integrative and instrumental motivation factor into Gardner’s (1985, 2010) socio-educational model of language learning. Further, Gardner (2006, 2010) has continued to champion integrativeness as one of the major predictors of success in learning languages, although he has also stated that the type of motivation is not as important as the motivation itself.

Integrative motivation makes greater sense in a context where there is a clearly visible target language group. For example, non-English speakers immigrating to England and having to learn English are surrounded by a specific language group once they leave the classroom. They must work, shop, and live in this new environment where using English is not only going to make it easier to live, which is closer to instrumental motivation, but they will be forming relationships with people within the community. To maintain and build on these relationships, they will have to use English. It is easy to understand the openness and desire of a recent immigrant to want to communicate with members of a society within which they are trying to make a home and that they are faced with daily.

In a context where the target language group does not have a strongly visible presence, however, an integrative orientation may not prove as strong a factor as an instrumental one, since the learner is most probably already a member of the majority society and is learning a new language for school, work, or some other purpose. Although Gardner (2006) mentions that for him, the type of motivation is not as important as its intensity, he argues that integrativeness helps to achieve mastery of the target language. Gardner's idea of mastery seems to entail some level of acculturation or adoption of the behaviors of the target group. However, it has also been suggested that the socio-educational model, and its delineation of integrative and instrumental motivation, were meant to explain general attitudes and behaviors and not individual variation (Ushioda, 2020). As such, individual variation continues to pose a problem for explanations that center on the instrumental/integrative divide.

Despite its far-reaching influence, the integrative factor is open to criticism based on the vague conceptualization of the target group. Integrativeness focuses on the

learner's desire to associate with a target language group but does not always account for the group itself – how they react to the learner, whether they show any acceptance of the learner, and how the group's reaction affects the learner's motivation. It appears that it is up to the learner to change or hide certain aspects of themselves to appease the group and integrate successfully. Research mentions positive views of the group held by the learner as being a part of the integrative factor (e.g., R. C. Gardner, 2006; Lambert, 1974), but there is little mention of the group's view of the learner. Although Gardner has gone on to update the concept of integrativeness (2006), it still focuses on the learner's overall "openness to cultural identification" and does not mention the group's openness to the learner. In fact, Gardner emphasizes this point, stating that motivation is "a characteristic of the individual, not the environment" (2012, p. 5), which denotes that the effect of the environment and those within it are not considered in this conception of motivation. In other words, the learner's motivation to learn the language and communicate with the group has little to do with an environment conducive to such an interaction, including the group's motivation to accept the learner.

Further, in this model of motivation, the target language community is often assumed to be a distinct, monolithic ethnolinguistic group which may or may not line up easily with the population of a specific nation-state, or even be accurately represented by the target language. This is the case with many globalized languages, English being the most relevant example: Ushioda and Dörnyei (2009), for example, comment on the difficulty of pinning down a specific language community when talking about World Englishes, and Coetzee-Van Rooy (2006) concludes that integrativeness is "untenable for second language learners in world Englishes contexts" (p. 447). Spanish is another example of an incredibly diverse globalized language, with several varieties spoken in the

Americas and in Spain: there are 22 academies of the Spanish language operating under the Real Academia Española.

Global languages, like World Englishes, have been found to be a legitimate challenge for integrative motivation. For example, Lamb's (2004) study challenged the assumptions of integrativeness, suggesting that "whether learners have a favourable attitude towards English-speaking cultures may not be a relevant question any longer, as English is no longer associated just with Anglophone countries" (p. 13). His study found that Indonesian school children learning English modeled their language on more proficient urban middle-class Indonesian English speakers rather than the more distant "native speaker" model of English. Reflecting on Lamb's work, Coetzee-Van Rooy (2006) suggests a modification to Kachru's (1988) model of three concentric circles for world English: the addition of a more localized group composed of urban middle-class speakers of English within traditionally non-English using nations. This group would not be so different from the learner, being of a similar cultural and linguistic background, but could still be the focus of any integrative drive the learner might have.

The target of integrative motivation, the target language group, is often thought of as external to the learner and, in some way, dissimilar to the learner. It is composed of people from a cultural and linguistic background that differs from that of the learner, and the learner is attempting to communicate with or join that group. However, that may not be the case for all learners; instead, a learner might have other target groups in mind. One such group that seems to have been undervalued by the concept of integrativeness is the language learning community. It might be argued that an Irish learner of Spanish is seeking integration into the greater community of Irish learners of Spanish, for example. During adolescence, which is consequently the timeframe that much school-based

language learning takes place, issues of identity and belonging are common, and learning Spanish in this case might be a way for a learner to relate to their friends and share in the learning experience. With the current emphasis on the development of multilingualism in Ireland, and Europe as a whole, it could also be argued that these Irish learners of Spanish are looking towards joining another possible local target language group: Irish multilinguals. Promises of career opportunities for multilinguals might see the Irish learner of Spanish attempting to integrate into this group, with both instrumental and integrative factors exerting some influence. Again, due to readings of the term “target language group” that tend to place it at a metaphorical distance from the learner, groups that are more immediate and possibly more meaningful to the learner do not receive the same amount of attention in the research.

Furthermore, with regard to learners learning two or more languages concurrently, it is unclear how the idea of integrativeness can be elaborated. Despite the relatively recent multilingual turn (May, 2013) in applied linguistics research, learners have generally been seen as L2 learners regardless of how many languages they know or are learning, and this is generally true with integrativeness. If successful language learning relies in part on motivation driven by a wish to positively associate with the language community, we must come up with a different conception of motivation that considers multiple language learning and multiple communities.

Another criticism of the integrative factor is that it seems to assume that the learner is starting from a point of exclusion and is looking for inclusion, which ignores the fact that the learner already belongs to another group. Language learners already know at least one other language and have an already established life before entering a new language learning situation. This life does not simply disappear upon entering the

learning environment or later reaching a certain level of proficiency in the target language. Whether the learner intends to leave their original group, whether the new group is accepting of the learner, how the original group reacts to the learner's attempt to join a new group and how the learner responds are all concerns that seem to fall outside of the concept of integrativeness. Even Gardner's turn towards a more general definition of integrativeness (2006) as "Openness to Cultural Identification" (p. 7), or an open interest in other cultures, does not seem to take these concerns into account.

Csizer and Dörnyei's (2005) redefinition of integrativeness as "the L2 representation of one's ideal self," explaining it in the following way: "If one's ideal self is associated with the mastery of a L2, that is, if the person that we would like to become is proficient in the L2, we can be described as having an integrative disposition." In other words, one's present "self" has an integrative disposition towards a future "self" that is a proficient user of the L2, or target language, and not towards a specific language community. Csizer and Dörnyei continue on to say that, to the learner, members of a distinct L2 community could symbolically represent a learner's idealized L2 self, and mention that a more positive view of the L2 community would denote a more positive view of the ideal L2 self. While this reinterpretation offers a more flexible view of the concept of integrativeness, it still calls for a certain level of acculturation or assimilation and does not take into consideration what the learner brings with them.

Yashima's (2009) suggestion that integrativeness be thought of more as an "international posture," or openness to learning about the world, is a promising alternative that allows for a broader reading of learner motives. International posture argues that dividing motivation along lines of instrumental and integrative is not easy to do, especially in an EFL context, given the cultural capital that English has. For the

participants in Yashima's study, integrativeness was not a significant factor, but the potential for establishing intercultural relationships was, and English was seen as a way to communicate with a wide range of people from other places and cultures. International posture "captures a tendency to see oneself as connected to the international community, have concerns for international affairs and possess a readiness to interact with people other than Japanese" (p. 146); in this way, it differs from integrativeness since the learner is not attempting to join a different group, but is instead trying to open oneself up to other groups. It can also be considered an acknowledgement that one is already a member of a diverse international community that was partly inaccessible until a new language, in this case English, opened up some of the closed-off areas. However, while international posture seems to be applicable to a greater number of language learning contexts, it does not account for bilingualism and multilingualism as such, and also does not seem to explain unintended effects of language learning, such as learning disparate ideas encoded in a different language that the learner has found more convincing than those of their "home" culture.

International posture maintains the strict distinction between internal and external: the international community is external to the learner, and the learner stands open in relation to a diverse set of others. Many of the above conceptions of integrativeness assert that successful language learners adopt some sort of posture in relation to the community that already uses the learner's target language, whether it is the learner simply being open to communicating with the community or attempting to join the community, but comparatively little has been written about changes to these postures over time, and how these postures or approaches to language learning have been affected by communication with members of the target language community.

Despite its shortcomings, the idea of integrativeness remains a useful construct that may be made more complete by approaching it via a more relational approach. As it stands, however, integrativeness seems to be one-directional movement, from a state of exclusion to one of inclusion; furthermore, Csizer and Dörnyei's (2005) reinterpretation frame it as a "reduction of the discrepancy between one's actual and ideal selves" (p. 30). It is essentially an internal psychological stance based on the learner's perception of external elements, and the various definitions and models that incorporate integrativeness appear to draw a sharp distinction between what goes on inside the learner's mind and what happens outside.

1.2.2. Other key perspectives in SLA motivation research

Another contribution to SLA motivation research came from self-determination theory and intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation arising because an activity is enjoyable or fulfilling in and of itself; it does not rely on some reward coming from outside. If a language learner has high intrinsic motivation, this would mean that the learner is choosing to learn a language because the language itself is fun or interesting, or because the process of learning holds some value for the learner. This is in contrast to extrinsic motivation, which is motivation that exists because of some promised reward. Learning a language for a higher grade in a class or for a job opportunity would be examples of extrinsic motivation.

Self-determination theory suggests that learners with high intrinsic motivation would be more successful in their learning attempts. Ryan and Deci (2000), for example, suggest that for behaviors that are at first extrinsically motivated, internalization of the

behavior (and consequently, the motivation) may be helped by the recognition that the behavior is important to a valued other, such as a parent or friend. In a classroom setting, internalization can be seen in a student trying to achieve better results because they like their teacher and feel appreciated and supported by the teacher. Ryan and Deci (2000) call this sense of wanting to connect with the valued other a sense of relatedness. It is reminiscent of the integrative factor mentioned above. Indeed, Ryan and Deci (2000) account for a type of integration in their model, defining it as the adoption of a behavior or belief as one's own "so that it will emanate from one's sense of self" (p. 60). This seems to go one step further than integrativeness, in that one is not simply trying to be like another, but that the adopted behavior also develops a value for the learner themselves.

Attribution theory (Weiner, 2010) has also influenced studies of language learning motivation. Weiner (2010) writes that attribution theory may be thought of as a "field of inquiry" that looks into "phenomenal causality" (p. 558); in other words, it investigates the perceived causes of outcomes rather than the "real" causes. For example, a student may succeed at learning a language because of a perceived aptitude for language learning; or an athlete may perform well at a sport because of a perceived athletic advantage.

In his overview of attribution theory, Weiner cites four causal dimensions: the locus of the cause, controllability, stability, and globality. The first of these, locus, continues the thread of internal and external that has presented itself in motivation studies: some causes, such as aptitude, are internal to the actor, while others, such as luck, can be thought of as external to the actor. It may be argued that concepts such as aptitude, though seen as internal, may rely on some external standard to measure

aptitude; however, people can still feel the effect of those standards in a real and personal way. Controllability refers to whether causes are directly controllable by the individual; Weiner (2010) uses aptitude as an example of a cause that is not controlled by the individual, while effort is. Stability refers to whether the cause is stable over time or whether it fluctuates. Finally, globality refers to the extent to which the cause is situation-specific or generalizable across domains.

One interesting thing noted by Weiner (2010) was that it is possible for teachers to unintentionally reveal their perceptions of causal attributions to their students, which may in turn affect student behavior and emotions. Motivation may be affected in the same way: for example, if a teacher believes a student is struggling to learn a language, the teacher may perceive it to be a lack of ability and might change their behavior towards the student. The student may then feel that the teacher is acting in a patronizing manner, or is no longer expecting the student to succeed, which may then affect the student's motivation to continue trying to learn. Here again we see the interplay between external (teacher's expectations) and internal (student's motivation), and a burgeoning recognition that the two might not be so easy to demarcate, although priority is still given to the internal.

1.2.3. Room for improvement in psychologically-based approaches to motivation

While the above theories have made inroads into understanding what it means to be motivated to learn a language, there are still areas where studies of language learning motivation can evolve. One problematic aspect of motivation has been its connection to learning success, with success being understood as some level of proficiency. Dörnyei (2014) notes that language learners vary widely in terms of their success at learning, and

that this has been seen as related to IDs among learners, specifically language aptitude and motivation (p. 4). "Success" here may rely on a measure of proficiency that has been decided by parties with specific interests, such as teachers or researchers, but this "success" may not be the same kind of "success" envisioned by the learner. It can be argued that terms such as "success" and "failure" presuppose an objective standard that does not truly consider the fluid and dynamic nature of further or additional language development. This view of language learning "success" envisions the existence of a complete and monolithic language system that can be acquired by the learner to various levels of proficiency rather than as a fluid practice. Of course, language systems have been standardized to some extent, but within active use, there is undoubtedly a wide range of variation allowable without impeding intelligibility. Other similarly problematic terms are "mastery" (mentioned alongside the integrative factor of motivation), "good language learner," "aptitude" and "intelligence." Because many studies rely on a standardized, "objective" measure of "success," there is still much to be learned by investigating the actual use of the learned language on a more regular basis, considering that language proficiency during assessment may vary due to several cognitive, social and emotional factors. Moreover, there is a relative lack of attention paid to the relationship of "success" and differences in schooling and school communities, educational policy, administration, educational structures and learning resources. For example, unequal distribution of learning resources (i.e., materials and teachers) is often a reason for differences in educational "success" as measured on standardized exams. Given that there seems to be a reciprocal relationship between motivation and success, it would stand to reason that these issues deserve more attention.

Further, research into motivation has often relied on generic conceptualizations of the context. Ushioda (2015) has argued that context is often described in terms of educational, cultural or linguistic environment (e.g., a French class in a secondary school in Ireland), that learners are placed into these contexts, and that the contexts affect internal variables (such as motivation). With this view, the interaction between learner and context (internal and external) appears to be one-directional, with the context exerting influence on the learner. Furthermore, motivation studies have tended to reduce the presence of groups such as teachers, peers, and family members and their effect on an individual's motivation.

Views of motivation based on sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) have not been as prevalent in SLA research yet may provide further insight into motivational processes. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) explain how sociocultural views of motivation reconceive of the relationship between individual motivation and the context, saying that "individual motivation is not simply 'influenced by' sociocultural factors in the surrounding context, but the sociocultural context becomes attuned to the goals, standards and values of the collective participants who define that context and shape its practices" (p. 34). Sociocultural views of motivation, therefore, assume that learning contexts, goals, practices, and the motivation to engage in them are socially co-created and mutually experienced (Hickey & Granade, 2004). This creates space to explore how relationships between individuals and their context, including other people in the context, may lead to mutual and combined influences on and experiences of motivation.

Furthermore, in her description of a person-in-context approach to motivation, Ushioda (2009) calls attention to the flattening or erasing of individual learner selves, composed of aspects of identity such as heritage, nationality, race, and gender, as well as

other individual elements like personal histories; these tend to be ignored when discussing context as well. The language or languages one already uses, and the communities that those languages connect them to, exert no small influence on how a student approaches the development of an additional language. Studies on motivation have tended to focus on common elements among learners within a group being studied, and this focus has led to many insights about the nature of motivation; however, there has been relatively less attention paid to qualities that make individual learners unique aside from commentary that certain factors may differ between learners. To fill this gap, there has been an increase in qualitative work looking at motivation: Siridetkoon and Dewaele (2018) comment on the shift towards more qualitative work, highlighting how researchers known for their quantitative work on motivation have come to acknowledge that motivation is non-linear and difficult to measure by quantitative means (p. 314). Although quantitative work still dominates the field, qualitative studies allow for the depth required to compose a fuller picture of what language learning looks like for an individual learner.

1.2.4. Alternative perspectives of motivation

Some of the above issues are addressed by alternative approaches to motivation. A poststructuralist perspective, for example, looks at issues of identity and how it works within a learner. Norton Peirce (1995) perceived a glaring weakness of the primarily psychological conceptions of motivation in SLA research: the difficulty in describing how the language learner relates to the world around them. Norton Peirce also criticizes models of motivation that seem to idealize the situation of the learner, often giving the learner more agency and volition than a social context might actually afford them; she

suggests that it is problematic to assume that a learner defined as “motivated” will have no apparent issues communicating with the target language community if they choose to do so. Even the labelling of learners as “motivated” or “unmotivated,” among other things, rests on an assumption that these labels will hold, although it has been observed “that such affective factors are frequently socially constructed in inequitable relations of power, changing over time and space, and possibly coexisting in contradictory ways in a single individual” (Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 12).

To account for these shortcomings, Norton Peirce (1995) suggests the concept of investment, which relies on a more “socially and historically constructed relationship” of a learner to the target language. Rather than being motivated to learn a language, for Norton Peirce a learner “invests” in a language with the expectation that they will see a return on that investment in the form of an increase in “the value of their cultural capital” (p. 17), a term she borrows from Bourdieu (1977). Essentially, learning a new language will give the learner something of value that they can then use to procure something else of value. This concept at first appears to rely on an economic and somewhat transactional view of the language learning endeavor, but it also makes room for a more well-rounded understanding of the individual learner. Coupled with the theory of investment is a view of the learner as a historical figure with a “complex social identity,” and that in the process of learning and using the target language the learner is also undergoing a perpetual process of reorganizing and readjusting how they relate to the world around them.

Another perspective that has yielded significant insight into motivation has been the ecological perspective adopted by a growing number of researchers in applied linguistics, linguistic anthropology, and similar fields. An ecological approach to language

learning provides a more organic view of the learner and their surroundings than other more transactional approaches that have typified studies in language learning motivation.

A proponent of an ecological approach, Kramsch (2002) commented that the learner-as-computer metaphor had come to dominate SLA research; such a metaphor relies on a definition of language acquisition as a growing ability to process input and create output. Instead, ecological approaches, such as the theory of language socialization (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984), adopt a learner-as-apprentice metaphor, whereby the learner's language development is inextricably tied into their development as a member of a language community. Language socialization is a direct descendant of Vygotskyian sociocultural theory (1978) that makes use of a community of more proficient others: by learning a language, a learner is not only learning the grammatical rules governing the language system, but also the numerous social and cultural forces that define the language community. Ochs and Schiefflin (2008) define language socialization as "socialization *through* language and socialization *into* language," (p. 5) which can be taken to mean that language is not only the end goal but also the means by which socialization occurs and that, to some extent, learners come to embody the language, or at least embody the sociocultural forces at work in the language community. Importantly, socialization does not have an end point but is instead an open-ended process that more accurately reflects typical attempts at language learning.

Lemke (2002) comments on the nature of language development in an ecological approach, arguing that there is no relevant 'final state' of language development, and that common methods that make use of discrete assessment cannot accurately measure an individual's level of language development. Rather, it is the process itself that is the main focus. Ecological approaches see interaction between a language and its users as

the interaction between parts of a living organism, so that rather than understanding the parts as wholly separate, both the language and its users are seen as parts, or fractals, of a greater system, the language community.

From an ecological perspective grounded in sociocultural theory, motivation can be understood to be strikingly similar to integrativeness, wherein the learner is motivated to become a part of the community and internalizes various aspects of the community as a whole. Unlike integrativeness, though, motivation is not generated internally nor is it a character trait of the learner; instead, it emerges from the developing relationship the individual has with the community at large.

Insights from the sociocultural and poststructural perspectives help in bridging the gap between the internal and external, shedding much-needed light on the context of the learner, but seem to pull too much in the other direction by focusing primarily on the context while decreasing space for the learner's voice. Traditional psychological approaches to SLA and topics like motivation, on the other hand, have been criticized for limited views of the context or environment (e.g., van Lier, 2002). Still, the ecological perspective has opened the way for a more complete picture of motivation that integrates the internal and external.

1.3. Current trends

Currently, there is a proliferation of models that borrow heavily from Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST) (Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2002, 2011, 2017). Rather than focus solely on the individual factors, these models emphasize the links among the myriad qualities that may affect motivation (Ushioda, 2009, 2015; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009, 2012). Another element some of these newer

models share is the idea of self-building, or realization of 'possible selves' (Markus & Nurius, 1986) whereby language for the learner-user is an integral component in the construction or expression of one's imagined self (Dörnyei, 2009a; Dörnyei, Ibrahim, et al., 2015; Dörnyei & Chan, 2013; Henry, 2015b).

1.3.1. CDST for motivation

The introduction of CDST into linguistics, especially applied linguistics, has led to its application in analyzing motivation, with researchers studying language learning motivation through a CDST lens to gain new insights into motivational processes. Motivation, rather than an independent variable that seemed to resist easy integration into other processes of language acquisition, has itself become something seen as dynamic and dependent on other factors: "Motivation is less a trait than a fluid play, an ever-changing one that emerges from the process of interaction of many agents, internal and external, in the ever-changing complex world of the learner" (Ellis & Larsen-Freeman, 2006, p. 563). The observation that motivation fluctuates over time, for example, has become a vital component to understanding motivational processes that were, at one point, conceived of as relatively static. The relatively recent increase in longitudinal studies of learner motivation has yielded evidence that motivation does not always hold steady over an extended period of time; even in cases where motivation may appear stable over a period of time, it may experience fluctuations on shorter timescales within that longer period of time (e.g., Henry, 2015a).

The view of motivation as multidimensional and contingent upon contextual factors has opened it up to the possibilities of interpretation and insight offered by the CDST approach, but it has also meant that motivational researchers have had to be more

deliberate in choosing what aspect of motivation to concentrate their efforts on. Because CDST is itself complex, it is incumbent upon researchers to decide where to focus while at the same time acknowledging that there are other factors at work beyond the scope of the study; conclusions drawn from such studies are always “provisional and partial” (Larsen-Freeman, 2017, p. 13). Ushioda (2016) has provided guidance, instructing researchers to sharpen their focus; others have demonstrated how focusing on the relationships between different psycholinguistic, affective, sociocultural and spatiotemporal contexts may lead to further understanding of motivational processes (e.g., Dörnyei, MacIntyre, et al., 2015).

1.3.2. L2 Self-System

A model of motivation that draws inspiration from complexity theory has been Dörnyei's (2009b) L2 Self-System. The L2 Self-System essentially consists of the actual self, the ideal L2 self, and the ought-to self, along with L2 learning experiences. The actual self refers to the learner's current or present state; essentially, it is who they are at the current moment in time. The ideal L2 self is the aspect of one's ideal self that encompasses one's desired proficiency in the L2. This ideal L2 self is an envisioned or imagined, yet phenomenologically real, future self who uses the target language in the way the learner-user intends to use the language. For example, if a learner sets foot into an English language classroom with the goal of reaching a C1 level, that learner's ideal English self can be described as a C1 proficient self; the ideal L2 self, though, is just one part of an overall ideal self. Although the prospect of ideal L2 selves is a useful construct for providing language learners with a meaningful goal, there is the risk of an easy misreading through which the L2 self becomes a static construct (Henry, 2015b);

therefore, the word “ideal” must be seen as a context-dependent dynamic state that can never be completely achieved. It is, in essence, a moving target, and it is shaped by the constantly evolving learner-user’s perception of themselves.

The ought-to L2 self is an aspect characterized by perceived duties and responsibilities, such as studying a language because a secondary school student “ought to” study, get good grades and pass exams. Duties might have been placed upon the learner by others who surround them, such as parents or teachers, or perhaps by greater social forces such as values and expectations. While the ought-to self may at times be at odds with the ideal self, Dörnyei (2009b) comments that strong ideal self-guides rely on some harmony between the ideal and ought-to selves.

Another key term is self-discrepancy, which refers to the metaphorical distance between the actual self and the ideal self; in the L2 self-system, motivation is the desire to close the gap between one’s actual and ideal selves. Finally, L2 learning experiences refers to the immediate language learning environment; Dörnyei (2009b) states that it “concerns situated, ‘executive’ motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience (e.g. the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, the experience of success)” (p. 29). He later develops this definition to include the school context, the syllabus, the peer group, the learning tasks, and the role of the teacher; still, compared to the other key components of the L2 self-system (ideal L2 self and ought-to self), it has not been the focus of as much research (Dörnyei, 2019). It should also be noted that despite its label, it focuses on the immediate learning experience, and not previous experiences of learning.

An interesting outgrowth of the L2 self-system is the anti-ought-to L2 self, which can be defined as a rebellious “self” that is motivated to succeed in something that has

little value to others, or that others have advised against. Researchers have found that in addition to the more typical motives for language learning, such as promised economic rewards or a wish to integrate, learners might be motivated simply to prove others wrong (Lanvers, 2017; Thompson, 2017). Therefore, embedded within the anti-ought-to self is a relationship with others, falling in line with the continued emphasis in motivation on a connection between self and other, or internal and external. Thompson (2017) discusses a student, Alex, who was told by his TA that he was not particularly good at Chinese and should consider studying another language; Alex continued to study Chinese to prove his TA wrong. In this example, the influence of the Other, the TA, on Alex led to the development of an anti-ought-to self. In other words, in Alex's case, the anti-ought-to self emerged from the interplay between the Self (Alex) and the Other (the TA).

At the heart of the anti-ought to self is a resistance to an expected, valued outcome or behavior. In a sense, this rebellion against typical values can be thought of as both a move towards a specific outcome (i.e., an integration into a target group, or a decrease in self-discrepancy) as well as a move away from an outcome that others might value, but that the language learner themselves does not. In other words, it is simultaneously a motivation to identify with a particular language or group as well as motivation to differentiate oneself from another language or group.

The L2 self-system has allowed for a dynamic reading of learner motivation, making up for the static conceptions of motivation that could be seen in earlier models. Since the ideal L2 self is meant to change with time and is contingent upon the actual self's continuous self-evaluation, motivation to close the gap between actual and ideal selves must change as well and examining the nature and causes of this change has led to greater insight into the phenomenon of language learning motivation. However, this

model still prioritizes the internal “Self” to the external “Other,” positioning the Other outside of the Self, such as in the ought-to self, where the Other is perceived as placing responsibilities on the learner. Because the ought-to self is characterized by “perceived” duties and responsibilities, the word “perception” may result in it seeming less real than the actual self. Dörnyei (2019) recognizes as well that another source of the Other in the L2 self-system, the L2 learning experience, has not generated as much attention as the other two components (ideal self and ought-to self), which demonstrates a bias in the focus of SLA motivation research based on this model.

1.3.3. Room for developing the L2 self-system

One of the major criticisms of the L2 self-system is that it, like much SLA research, is victim to the monolingual bias and does not sufficiently address the concepts of bilingualism and multilingualism. The ideal L2 self is the aspect of the overall ideal self that refers to L2 proficiency, but this proficiency tends to be viewed in isolation from the learner’s L1 (or L1s) and other L2s that the learner might have learned and continues to use. Although the ideal L2 self is simply meant to be a guide and is dynamic in nature, there is always the danger of it being used to hurt a learner’s motivation because they cannot achieve their ideal proficiency or cannot be the ideal speaker they have in mind due to the influence of their other languages.

As a response to the monolingual bias in the framing of concepts such as the “ideal” and “ought-to Lx self,” Henry (2017), following Ushioda (2017), transforms and extends the concept of an ideal self to multilinguals, proposing a holistic and unified “ideal multilingual self” to replace the “selves” that might correspond to each language within a multilingual’s repertoire (i.e. L2 self, L3 self, etc.). This multilingual self exists on a

higher level, encompassing the different L2 selves that learners can develop; an ideal multilingual self can consist of several different ideal L2 selves that interact with each other in various ways. Such a system helps to explain the various iterations of multilingualism, such as the “contentedly bilingual self” and the “ideal multilingual self.” Further, it suggests that individuals who were not born into a multilingual household but instead are working towards multilingualism through formal education can also develop distinct multilingual identities and describe their image of multilingualism similarly to how individuals born into a multilingual situation do, suggesting that there are common elements to what has typically been framed as different experiences. Such a turn to a multilingual self calls for a need to promote motivation studies and motivational strategies that use a more holistic and non-separationist view of the language learner and urges researchers to view participants as potential bilingual and multilingual subjects.

The role of affect and its influence on motivation has also been historically undervalued in motivation research. Affective responses, such as emotions, related to motivation are typically broadly described as either positive or negative, and anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989) seems to be the affective variable most frequently mentioned in research. However, emotions experienced when learning languages are more varied and complex than perfunctory mentions of anxiety allow. MacIntyre (2002) argues that emotions are integral to the motivational system and that a more complete analysis of the emotions experienced during language learning could help explain differences and fluctuations in language learning motivation. Swain (2013) adds that “emotions cannot be ignored in understanding language learning processes” (p. 196), both in the way that emotions may influence language learning and vice versa. She also comments on the social nature of emotions: in Swain’s example of two eighth grade L2

French learners, she examines the co-construction of emotions throughout a dialogue, concluding that “emotions are socially constructed in dialogue.” This follows from Parkinson (1996), who argued that emotions are first and foremost social phenomena, influenced by interpersonal relationships and sociocultural interpretations of events, and with real-life communicative and behavioral implications.

Since the L2 self-system (and theories of motivation that preceded it) tended to prioritize individual action and judgement and see them as in tension with external forces, whatever emotions were mentioned were seen as individual psychological processes that occurred in reaction to those external forces. Typically, these emotions would be considered internal to the learner, while Parkinson (1996) would argue that there would have been outward signs of these emotions as they were performed to communicate something meaningful to the learner’s counterpart, perhaps a teacher or another student. By understanding the social and relational nature of emotions, we might be in a better position to interpret motivation as a relational process.

1.3.4. Person-in-context relational model

Henry’s (2017) aforementioned ideal multilingual self is one theorization based on Ushioda’s (2009) person-in-context relational model. In this approach, the learner-user is not abstracted out of their context but is rather understood as an integral part of, and agent of, their context. Echoing CDST (Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2002, 2011, 2017), she contends that the relationship between a person and their context is “dynamic, complex, and non-linear” (Ushioda, 2009, p. 218); she later discusses the concept of “emergent motivation,” which is motivation that comes to be as the result of a process of self-organization. In other words, motivation emerges from the

interaction between the person and their context. In a sense, the context is always with us; it could be a future ideal self, another individual, another language, or a particular environment. While Ushioda states that her model is pragmatic rather than humanistic in nature, the end result can be used to argue for a more humanistic approach to the language learner.

Motivation to learn and use language is thus not an independent process; rather, it is tied into the lived experience of the individual. In the case of a school student, motivation to learn a language may not be attributable simply to the language itself or any perceived instrumental attributes; rather, motivation for language learning happens against a backdrop of factors such as the temporal and physical classroom environment, the social relationships among the students and teachers, other school subjects, extracurricular activities, and home relationships. It may also fluctuate over different periods of time. As it is impossible within the scope of a single research project to know everything about the persons-in-context being studied, Ushioda (2016) suggests focusing on certain discrete factors. Interrogating experience may also lead to promising theoretical developments.

Ushioda's (2009) framework is heavily influenced by CDST, so it shares many core elements. One such element is autopoiesis. Dynamic systems are considered to be autopoietic, and there are two readings of autopoietic as it relates to motivation. The first relates to the concept of self-organization. One of the key elements of a complex system is that it is an open system that responds to an introduced stress by reorganizing itself more efficiently. There is no endpoint or final equilibrium achieved, although there may be periods of general stability. Such a system is described as autopoietic, in that while it continues to undergo change in a discrete way, the overall identity of the system remains

the same (Maturana & Varela, 1972). Larsen-Freeman (2011) has compared this to language, which has demonstrated the quality of changing according to use; the same has been said of multilinguals and language learner-users (e.g., Ellis, 2008; Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Jessner, 2008). If motivation is also characterized as dynamic system, it too is understood to be in a perpetual process of re-stabilizing.

A second interpretation sees motivation as autopoietic in the sense that learning or developing a language can be interpreted as the process of making and remaking oneself, and that motivation is an expression of a desire to change or to be remade into a new self. As Kramsch (2009) notes, “The impulse to learn a foreign language, and when learning it, to actually acquire it well or not, might have less to do with the objective demands to get a job, become integrated into a native speaker community, identify with native speakers or with a particular ideology, and more to do with the fulfillment of the self, that is, the drive of the learner for physical, emotional, and social equilibrium” (p. 75). In referring to the “fulfillment of the self,” what she seems to be suggesting is that at the heart of the language learning process is an attempt to become something different, or rather, more than what one is at present; “fulfill” implies that there was a lack, a perceived need or imperfection, and that by learning a language the learner-user is becoming more complete. What this does is restore agency to the learner-user, who manipulates the potential of language learning, and learning in general, to effect change within themselves.

1.3.5. Relational aspects of motivation

With the recognition that motivation is related to an individual’s context, there has been growing research into how others within the learner’s life may play a role, with

particular attention to teachers and peers within the language classroom; these “others” are sometimes referred to as important or significant others. Shoaib and Dörnyei (2005), for example, note the presence of parental, teacher and peer influence in the participants’ learning histories, delineating a “significant-other-related dimension” within their analysis. Further, Dörnyei (2009b) includes the presence of others within the L2 Motivational Self-System in both the ought-to self (perceived obligations to others) and the learning experience (teacher and peer presence). Within broader educational research, Uslu and Gizir (2017) concluded that teacher-student relationships and peer relationships seemed to have a large influence on adolescents’ sense of school belonging; students with a sense of belonging tended to have more positive attitudes towards school and higher levels of academic motivation and engagement. It has also been suggested that support from family members, teachers and peers play important, albeit independent and largely domain-specific, roles in student motivation, academic success, emotional well-being and prosocial behavior (Wentzel, 1998, 2017; Wentzel et al., 2016, 2017). For example, Wentzel et al. (2016) suggested that while emotional support from teachers seemed to predict motivation, emotional support from parents seemed to be more closely related to academic achievement.

The role that teachers play in an individual’s language learning motivation has been documented as well. Kyriacou and Zhu (2008) found that, among Chinese secondary school EFL students, the overall influence that significant others had on participants’ motivation was small but positive, with teachers playing the most influential role among significant others. Considering student accounts of language learning experiences, Taylor (2013) suggested that a teacher’s motivation and enthusiasm for teaching and learning could transfer over to students, and that teachers may be able to facilitate motivation by

respecting students' autonomy and individuality. Similarly, Moskowitz et al. (2022) found that a teacher's in-class behavior had a direct relationship with learner motivation, with both positive and negative attitudes and emotions transferring over to their students; attentive teachers who recognized and appreciated their students' emotions tended to positively influence motivation among their students. Cuéllar and Oxford (2018) have also reported on how teachers' emotions may influence the classroom environment. However, in cases where teachers may prove an inhibiting factor to their students' motivation, it has been shown that students can respond by adjusting how they approach the learning situation to a more positive way in order to sustain motivation (Chaffee et al., 2014).

Furthermore, there is some evidence to suggest that teachers themselves seem to be aware of the influence they may have on a student's experience: in a study featuring language teachers in Poland, participants recalled their own experiences learning languages and found that their positive experiences engendered enjoyment; they also noted that they tried to recreate these positive experiences within their own classes in order to facilitate learning enjoyment (Mierzwa, 2019). Taken together, studies such as those mentioned above cast teachers less as content masters and more as partners in the learning process, with their own emotions, attitudes, and motivation for their language teaching having a direct influence on whether and how their students engage in the learning process.

Aside from teachers, classmates and peers play a prominent, though more indirect, role in learner motivation and success. For example, there is some evidence within broader educational research to suggest that simply having friends or working together with a friend may result in positive learning outcomes (Wentzel, 2017; Wentzel

et al., 2018). This may be due to the effect that peer relationships have on promoting prosocial behavior, and in situations where prosocial behavior is aligned with positive academic outcomes (Wentzel, 2017; Wentzel et al., 2017).

With specific regard to language learning contexts, the effect of peers is similarly influential. Among British, German and Dutch students taking French and German, Bartram (2006) discovered that peer perception of language learning affected students' attitudes towards language learning and language choice: French and French learning, for example, was feminized, and the feminization of the language influenced how male students engaged with it. Elsewhere, Wesely (2009) found that peer relationships influenced students' motivation and choices regarding French immersion learning in Canada, with conflicting forces coming from a supportive in-group (those involved in immersion learning) and more contentious out-group (those in mainstream classes).

It has also been contended that, with respect to an individual's engagement in language learning, peer relationships influence both the general classroom environment as well as changes in individual linguistic competence, especially in terms of feedback (Noels et al., 2019). Teravainen-Goff (2022) found that learners reported peer influence on the pace of the class as a reason for changes in motivation and engagement: for example, some higher-level participants mentioned that their motivation was affected by a class moving too slow due to less advanced learners. A further reason for changes cited was the apprehension produced by having to perform linguistically in front of peers who may harbor expectations about an individual's linguistic ability.

The peer effect on motivation was observed outside of the traditional classroom environment as well. Gao (2007, 2013) noted how English learners in China created a community of support by gathering online to learn English and create an English L2 Self.

Through collaborative effort, these English-learning peers were able to support each other's autonomous language education to compensate for the lack of opportunities to speak with native English speakers. Murray (2008) commented on the power of imagined communities to bolster language learning; he argued that pop culture in the form of movies and television, for example, provided an imaginary community that participants aspired to belong to, and in their repeated viewings were able to visit numerous times as they continued to learn language. In other words, the possibility that those on the screen could possibly be a learner's peers was enough to engender and sustain a learner's motivation.

Compared to the influence of peers and teachers on language learning motivation in formal learning contexts, the influence of family members has been the focus of less research. Although mainstream educational research has noted the influence of parents on student academic motivation, success, and well-being (Uslu & Gizir, 2017; Wentzel, 1998; Wentzel et al., 2016), it is less clear how family members, especially parents, influence language learning specifically. Perceived familial obligations are represented in the ought-to L2 self (Dörnyei, 2009b), but are taken together with perceived obligations to significant others in general. Some evidence has shown that parents may have an important role for generating motivation and interest for early adolescents, and that such an influence may then turn into more sustained and more autonomous motivation (Lamb, 2011). The familial influence may be more prominent in heritage language situations (e.g., Armstrong, 2013; MacIntyre et al., 2017; Zhou & Liu, 2022) than in classroom-based situations, possibly because family members are not an immediate presence in the classroom. However, familial influence may still have an indirect effect on an individual's learning situation, such as by providing learning assistance or material

support (e.g., Kyriacou & Zhu, 2008). For instance, in a large-scale study in Switzerland on the development of German second language skills among participants from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, Keller et al. (2015) concluded that first-born children tended to have better language skills than their younger siblings, and that the number of siblings one had could impact one's second language skills; this is partly due to an economic reason, where families with fewer children could theoretically invest more in each child's education. Although they hypothesized that having an older sibling might help in the development of a child's language skills, this potential benefit was offset by the changes in the financial situation of the family. Such indirect influences may still bear important consequences for researchers investigating contextual and relational aspects of learner motivation.

1.3.6. Learner historicity

Reflecting Ushioda's (2009) advocacy to researchers to consider learners as flesh and blood individuals with a history that impacts their present and future, there is growing interest in the effects of a learner's past on their language identities and their motivation to learn language. Csizér and Kálmán (2019) provide a useful broadening of the concept of L2 learning experience (Dörnyei, 2009b, 2019) to respond to this growing interest, as it encompasses both the immediate learning environment (as it is originally presented in the L2 Motivational Self System) as well as a "synthesis of retrospective contemplation that may continuously evolve after the actual language learning has taken place" (p. 226). It is this "retrospective contemplation" that the current study seeks to highlight, and that several studies have sought to investigate in order to better

understand language learning motivation as well as other related aspects of the learning process.

Retrospective techniques that investigate a learner's past, such as those in the form of a learner history or narrative, reveal the complexity of the learner and their language learning journey (i.e., Shoaib & Dörnyei, 2005). They are especially suited to demonstrate, for instance, the role of emotion in learning languages and provide a unifying structure for seemingly disparate emotional elements (Oxford, 2011). Such techniques hinge on the elicitation, framing, and interpretation of memorable and transformational episodes within an individual's history (e.g., Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2016; Flowerdew & Miller, 2008; Ng, 2021; Nomura & Yuan, 2018; Shoaib & Dörnyei, 2005), and such episodes may reveal what the individual considers relevant to their life and language learning trajectory. Further, such techniques provide a way for nuance to emerge, as the learning of languages is a difficult, strenuous and multifaceted enterprise that often includes myriad concerns both inside and outside the immediate educational environment. Ng (2021), for example, allowed for nuance and complexity to emerge in an investigation into the emotional lived experiences, or *perezhivaniya* (Vygotsky), of two Japanese university student English language learners. A narrative inquiry into the participants' learning history disclosed the interplay of psychologically and socially oriented language-learner identities being formed by each learner; importantly, these identities were closely related to the participants' *perezhivaniya* in later adolescence.

The complex, and sometimes contradictory, nature of language learning was noticed by Wesely (2010), who found contradiction among adolescent students involved in French immersion education in Canada and their motivation to continue in the course, finding that "student attitudes toward learning a language did not necessarily have a

strong impact on their decision to persist in immersion education” (p. 309). Tashma Baum (2014)’s study of the role of English in the lives of preservice language teachers in Israel similarly found contradiction and complexity within the participants’ professed love of English: there was a love of the language, qualified by an understanding that English, as a language of colonialism, came with considerable baggage. Similar to Ng (2021), the root of the participants’ love for English could be found within later childhood and adolescence.

Such techniques may also reveal nuance and contradiction within the results and interpretations of previously conducted research, illustrating that previous research may not have given a complete picture. In an investigation into long-term adolescent English language learners (ELLs), Kim and García (2014) found that there was a noticeable contradiction between their participants’ accounts and what was typically noted in mainstream educational research. In the study, participants reported motivation to achieve their academic goals and were often let down by an educational system that undervalued and underestimated their abilities, particularly in regard to their language abilities; this ran counter to what had been traditionally reported in research, namely a lack of motivation and strong educational values among long-term ELLs. Instead, Kim and García found that learners perceived of themselves as embedded in an unsupportive context, rather than being unwilling and unmotivated participants surrounded by opportunity and assistance.

Coffey (2010) and Coffey and Street (2008) used learner retrospectives, in the form of learner narratives, to further demonstrate complexity within the “language learning project” of the learner. By examining learners’ life histories, insofar as they related to language learning, these studies demonstrated how learners create and

perform identities that are “institutionally and culturally situated but that are also dynamic and individually interpreted” (Coffey & Street, 2008, p. 452). This view of identity is similar to the person-in-context approach (Ushioda, 2009) and, while is not explicitly related to motivation, can be considered a partner to motivation: Coffey and Street (2008), for example, found that participants engaged in language learning as a form of escapism and to become something other than what one was (“chameleon”). In other words, participants were motivated to learn language to escape from their current situations and become different from who they were, an interpretation echoed by Kramersch (2009).

Social, institutional and cultural aspects of context related to an individual’s motivation reveal themselves elsewhere in learner histories. Thompson and Vazquez (2015), for example, noted that participants’ motivational profiles reflected their social context, with factors such as gender and ethnicity playing a role in language choice and how they engaged in learning and teaching as non-native speaking teachers of various languages. Interestingly, gender seemed to play a role in attitude towards language and language choice during secondary school in Bartram (2006) as well. The relationship of the sociocultural context with the individual and its impact on language learning motivation and identity was also identified in Flowerdew and Miller (2008), who recognized the influence of Hong Kong’s social structure and educational system on learners’ long-term investment in and motivation to learn English.

Understanding a learner’s history may also help in identifying and facilitating motivation to learn a new or different language, as shown in Mayumi and Zheng (2021), who found positive language learning experiences seemed to predict motivation to learn Chinese, a language their participants had not yet learned. There is also evidence that

salient learning experiences may continue to affect motivation beyond the immediate context: Csizér and Kálmán (2019) found that, among groups of language teachers reminiscing about their own experiences and learners providing observations about their current learning, the types of memories the participants chose to speak about tended to be similar. For example, the influence of teachers on the learning context and on motivation was prominently mentioned by both groups.

Retrospective accounts of language learning have also demonstrated the ability to show fluctuations in language learning motivation over time, as well as helping to distinguish between initiating motivation (to start learning) versus sustaining motivation (to continue learning) (Shoaib & Dörnyei, 2005). For example, Siridetkoon and Dewaele (2018) found that, among individuals engaged in simultaneous foreign language learning, motivation was dynamic in nature, with an “ebb and flow over time depending on the students’ immediate needs and their future plans” (p. 324). They concluded that learners’ motivation was not fixed and could be influenced by internal and external factors, such as a perceived improvement in performance or the recognition that a language would be needed to realize one’s future goals. Despite possible fluctuations, when observed more holistically, it is possible that motivation is generally sustained over time (e.g., Lamb, 2011). Nomura and Yuan (2018) focused on transformational episodes among learners of Japanese in Hong Kong in order to investigate the learners’ sustained motivation; they found that while aspects of popular culture were able to initiate motivation, it was instead due to a more complex host of factors, including Japanese social mores and access to communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) that learners had sustained motivation to learn Japanese. Thus, it was a shift in the source of motivation that these learners experienced as they continued their study of Japanese.

Researchers have also used retrospective techniques to delve into the personal histories of individuals who went on to become language teachers and have derived important insights from such studies. Arioğul (2007), for instance, found that for the three Turkish teachers of English, their early experiences with English were a prevalent influence on their teaching practice; the participants mentioned that by reflecting on their own previous experiences, they were better able to understand their students' challenges in the language classroom. Similarly, Moodie (2016) found that Korean teachers of English were able to learn from their negative language learning experiences and adapt their own teaching practice appropriately, intending to avoid the practices that they had found to be ineffective as learners.

The studies mentioned above illustrate how individuals remember their experiences and use those memories in their further language learning. The studies also illustrate the multifaceted task of learning a language and allow researchers to investigate aspects of language learning that may not always be apparent when viewed through other lenses. One such facet is the dynamics at play within motivation, particularly in how motivation appears to change over time (e.g., Coffey, 2010; Csizér & Kálmán, 2019; Ng, 2021; Shoaib & Dörnyei, 2005), as well as the confluence of factors that may affect motivation (e.g., Flowerdew & Miller, 2008) and possibly other language-related aspects of an individual's life. Of note is that, in several of the studies cited above, it is school-based language learning, particularly during later childhood and adolescence, that seems to play an important role in an individual's language learning motivation and related aspects (e.g., Coffey, 2010; Flowerdew & Miller, 2008; Moodie, 2016; Ng, 2021; Tashma Baum, 2014). This may be because, in most school systems, foreign/second/further language learning tends to be introduced at a time when students

are in their adolescence. A further consideration is evidence that individuals tend to recall events and experiences from adolescence as formative and influential in the construction of their identity (Glück & Bluck, 2007; Rubin et al., 1986).

1.3.7. Motivation as the creation of meaning

Clarke & Hennig (2013) looked at how person-in-context motivation might be used to examine the meaning language learning might have for a learner-user; they approach “motivation from a perspective that incorporates consideration of learners’ deliberations and decisions about who they are, who they want to become, how to live their lives, and how to act and behave towards others” (p. 79). The last part is important, as theirs is an ethical autopoiesis, a coming-to-be in a world, whereby language learning “provides a means for learners to transform themselves in multiple domains— intellectual, emotional and spiritual” (p. 87). There is a morality inherent in their interpretation that does not often factor prominently in research on language learning motivation.

Harvey (2017) notes that Clarke & Hennig fail to provide a definition of language, a glaring weakness in their study. Building on their approach, Harvey introduces the Bakhtinian (1981) concept of ideological becoming, using Bakhtin’s theory of language as dialogical to strengthen the reciprocal relationship between person and context. Language, for Harvey, provides the bridge between the Self and the Other precisely because “the word in language is always ‘half someone else’s’” (Harvey, 2017, p. 71). The motivation to learn, develop or use a new or different language not only entails learning that language, it also requires the use of language to do so (reminiscent of language socialization), and using language entails engaging with the world. In this view, a person’s

contextual existence is predicated on the existence of language; language and language learning are primarily and ultimately social in nature, and the “motivation to learn a language is connected to broader processes of life-learning, or learning to be in the world” (Harvey, 2017, p. 76).

Harvey’s turn to Bakhtin to explain motivation reflects the growing interest in dialogism within applied linguistics, at least in part because of its easy partnership with Vygotskyian (1978) sociocultural thought, already a mainstay in approaches in applied linguistics, and CDST (Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2002, 2011, 2017), which continues to exert growing influence. A Bakhtinian view of language learning motivation looks at the process of learning as a way of becoming, and later being-in-the-world. “Becoming” involves engaging in a struggle between the various discourses, represented by other individuals, that a person may encounter in the course of their education. What is useful about this approach is that it does not ignore the preexisting discourses that may exist within a person, discourses which can manifest themselves as motives for learning a language. It also does not seek to simplify motivation but rather allows for a view of motivation as a complex process that emerges from the various tensions that a learner finds themselves subject to.

Building on this, I suggest that language learning is not only about becoming and being-in-the-world, but also about creating meaning for oneself. Many contemporary theories of motivation acknowledge that language learning is just one aspect of one’s greater sense of Self, and that it may relate to several other concerns that come to occupy one’s life. Bruner (1990) suggests that modern psychology has taken us away from one of the core drives of humanity: the creation of meaning in our lives. He writes that “culture and the quest for meaning with culture are the proper causes of human

action,” and that narrative is key in understanding how someone has constructed meaning (p. 20). To bring this back to language learning, the question is, what meaning does the act of learning and speaking a language have for the learner? Or to put it another way, how does language learning figure into the overall meaning one is constructing for themselves and their life? This study is aimed in part at discovering how language learning factors into the creation of meaning for one’s life; it will do so by focusing not only on how motivation emerges from the relationship between person and context, but also on the emotions that emerge from and undergird that relationship.

2. Emotional aspects of education and decision-making as contributing factors to motivation

2.1. Introduction

The theory of the trilogy of mind (Hilgard, 1980) divides the mind into cognition, conation (motivation) and emotion, and Western thought has prioritized cognition while devaluing emotion, often placing it at odds with rational thought (Swain, 2013). SLA has been influenced by this view, with linguistics often being seen as a branch of cognitive science, and cognitive science focusing primarily on cognition while minimalizing emotion. The difficulty of measuring emotions has also led to their being disregarded in the great amount of SLA research (Imai, 2010; Swain, 2013).

Despite this, emotions have been shown to influence human thought and behavior and are linked with the motivation to take up certain actions (MacIntyre, 2002). Oxford (2018) suggests that emotions are instrumental in understanding language learner behavior and motivation throughout the learning process. Further, Tyng, et al. (2017) posit that because people tend to remember emotional events more clearly than neutral events, emotion might also influence how items learned in an educational setting, like a classroom, are retained.

This chapter will first provide a review of the role emotion plays in education and the learning process. In an effort to help develop the field of studies in language learning motivation by examining complementary disciplines with alternative theories and methods, this section will then review some concepts related to decision-making and meaning-making, with a focus on the adolescent period. The argument is that decision-making and meaning-making can be viewed as types of motivated behavior, as the

individual is making decisions about the activities they will engage in in accord with an emerging identity and self-concept. The focus on the adolescent period is due to the current study's concentration on language learning during the adolescent period.

2.2. Emotion

This study is based on the premise that a primary source of motivation for language learning and becoming a multilingual subject lies in the construction of meaning in one's life, a process that entails some sort of reckoning with emotion. It has been suggested that the capacity to create one's life narrative begins to emerge in adolescence (Habermas & Bluck, 2000; McAdams, 1988), which is also typically a period of life filled with emotional intensity, as well as the burdens of formal education. Habermas and Bluck (2000) note that in early to mid-adolescence, individuals build their personality by integrating "a variety of emotional and motivational states with ways of acting in relationships"; in mid to late-stage adolescence, there is "the possibility of conflicts between various parts of personality and the understanding that some parts of personality are not easily accessible to awareness" (p. 28). Emotions clearly play a role in these processes.

It should be noted that in SLA motivation research, the term "affect" has been used sometimes interchangeably with emotion; however, "affect" is also thought of as a broader term that encompasses feelings, attitudes, and beliefs (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989, p. 7). "Emotions" are considered to be short-term feelings or states that are sometimes linked to a certain disposition to action (Aragão, 2011, p. 302); emotions may be quite strong in their effect. "Moods" are lasting emotional states; such states are more subdued in their intensity than their accompanying emotion. This study adopts "emotion"

as the aspect and vocabulary of choice, understanding that the term is understood in varying ways depending on context and discipline. Clarifications will be made when necessary.

2.2.1. Education and the limiting of emotion

Freire (2012) observed that modern education was based on a “banking” model, whereby students were empty vessels waiting passively for knowledge to be poured into them by their teachers; the students internalize this knowledge and believe it to be the way the world is. This is a cyclical process: students later replace their teachers and do the same to the next generation of students. His criticism of this model is that it dehumanizes both the teachers and students: students are robbed of any historicity, individuality or agency, while teachers do not see, or are not allowed to see, their students as equally human as themselves; the flattening of student histories is a theme echoed by several SLA theorists (e.g., Harvey, 2013; Lemke, 2002; Norton Peirce, 1995; Ushioda, 2009, 2011). The banking concept rests on the proposition that people are simply living in the world, not with it, and that people are merely spectators, possessors of an empty mind to be filled with concepts and things.

In contrast to the banking model, Freire (Freire, 2012) proposes a dialogical model whereby all involved in the educative process are conceived of as simultaneously teaching and learning, even those once called “teachers”; this is because even teachers may not have all the answers and may come to learn something new about themselves, their students, their subject, and the world at large, by questioning what is considered “knowledge” in the first place. While the banking model largely resists the concept of

change and sees knowledge as reified and absolute, the dialogical model assumes knowledge to be unfinished and change to be a natural thing. Upon learning something new, a person is qualitatively and fundamentally changed. This aligns with Bakhtin's (1981) proposition that education is the process of ideological becoming: how one reacts to new knowledge and chooses to change in light of it. Further, participation in the dialogical model requires a measure of trust in the other actors involved as well as hope in the entire process (Freire, 2012; Wrigley, 2003). These are important qualities in a model of education where knowledge itself is problematized, interrogated, and later co-constructed by the participants involved.

The dialogical model proposed by Freire (Freire, 2012) acknowledges that such changes in the nature of knowledge can have a destabilizing effect on teachers and students alike, and destabilization may result in emotional reactions. However, it has been noted that emotion has not always been welcomed in educative pursuits:

...in deleting Eros from the pursuit of knowledge, has the western educative tradition reduced the pursuit of knowledge to a mere academic exercise...? Has the western educative tradition reduced education from a holistic enterprise that engaged the entire being in the process (mind, body, and soul) to a purely cognitive project as part of a sequestered discourse with but an intermittent connection to experience, to the real – resulting in the Self's alienation from the world, the other, and itself, as a result of the alienation of eros and logos: by divorcing love from the love of knowledge and or the love of humankind?" (Brown, 2012, pp. 185–186)

In this criticism of Western education, Brown (2012) is echoing an aforementioned criticism of studies in language learning motivation, namely, that affect has been ignored for too long as an influential factor in the learning process (Swain, 2013). It is already present, but ignored and devalued in favor of cool cognitive processing. However, Wrigley (2003) comments that emotions in education should not be seen as superfluous

but rather as essential; disregarding emotional integrity or stripping education of emotional authenticity “undermines our relationships and actions” (p. 48). From this viewpoint, the building of relationships between the actors in an educational enterprise is crucial to success. Teaching and learning rest on a foundation of strong relationships built on trust between teachers and their students; parents and administrators would also be included as part of the educational community.

Wrigley looks to what he calls the European conceptualization of pedagogy and compares it to the Anglo-American idea (2003, p. 127). The European model approaches education more holistically and sees pedagogy as having broader social, ethical and affective aims that balance out the cognitive; the Anglo-American model, on the other hand, defines pedagogy more narrowly, focusing on teaching methods. Wrigley’s preference is for the European model and its inclusion of affective, or emotional, concerns.

2.2.2. Emotions in education and learning at large

Although emotions are typically considered to be a description of feeling, it has been noted that they have several aspects: in addition to an affective component, there are also physiological, motivational, and expressive aspects (Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981; Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2014; Shuman & Scherer, 2014; Turner, 2007). Turner (2009) has suggested that emotions “operate at many different levels of reality—biological and neurological, behavioral, cultural, structural, and situational” (p. 341). The motivational aspect has been explored in SLA by Aragão (2011), who described emotions as “dispositions for actions.” Parkinson (1996) has argued that emotions, rather than being individually felt phenomena, are social and communicative in their expression.

Emotions may also require interpretation “through a cultural meaning making system” (Panayiotou, 2004, p. 187). Questions as to the number of emotions have arisen as well; Cowen and Keltner (2017) have suggested as many as 27 emotions, with combinations possible; combinations and varied iterations of emotions have also been described as “elaborations” (Turner, 2007). In other words, emotions are various and are not simply felt, but may also be displayed, interpreted, acted upon, and may motivate the individual to behave in some way. Within an educational context, the various modes of emotional expression may be on display.

Pekrun and Linnenbrink-Garcia (2014) outline four different categories of educational emotions as related to what they focus on: achievement emotions, which are related to “activities or outcomes that are judged according to competence-related standards of quality”; epistemic emotions, which are a reaction to the cognitive demand of information processing; topic emotions, related to the content being studied; and social emotions, which are related to the social relationships involved in the act of learning. They further note the possibility of incidental emotions, those brought in from outside the immediate educational environment to influence a student in the process of learning. There is possible overlap, as a topic emotion, such as enjoyment of the content, may influence the feeling of an achievement emotion, such as pride in the work a student has done. Emotions have also been observed in terms of valence, which denotes whether emotions are viewed as positive or negative in nature (Shuman & Scherer, 2014).

There is a demonstrated connection between emotion and learning processes. Um et al. (2012), for example, conclude that using materials that were created based on positive emotional design principles helped facilitate learning; even something as simple as the colors used in creating the materials seemed to lead to positive results in student

motivation, effort, and satisfaction. Conversely, although stress can be considered a negative emotion, lighter levels of stress may improve memory performance during academic exercises (Vogel & Schwabe, 2016). Fiedler and Hütter (2014) suggest that while positive moods, or lasting emotional states, may facilitate creative and intuitive thinking during learning activities, negative moods may help in more detail-oriented tasks that do not require much in the way of creative problem solving and instead ask for careful consideration of presented material.

Linnenbrink (2007) suggests that emotions felt during the school day may influence a student's setting of personal goals. Distinguishing between pleasant and unpleasant affective states, Linnenbrink contends that students who experience pleasant affective states (like happiness or excitement) may in turn believe they have sufficient resources to achieve a goal, while unpleasant affective states (like sadness or anger) may influence the same student to believe that they do not have the resources to achieve said goal (2007, p. 111). Pleasant affective states may result in the attempt to reach a specific goal; conversely, unpleasant states would instead lead to an avoidance of undesired outcomes. Instead of actively trying to succeed in reaching a goal, a student experiencing unpleasant emotions may turn to an avoidance strategy to prevent losing any progress that has already been gained.

Further, it has been reported that individuals generally pay more attention to emotionally salient stimuli; this emotionally salient data is then stored in memory for later retrieval and use (MacKay et al., 2004; Tyng et al., 2017). While this can happen consciously, it can also happen unconsciously: Ledoux (1996), for example, has hypothesized that memories associated with a negative emotion, like fear, assist in creating strategies to avoid similar situations in the future. Ledoux's argument is based on

the unconscious recollection of an emotional event that initiates a behavioral response (Ledoux, 1992).

Whether conscious or unconscious, emotionally salient events tend to be remembered more vividly and for a longer period than emotionally neutral ones, with evidence that memories tinged with both positive and negative emotion are more frequently recalled and seem to hold more meaning for the individual than memories without any particular emotion attached (Kensinger & Schacter, 2008; Ledoux, 1992). There is also evidence that negative memories tend to be remembered with more accuracy than positive ones (Kensinger, 2007).

In short, emotion is a guiding principle for memory, and consequentially, learning: as Tyng et al. (2017) state, “emotion regulates the allocation of processing resources and determines our behavior by tuning us to the world in certain biased ways” (p. 6). The importance of emotion to learning processes lead them to conclude that considering emotional factors in learning strategies may lead to better retention of learned material. Furthermore, they suggest that considering students’ emotions may also help in improving performance in educational settings.

As mentioned earlier, despite the noted importance of emotions in learning, formal education has been criticized for disregarding the role of emotions (Brown, 2012; Wrigley, 2003). Kort et al. (2001) comment on how this has also devalued the very process of learning: they observe that when teachers teach, many times it amounts to a presentation of facts, much like the banking model suggests, while not modelling the learning process. They note that learning naturally involves making and overcoming mistakes, redesigning models, and trying again after failing; by not modelling these behaviors and attitudes in a classroom, as well as the emotions that come with them,

modern education is providing an incomplete picture of the process of learning (p. 43). Attending to and modelling emotions is crucial in a formal educational context, since it has been suggested that teachers' emotions are linked to and help support students' emotions (Frenzel et al., 2009; Meyer & Turner, 2002).

The affective turn in humanities and social sciences (Clough & Halley, 2007) urges us to reconsider how education works and how emotions affect pedagogical concerns as well as the learning process. Zembylas (2016) contends that because classrooms are divided places populated by teachers and students with sometimes competing conceptions of reality and knowledge of the world, in coming together they must reckon with the discrepancies in their knowledge and attend to the emotions present during such a reckoning. This viewpoint argues directly against the traditional banking model of education: students and teachers alike do not come into the classroom as passive receptacles for knowledge, but as active creators and interrogators of knowledge. Zembylas further comments on the "demonization of emotion on critical inquiry": education traditionally appealed to what we know as "objective" or "critical" scientific inquiry, which rested on a "fabricated absence" of emotion (p. 544). Although writing about science education, what Zembylas notes can be equally applied to many other disciplines, including SLA.

2.2.3. Emotions in language education

As noted before, Swain (2013) comments that emotions "cannot be ignored in understanding language learning processes" (p. 196). Dewaele (2011) concurs, stating that emotions must be acknowledged since they form the foundation for learning (p. 24). However, the focus of SLA on the cognitive aspect of language acquisition has led to a

chronic undervaluing of the role of emotions in language learning. The most discussed emotional aspects of language learning are traditionally learner anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989) and an “affective filter” (Krashen, 1985). The concept of the “affective filter” is vague in that it does not specify which emotions might be causing the learner to hesitate. Learner anxiety itself, among other concepts, has been criticized for being a “decontextualized and oftentimes poorly defined sociopsychological construct” (Pavlenko, 2005b).

Pavlenko (2005b) posits that, in general, human beings are emotional about the languages they use, and that emotions make their way into decisions on individual language choice and societal language policy. This is especially true for languages that an individual has been socialized into: languages learned in “natural” contexts seem to carry more emotional weight than those learned only in formal education contexts, such as a classroom (Dewaele, 2004; Dewaele et al., 2008; Pavlenko, 2005b). This may be due to several reasons, the first being that it is languages, rather than the students, that tend to be at the center of the language classroom. A second reason is that languages into which one is socialized in a natural context may have more salient or meaningful memories attached to them. When considering one’s first language or languages, these are the languages through which one might have communicated with their parents or primary caregivers, and through which they formed lasting relationships with friends and loved ones. As Pavlenko (2005b) states, these languages “bring back voices and memories, elicit tenderness, joy, and affection; they may also feel like blows and arrows, leaving wounds that may never heal” (p. 237).

Finally, a third possible reason could be the materials and methods used to teach language in formal educational settings. G. Cook (2000) notes that language textbooks

often put forward a sanitized, politically correct version of a language, devoid of any content that may seem controversial or emotionally charged. While it can be argued that content should be fit for the socio-political context and should not be introduced simply for shock value, decisions about what to include in a textbook are often ideologically or politically motivated rather than based on how humans live their lives and use language to do so.

G. Cook (2000) admits that proficiency may be a legitimate concern when it comes to discussions of sensitive topics, but it can be argued that it is the job of language education to give learners the language necessary to engage in such discussions. If being able to talk about controversial topics and engaging in emotional and creative language use are markers of advanced levels of proficiency, then their exclusion from learning materials seems counterproductive. While G. Cook does not refer explicitly to emotions, he does refer to emotionally charged content; Pavlenko (2005b) suggests that the inability to produce words that signify emotions being felt can lead to feelings of powerlessness and shame (p. 142-3). Taken together, it can be hypothesized that by over-sanitizing the language classroom and avoiding topics that may lead to emotional reactions, learners are being disempowered and the potential for learners to form meaningful bonds with the languages they learn is being removed.

Avoiding emotional content in a classroom does not create an emotional vacuum; students and teachers alike will feel emotions throughout the class, even if they are not openly discussed. This is clear from the research on emotions in education at large. Social emotions, for example, will be present in a social environment such as a classroom; Bown and White (2010), for example, observed the effect that student-teacher relationships had on students' Russian language learning. The effect of the teacher on students'

enjoyment was also noticed by Dewaele and Dewaele (2020). It has also been suggested that student enjoyment is linked to teacher enjoyment of the content (Frenzel et al., 2009).

Although it can be argued, as Pavlenko (2005b) has, that languages learned in a language classroom lack the emotional impact of languages learned in more “natural” settings, it can also be argued that for many individuals the language classroom is one kind of “natural” setting that involves emotions; despite the limitations of classroom language learning, what is learned in that setting should not be ignored in terms of impactful and meaningful language learning, while still admitting that classroom learning is different from learning in “natural” contexts outside of the classroom. Instead, as Dewaele (2010) suggests, language education should find ways to increase the emotional range of content offered (p. 220). While this is in no way a replacement for language learning in more “natural” context, it can help bridge a noticeable gap.

Oxford (2018) has outlined how increased attention to emotion in the language classroom may lead to greater agency and more successful language learning. Her review of emotion includes emotions about language learning and emotions as expressed through language, both of which are crucial to higher levels of proficiency. Furthermore, being able to relate emotionally to a language has been seen as a consequence of increased proficiency and comfort with the language, while the lack of an emotional connection may indicate a lower proficiency and comfort: Dewaele and Nakano (2012), for example, found that multilinguals tended to describe the languages they learned later in life as less serious, less authentic, and importantly, less emotional than languages they learned earlier.

The authenticity of emotionless language use has been questioned often (Dewaele, 2004, 2008; Pavlenko, 2005b); many criticisms of classroom-based language teaching also focus on the inauthentic use of the language within the classroom. Much of this is due to the lack of attention paid to emotion in SLA. Greater attention to the range of emotions experienced in the classroom by learners may provide greater insight into processes of language acquisition, development and use (MacIntyre, 2002) and provide room to build authenticity; Dewaele (2011) has stated that “emotions are the driving force behind SLA and later use of an LX,” suggesting that a closer look at emotions may be helpful. This includes focusing on wider and more complex varieties of emotion beyond anxiety (e.g., MacIntyre & Vincze, 2017) as well as categories of emotions that are prevalent in research on education in general.

2.2.4. Empirical research on emotions in SLA and language education

Among the emotions typically associated with SLA, foreign language anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989) seems to have garnered the most attention (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). However, recently attention has shifted to a wider range of emotions involved in language learning to coincide with a “more realistic view of the language learner that incorporates and acknowledges the value of their emotional experiences” (Ross, 2015, p. 19). Some research has demonstrated how emotionally intense language learning and development may be for the learner (Moate & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2020). It has also been argued that broadening the discussion of emotion in SLA may “bring new dynamics and opportunities for the research communities of both language learning and psychology” (Shao et al., 2019, p. 7).

The work of Fredrickson (2001, 2004), specifically the “broaden-and-build theory,” has recently become influential in studies in SLA. This theory is based on the premise that while negative emotions tend to narrow the possibilities of how an individual may act in a certain situation to actions already ingrained in the mind, positive emotions may work to “broaden people’s momentary thought-action repertoires, which in turn serves to build their enduring personal resources, ranging from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources” (Fredrickson, 2001, p. 218). In other words, positive emotions help an individual flourish and expand their self-concept through the desire to play, explore, imagine and create (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012), which may be beneficial to language learning. Within this turn to Fredrickson’s work is an implicit assumption that language learning should be a creative, playful, and exploratory activity.

Researchers have referred to Frederickson’s work to better understand, and possibly facilitate the appearance of, the positive emotions that may emerge in language learning. Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014, 2016), for example, referred to this theory in a large-scale study highlighting the effect of foreign language enjoyment (FLE) on motivation and engagement. They suggested that enjoyment and anxiety may manifest independently of each other, and that a learner may find enjoyment in a language activity that is simultaneously a source of anxiety, thereby promoting motivation to complete the activity. Their study also found that participants reported consistently higher levels of FLE than anxiety, which calls into question the relative lack of research on positive emotions, particularly enjoyment, as compared to negative.

Nakata (2009) found that, among Japanese middle school students reporting on their experiences learning English in elementary school, enjoyment was closely linked to meaningfulness and the willingness to continue learning, and these three aspects came to

bear on the “ebb and flow” of motivation to learn English. The effect of previous positive experiences on language learning motivation was also explored in Mayumi and Zheng (2021) and Liu (2022). In a study involving Chinese secondary school students, Li et al. (2018) cited both the teacher’s influence as well as a sense of personal fulfillment as sources of FLE. Zhang and Tsung (2021) disagreed with Li et al. (2018) on the extent to which the role that teacher’s influence may play on FLE but agreed that personal fulfillment was a relevant factor; they noted that the different populations concerned in the studies (secondary school versus university students) may have contributed to the difference in teacher influence. In a longitudinal study concerning Iranian EFL learners, Elahi Shirvan et al. (2021) concluded that FLE could change over time in light of both learner and teacher-related factors and suggested that both individual and class FLE needed to be considered by language teachers. Despite differences in how the above researchers interpreted FLE and its contributing factors, they seemed to agree that FLE is important enough to consider due to its effects on language learning, particularly on motivation.

Pavelescu and Petrić (2018) and Pavelescu (2019) have argued that an emotion similar to but different in degree from enjoyment is at the core of learners’ motivation: love. They differentiate between an enjoyment of learning the language and a love of the language itself, and how loving the language can motivate learners where enjoyment of a particular task or classroom environment was low (Pavelescu & Petrić, 2018). Further, they argued that, for their participants, it was an emotional attachment to the language which was a more stable and decisive factor in certain learners’ motivation; participants who were not perceived to have this strong emotional attachment were observed to not

be as engaged in their learning, despite reporting overall enjoyment with their language learning.

The recognition of positive emotions has not meant a turn away from negative emotions: Teimouri (2017), for instance, has argued that shame and guilt also be considered as relevant emotions in the L2 Motivational Self-System and within language learning contexts. In a study on the development of L2 selves among adolescent Iranian EFL students, Teimouri found that shame and guilt helped to explain why some learners may withdraw, or become less motivated, to learn.

Other research has emphasized the need to consider the wide range of emotions that emerge in language learning situations and that both negative and positive emotions may prove beneficial to learning (Méndez López, 2011; Méndez López & Aguilar, 2013). Saito et al. (2018) found that while negative emotions tended to build up over time, positive emotions were more ephemeral in nature and required more elicitation. This may be due to the difference in the way positive and negative emotions are dealt with by learners: learners have mentioned that while positive emotions do not require anything to be done, negative emotions often lead to an analysis of why that emotion emerged and what to do to avoid that type of emotion in the future (Méndez López & Aguilar, 2013). Such research implies that both negative and positive emotions are necessary for the language learning process, which falls in line with the view of emotion in general educational research (Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2014).

In a study conducted among Greek university students, Kantaridou and Psaltou-Joycey (2021) also found that participants reported on negative emotional instances more frequently than positive ones despite the possibility that one's overall feeling towards the language learning situation was positive. Further, they suggested that

learners' emotions may not necessarily be due to the immediate language learning context but may be "caused by a wider dynamic in students' social, personal and academic life" (Kantaridou & Psaltou-Joycey, 2021, p. 91). This implies that language teachers need to be aware of more than what is simply in the language classroom when teaching.

2.3. Decision-making and meaning-making

Adolescents, or the adolescent period, is not represented in the same way as children or adult learners in SLA. When it comes to drawing conclusions about language learning, adolescent language learners are often grouped together with adults or young learners, or not mentioned at all. However, adolescent learners are distinct from younger learners and adult learners in a variety of ways, including biological, social and developmental aspects. As this is a study on motivation, why adolescents make the decisions they do and how they engage in behavior deserves exploration.

2.3.1. *Factors of adolescent decision-making*

The developmental period known as adolescence has social, biological, neurological, and psychological dimensions that distinguish it from early childhood and adulthood. These various dimensions are present in the very definition of adolescence: Blakemore and Mills (2014) remark that since adolescence is commonly known as the period of development starting with puberty and ending with a young person's reaching a certain level of independence and self-sufficiency, it begins with a biological event but ends with a social one. The end of adolescence, then, may differ depending on the

cultural norm in action within the society at large: in the USA, independence may come as early as 18, while in some other places, a young person might not be considered self-sufficient until well into their 20s. Regardless of when it ends, it can safely be stated that adolescence is a distinct period of life that differs from both childhood and adulthood in myriad ways. Adolescents simply do things differently and for different reasons than those in other stages of life.

Due to ongoing processes of socialization, adolescents are involved in relationships with various groups that shape who they are and what they do. The influence of peers, for example, is a factor in adolescent decision making, as adolescents seem to be more likely than adults to listen to other's thoughts or opinions when making their own decisions about whether to engage in risky behavior (M. Gardner & Steinberg, 2005). It has been suggested that younger adolescents defer to their older peers when it comes to risk assessment, valuing the opinions of other teenagers over adults (Knoll et al., 2015).

Adolescents may also be motivated to engage in riskier behavior in the presence of other adolescents, which may be due in part to a predilection among teenagers to seek social inclusion and avoid ostracization (Blakemore & Mills, 2014; M. Gardner & Steinberg, 2005; Knoll et al., 2015). This is not limited to risky behavior, however: Bursztyn and Jensen (2015) found that peer approval and the avoidance of social penalties was a factor in educational decisions, especially when those decisions were public and observable.

The social context seems to play a key role in adolescent decision-making, particularly in "hot" contexts (Blakemore & Robbins, 2012); a "hot" context can be considered a situation that is especially emotionally charged. Social relationships have

also been found to be a significant factor in the development of prosocial behavior among adolescents (Güroglu et al., 2014). Prosocial behavior refers to behavior that is done with the benefit of others in mind (Eisenberg, 2006); the goal of decision-making from this perspective appears to be partly to establish and maintain social relationships, which may not always lead to logical choices by adult standards.

It has been further suggested that the process of mentalization, which is the ability to understand someone else's mental state or perspective, continues to develop throughout adolescence (Dumontheil et al., 2010); this, coupled with studies that find that adults may be subject to the "curse-of-knowledge" bias (Birch & Bloom, 2007), whereby one's own knowledge of a situation may prevent understanding that situation from another perspective, may lead to the conclusion that adolescents are more attuned to the social contexts and factors of decisions than adults, or at least allow social factors to contribute more significantly to their decisions.

Underlying the social influence factor in decision making are some interesting notions stemming from psychological and neurological findings. In order to explain the factors affecting decision making among adolescents, particularly in relation to decisions that lead to risky actions, Steinberg (Steinberg, 2008, 2010) proposes a dual systems model for adolescent brain development. This model suggests that adolescents often engage in risky behavior due to a difference in the rate of development of the part of the brain that oversees reward-seeking versus that which oversees self-regulation and inhibitory processes. Essentially, the part of the brain housing the socio-emotional processes involved in reward-seeking, especially in the presence of peers, seems to develop more quickly than the cognitive control center, which controls self-regulation functions. This helps explain why adolescents seem to engage in risky behavior more

frequently than adults. There is some evidence that this biological phenomenon largely holds across national boundaries and cultures in spite of the different ways that adolescence is experienced socially: one large-scale study conducted by Steinberg et. al (2018) covering 11 countries on multiple continents found that, in most locations, reward-seeking seems to grow continuously and peak around age 19, while self-control starts to develop later and plateaus out during the mid-20s.

Furthermore, based on neurological evidence found in relation to the development of social cognitive processing, Burnett and Blakemore (2009) posit that adolescents use their brain differently than adults, or rather, that brain activity differs between adolescents and adults, especially in regard to cognitive processing. They offer two plausible reasons why this might be the case, and both reasons refer to the fact that adolescents simply do not have the same life experience as adults, so their brains, or perhaps their mental faculties, require more energy and more practice to develop the automaticity that the adult brain has. There may be a benefit to a lack of automaticity, however: adolescent brains exhibit more plasticity and flexibility, which may allow adolescents to be more open to new ideas (Burnett & Blakemore, 2009). As shown above in the discussion about social influence on decision-making, though, this may be a double-edged sword. Nevertheless, in an educational setting, the adolescent propensity for creativity, open-mindedness and risk-taking can be a decided advantage (Blakemore & Mills, 2014).

2.3.2. Individual meaning-making and a sense of identity

One potential caveat to the growing bank of neurological evidence about the uniqueness of the adolescent brain is the potential to flatten the individuality of each

adolescent. A study by Choudhury et. al (2012) shows some appreciation as well as apprehension on the part of teenagers in response to the entrance of cognitive neuroscience into public discussions about teenagers. Teenagers in Choudhury et al.'s (2012) study valued the different perspective offered by cognitive neuroscience for its potential in helping adults understand teenagers better but were wary of the potential for such arguments to take away identity, individual responsibility and agency, to reinforce harmful stereotypes; the prevalence of research into "risky behavior" among adolescents can be seen as one stereotype. There is also the possibility neuroscience may be prioritized over other influential factors, such as the numerous social concerns that inform actions and decisions. Researchers are also cognizant of the potential for an oversimplification of explanations for teenage behavior, urging that social contexts be considered whenever it is discussed (Blakemore & Mills, 2014).

In addition to remembering the influence of social contexts on adolescent behavior and decision-making, there is the view that because adolescents have not lived as long as adults, the reasons behind their decisions may be linked to the desire to build a bank of memories with first-hand experiences; this is the premise behind meaning-making, particularly in how adolescents are beginning to create meaning through their experiences in creating their identity through their life story (McLean & Pratt, 2006; Tavernier & Willoughby, 2012).

For many in Choudhury et al.'s (2012) study, being told what is or is not the case is not the same as trying something to learn for oneself. The newness of experiences appears to be of great meaning and value to adolescents, and this may be an influential factor in adolescent decision-making as well. What might be considered "risky" behavior

can also be interpreted as an opportunity to try something new and determine whether it is the right or desired course of action.

Dahl (2004) notes that the multitude of changes that arrive with adolescence create individuals with strong passions and desires in need of direction. Just as they can manifest in harmful ways, they can be directed towards healthier and more positive pursuits, and it is the experiences at this stage of life that can play a role in determining how those passions will manifest and continue to manifest throughout adulthood. How adolescents choose to direct their energies is at the core of the idea of meaning-making.

Bruner (1990) argues that humans are naturally inclined to creating meaning from the experiences they have: he states that “the lives and Selves we construct are the outcomes of this process of meaning-construction” (p. 134), suggesting that in sifting through our experiences and creating meaning from them, we create our very lives. Further, he asserts that “culture and the quest for meaning with culture are the proper causes of human action. The biological substrate, the so-called universals of human nature, is not a cause of action but, at most, a *constraint* upon it or a condition for it” (p. 20-21). For Bruner, the human drive for meaning is what motivates a person to act in the way that they do. This would include motivated behaviors such as decision-making.

Meaning-making, and consequently the life narrative, often grow in importance during adolescence as adolescents are starting to consider, and construct, who they are. The reminiscence bump (Rubin et al., 1986), for example, suggests that memories from the ages of 10-30, the second and third decades of life, tend to be remembered more and carry greater meaning for the individual than any other point in life (Glück & Bluck, 2007). Moreover, McAdams (2001, 2019) has observed that adolescence is when the life story begins to emerge, as it is the beginning of a process of exploration and experimentation

with a range of values, goals, beliefs, talents, and relationships leading to “a patterned configuration of thought and activity that provides life with some semblance of psychosocial unity and purpose” (2019, p. 2). Habermas and Bluck (2000) have theorized that the emergence of the life story in adolescence is based partly on the demands of adolescence to create an identity as well as an interest in biographical activities, such as diary writing.

Meaning-making has been explored in other ways related to issues of identity and psychological health among young people. Tavernier and Willoughby (2012), for example, found that meaning-making of significant “turning-point” events predicted positive mental well-being among 12th grade high school students. McLean and Pratt (2006) suggest a relationship between meaning-making and the progress of identity development. In a study of narrative storytelling and the creation of meaning among late adolescents, McLean (2005a) suggests that “Meaning appears to be more relevant or appropriate when telling for self-explanation, which may allow one to develop, strengthen, and to confirm insights about the self” (p. 688); further, that “identity is made up of meaning-filled experiences” (p. 689).

Meaning-making is closely related with narrative identity. Narrative identity, that is, the idea that a narrative provides the foundation for the consistency and constancy needed to ground the concept of an individual “I” that operates across time, finds roots in Ricœur (1984). Bruner (2004) further elaborates on the idea, arguing that

eventually the culturally shaped cognitive and linguistic processes that guide the self-telling of life narratives achieve the power to structure perceptual experience, to organize memory, to segment and purpose-build the very “events” of a life. In the end, we become the autobiographical narratives by which we “tell about” our lives. (p. 694)

Furthermore, Fivush et. al (2019) argue that “how individuals structure their stories and integrate referential and evaluative dimensions informs how humans use narrative to create meaning more broadly” (p. 156). Consequently, narrative identity is the proposition that a person is the story they tell about their life, and in the telling of the story, one is “building purpose” or “creating meaning” for their life through and with the events they have chosen to include.

Habermas (2012) has argued that not only are events selected and integrated into a life story to construct a sense of identity, but that memories of events may in fact be bent to fit the overarching narrative that one has decided upon for their life. This may at times call for the distorting of events in order to achieve a narrative truth (Spence, 1982), one that has meaning for the individual. By constructing their story through the selection of which experiences to include, which to exclude, which to highlight, and finding connections between the events, an individual is in the process of creating meaning, purpose, and sense in their life. Individuals continue to make decisions based on their constructed life story, which is ultimately a subjective perception of their life. This perception can be thought to form the basis for future decisions in accord with the meaning that has been created. Adolescents, then, are at the very beginning of this process.

2.4. Bringing the two together

There are two crucial points brought up through a review of the literature in this section: the first is that emotions tend to be disregarded, or at least undervalued, in educational contexts; this is especially true of language education, where language is often presented in a sanitized way, and the focus is typically on linguistic knowledge. The

role of emotion in motivation is palpable, yet still has not received the type of attention it deserves. It has also been investigated in a limited way, and a broader perspective may allow for further insight into how emotion may be understood in light of language learning motivation.

The second point is that adolescence is a unique and distinct period in human development, and adolescents tend to experience things differently from younger children and adults. They make decisions and engage in behaviors with different types of ideas and motivations. Further, they are at the genesis of creating meaning and understanding their place in the world, and their motivations in engaging in language learning may be understood through the lens of their individual meaning-making processes.

Swain (2013) argues that “Emotions...have a significant impact on what has happened in the past, what is happening now, and what will happen in the future” (p. 195); however, this impact is not always acknowledged. Nevertheless, it may be argued that adolescence is the period of life where the concerns of past (childhood), present (adolescence), and future (adulthood) are beginning to be reckoned with in a meaningful way. The idea that the capacity to construct one’s life story via a collection of meaningful memories emerges in adolescence (Habermas & Bluck, 2000) is potential evidence of this reckoning.

3. Multilingualism

3.1. Introduction

Rather than referring to the question of motivation in terms of motivation to learn a specific language, this study hinges on the premise that in learning a new language, one is learning and endeavoring to become bi- or multilingual (Wei, 2018, p. 16). However, the idea of “becoming multilingual” is not always as clearly delineated as that of “learning a language.” In becoming multilingual, what exactly is one attempting to change about oneself? What is entailed in being multilingual, and consequently, the process of becoming multilingual? Importantly, how can we use the multiple definitions and conceptualizations that exist to understand how multilingualism is experienced by individuals as they learn languages?

This chapter begins with a summary of concepts used in defining individual bi- and multilingualism, highlighting discrepancies in how definitions are formulated and used. It then goes on to consider aspects of societal multilingualism that help frame the context of this study. Within this second section is an analysis of two perspectives that dominate much of the discourse on multilingual learning and practice: plurilingualism and translanguaging. I intend to highlight the dynamic nature of the discussion surrounding multilingualism as I ultimately adopt a multicompetence perspective as the grounding framework for this research, with special attention to plurilingual educational policy.

3.2. Conceptualizations of individual multilingualism

Definitions of bi- and multilingualism, as compared to monolingualism, are not always clear, and they often reflect several perspectives and concerns. In a discussion on

issues affecting quantitative research into cross-linguistic influence, De Angelis (2017) notes the difficulty in determining a threshold proficiency at which a non-native language may influence further language acquisition, which leads to problems in distinguishing between a monolingual L2 learner and a multilingual L3 learner in research contexts. This can be extrapolated into a further contemplation on a prominent obstacle in linguistic research: it remains unclear at what point knowledge of a language begins to matter enough to define someone as a bi- or multilingual. In short, a clear distinction between monolingualism and bi-/multilingualism is not always the case (Luk & Bialystok, 2013; Surrain & Luk, 2019). Furthermore, there may be differences between a researcher's view and that of the individuals themselves, and such views may vary over time. Björklund et al. (2020), for example, note how student teachers' self-definitions as a monolingual, bilingual or multilingual tend to be dynamic and contingent upon different perspectives on their own language knowledge. Conceiving of bi- and multilingualism as points on a continuum rather than as clear-cut categories of being seems to be one way around the difficulty to define these terms exactly (Dewaele, 2015).

The above issues surrounding the language knowledge of bi- and multilingual subjects reflect an approach that prioritizes such language knowledge. However, another approach to linguistics at large, with specific focuses on bi- and multilingualism, prioritizes language practice; that is, it conceives of language (and multilingualism) as something that is done rather than as a specific knowledge of linguistic structures (though it should be noted that linguistic knowledge and activity cannot be easily separated from each other). To emphasize this priority, some researchers have adopted the term "languaging" to signify the use of language. It was proposed by Swain (2006) to highlight the process of "making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience

through language” (p. 98). In fleshing out “translanguaging,” Garcia and Wei (2013) adopt the same term, modifying its meaning: for them, it refers to “the simultaneous process of continuous becoming of ourselves and of our language practices, as we interact and make meaning in the world” (p. 8). The common element in both formulations of languaging is the process of making meaning, which emphasizes the idea that meaning in language is incomplete until, through languaging, meaning is made, reminiscent of Vygotsky’s (2012) proposition that language completes thought. Instead of saying one is learning a language, it might be said that one is learning *to* language in a new or specific way. A multilingual, then, would be one who can language in a wide variety of ways, using different named languages, dialects or registers to communicate with different sets of interlocutors at different periods of time.

In this section, I will first examine how attempts to define bi- and multilingualism are framed by an argument over whether the focus of the definitions should be on language-as-knowledge or language-as-practice. I will then review how contemporary views of bi- and multilingualism rely on a holistic approach. I use Grosjean’s (1997) and Cook’s (V. Cook, 1992, 2012) multicompetence as anchors to frame my understanding of multilingualism, and I will explain how they have developed to push back against some of the issues plaguing attempts at defining bi- and multilingualism.

3.2.1. Knowledge vs. activity: Competing definitions of bi- and multilingualism on an individual level

Early on, Bloomfield (1933) advanced the idea that a bilingual was one who had a ‘native-like’ proficiency in two languages (p. 56), reflecting an emphasis on language knowledge, specifically the demonstrated linguistic knowledge of a native speaker.

Logically, if we expand this definition to multilinguals, it would follow that someone who identified as a multilingual would have native-like proficiency in every one of the languages that they used. This definition has been criticized for its limited view of language development and use as well as its apparent privileging of the monolingual model of language, or the monolingual bias, in the linguistic study of bilinguals (Dewaele, 2015; Grosjean, 1989).

Still, despite its limited view, and despite equal proficiency no longer being deemed a requirement in definitions of bilingualism (Skutnabb-Kangas & McCarty, 2008), Bloomfield's early definition and its appeal to the monolingual bias continues to hold sway in the popular sphere. For example, Cenoz (2013) observes that bilingual and multilingual language proficiency is often evaluated using monolingual standards. Further, Grosjean (1997) comments that bilinguals tend to evaluate themselves as inadequate in both their languages (p. 166), an observation seconded by Dewaele (2015, p. 1). Sia and Dewaele (2006) also noted that, among other factors, individuals still actively studying a language did not consider themselves to be bilingual in that language: "The ongoing formal instruction in the L2 with the feedback and the test results that this entails may convince the learners that their L2 is still developing and that they have not yet reached their 'ultimate' attainment" (p. 15).

This perceived inadequacy may stem from the learners' position as students having been evaluated, and evaluating themselves, on standards based on the monolingual language use of a native speaker. Ortega (2013, 2019) appears to support this observation, suggesting that both the monolingual bias and the native speaker bias (i.e., those who use a language from birth develop a superior competence) "work

together to cast a deficit light on the object of study, portraying language learners as doomed to failure” (2019, p. 24).

However, in a shift to a language-as-activity focus, it has been argued that bi- and multilinguals do not use their languages in the same way that monolinguals do: the complementary principle, formulated by Grosjean (1997, 2015), holds that bilinguals use their languages for different purposes and with different sets of interlocutors, thereby resulting in different levels of fluency in each of their languages. This means that monolingual standards may not be fit for the purpose of explaining or evaluating multilingual language use, since, for a bi- or multilingual, their total language knowledge and performance consist of complementary knowledge of all the languages in their repertoire, but this complementary knowledge may not be accurately reflected by a monolingual standard. When seen in isolation, the knowledge a multilingual has of one language may appear deficient, and their usage may seem awkward or unnatural, but the knowledge and practice of an individual language for a multilingual cannot be isolated from other languages since a multilingual rarely uses one language in isolation. For instance, De Angelis and Jessner (2012) noticed that multilingual learners (L1 Italian, L2 German, L3 English) exhibited noticeable amounts of linguistic interdependence and cross-linguistic influence in written assessments in each of their languages. They concluded that multilinguals should be assessed on their written language performance holistically (i.e., writing in all their languages) since “the usual sole focus on written assignments in the target language does not provide enough information to judge a student’s language knowledge, which consists of more than knowledge in the various languages” (p. 65).

Pavlenko (2005a, 2014) also argues in support of the premise that bi- and multilinguals remember, perceive, emote, think and language differently depending on which language(s) they are using; thus, a complete picture of multilingual thought processes would entail dealing holistically with all of the languages in one's repertoire. Dewaele (2004, 2008) as well offers evidence corroborating the hypothesis that multilinguals assign a different emotional weight to words in different languages; rather than comparing their respective weights, adopting a holistic view of the emotional impact across languages may generate additional insight into multilingual emotions. As formal language education has traditionally been built upon the foundation of a monolingual view of language (Cenoz & Gorter, 2014), there appears to be a persistent disconnect between what bi- and multilingualism is (and is not), how it is developed in a formal educational setting, and later how it is described, understood and assessed.

Basseti and Cook (2011) explain that Bloomfield's definition can be taken as an example of a maximal view of bilingualism, whereas a minimal or usage view may instead consider the ability to use two languages in real-life situations, regardless of proficiency level. According to them, though, neither the minimal (usage) nor the maximal view are appropriate for determining the threshold at which one can be considered a bilingual, since both views are based on a monolingual native-speaker standard: "The maximal definition assumes that the target for a bilingual is the linguistic competence of a monolingual native speaker in both languages; the use definition assumes that a bilingual uses language in the same way as a monolingual native speaker in both languages" (p. 144). Because, as Grosjean (1997) pointed out, bilinguals use language differently than monolinguals, both the minimal and maximal views are lacking in their ability to provide an apt definition or conceptualization of bilingualism, and consequently, multilingualism.

In other words, neither a language knowledge nor a language-as-activity approach works if language is assumed to be one specific language and not the total linguistic competence of an individual. Rather than a perspective that seeks to divide the languages within one's repertoire, what has evolved is a perspective that respects the language system as a whole unit and considers the idea that language knowledge and use for bilinguals and multilinguals falls along a spectrum with a large amount of variety therein (Dewaele, 2015).

3.2.2. *Multicompetence*

Cook (1992, 2012) offers multicompetence as a contemporary view of bi- and multilingualism, with an individual's language system seen as a single complex unit composed of a variety of languages; for Cook,

Multi-competence...involves the whole mind of the speaker, not simply their first language (L1) or their second. It assumes that someone who knows two or more languages is a different person from a monolingual and so needs to be looked at in their own right" (2012, p. 1).

Multicompetence, therefore, defines the linguistic system of a multilingual as a compound entity that differs qualitatively from that of a monolingual. Such a holistic view differs from traditionally atomistic perspectives that seek to analyze, for example, individual languages within one's repertoire (Cenoz, 2013) From a multicompetence perspective, a Spanish-English-French multilingual individual, for instance, is not three distinct language-based personalities within one person; instead, this particular individual would exhibit qualities that differ from the theoretical monolingual of any of those languages. This individual is not a Spanish speaker AND a French speaker AND an English speaker; this individual is qualitatively different from any one of those. The premise of a

multicompetence perspective is that the language system of a bi- or multilingual individual cannot be separated neatly into distinct components but must be analyzed holistically as an individual and unique system in and of itself (Cenoz, 2013; V. Cook, 1992, 2012; Grosjean, 1989, 1997).

Cook had been criticized for situating multicompetence primarily on the linguistic level while ignoring the conceptual level (Kecskes, 2010) as well as for not extending multicompetence to a theory of language knowledge (Hall et al., 2006). However, Cook (2012) argues that such criticisms are based on a partial understanding of multicompetence; multicompetence was not meant to be limited in any one dimension but is instead proposed as an “overall perspective or framework” (p. 1) through which L2 users (Cook’s preferred term instead of bi- or multilingual) can be viewed and their language development and use be understood. The definition of multicompetence was intended to cover all language-related aspects in the mind; although Cook (2012) notes that his concept is not “particularly psychological” or “particularly sociological” (p. 1), it does seem to address some psychological and sociological concerns, insofar as they are related to language. Further, Cook (2012) notes that multicompetence can also be applied to a community, so that the collective community of speakers be considered multicompetent in all languages that are represented therein. This introduces a dialogical element to multicompetence, as the multicompetence of a community may influence the multicompetence of its members, and vice-versa. The co-official status of Castilian Spanish and Catalan in Barcelona, for example, means that students will be educated in both languages throughout their schooling, resulting in multicompetence for the citizens. Multicompetence then allows for the broader definition of multilingualism, which includes both individual and societal multilingualism (Cenoz, 2013; Skutnabb-Kangas &

McCarty, 2008). It also seems to predict the emergence of dominant language constellations (Aronin, 2016).

While multicompetence itself is a useful framework for conceptualizing bi- and multilingualism, and for offering a counter perspective to the monolingual native-speaker basis used for the influential theory of Universal Grammar (UG) (Chomsky, 1965, 1981), one problematic extension can be the positioning of monolinguals as “language-deprived” (V. Cook, 2009). Although Cook (2009) explains how UG may benefit from a multicompetence perspective to help account for several issues that UG fails to explain (for example, how a child raised in a bilingual home can learn to distinguish between languages despite not being told the languages are different), his suggestion that monolinguals are “language-deprived” and monolingualism as an aberration may be interpreted as critical, or possibly discriminatory. In a report of a teaching intervention designed to educate adolescent students about the benefits of language learning and multilingualism, Lanvers et al. (2019) report that, while many students appreciated the observable benefits of being able to speak multiple languages, some students reported feeling insulted at being told that bilinguals were smarter than monolinguals.

While framing multicompetence as normal is a step in the right direction in terms of undoing the monolingual bias and the damage it has done to bi- and multilingual subjects, it would not be right to speak of monolingualism using similar terms that have been used to criticize. This may be the drive behind perspectives such as Hall et al.’s (2006) that say even monolinguals can be considered multicompetent due to the theoretical presence of multiple registers, dialects, and other language varieties within a monolingual society.

Hall et al. (2006) argue that the distinction between monolingualism and multilingualism is not a qualitative difference, but is rather dependent on the number and types of communicative contexts a language user has experience in. Their interpretation of multicompetence rests on a reversal of what they see as one crucial weakness:

... while showing evidence of the dynamic properties of language knowledge, multicompetence-inspired research has attempted to explain the dynamic properties of language knowledge with reference to inherently stable systems that are somehow destabilized with the advent of multicompetence (2006, p. 229).

Instead, they suggest that language knowledge is “inherently dynamic” and that development of language knowledge is tied to frequency of use. For Hall et al. (2006), the dynamic nature of language knowledge is “subject to a variety of stabilizing influences that are tied to the constancy of individuals’ everyday lived experiences, and more generally, to more encompassing societal norms that value stability” (p. 229). Placing the source of language knowledge in experience of language activity allows Hall et al. to say that even monolinguals may be considered multicompetent, should the experiences be diverse and plentiful enough.

Kecskes (2010) argues that “The main problem with Hall et al.’s criticism is that it seems to ignore the fact that NOT ALL language knowledge of bi or multilingual speakers derives from social-cultural experience of the use of L2 or Lx” and that much of the language knowledge that a non-native speaker might have comes from studying the language itself (p. 101), but this counter-criticism seems to contrast “authentic” social-cultural experiences had outside of a classroom with classroom-based language experiences. Kecskes (2010) does not seem to include formal language study within the realm of social-cultural experience.

However, while the language classroom has been criticized for its apparent inauthenticity (e.g., Pavlenko, 2005b) and the difficulty it poses for research (e.g., V. Cook, 2013), it is still a social-cultural space that can engender meaningful connections between students and language; nevertheless, the kind of experience will be different from an “authentic” social exchange. For example, Kramsch (2009) argues that students learning a foreign language in a school setting may find different but still meaningful uses for the language, such as “the expression of their innermost aspirations, awarenesses, and conflicts” (p. 4). Still, the kernel of Kecskes’s (2010) criticism rings true: the development of Lx language knowledge differs from that of an individual’s L1. However, it does not seem that Hall et al.’s (2006) interpretation would deny such a difference, since they allow for contextual usage-based differences in language knowledge.

As mentioned earlier in this section, Cook (2012) is aware of criticisms of multicompetence and has answered them by suggesting such criticisms are due to a partial misunderstanding of the purpose of the multicompetence framework. Hall et al.’s (2006) interpretation can therefore be considered less a criticism and more an application of the multicompetence framework, resulting in a usage-based theory of the language knowledge possessed by multicompetent individuals. However, their assertion that the distinction between the language knowledge of multilinguals and monolinguals is based on “the amount and quality of exposure to variable linguistic forms, and, more generally, the unique social contexts and pragmatically-based communicative activities that individuals encounter in the process of becoming multilingual” (Hall et al., 2006, p. 230) does seem to contradict Cook’s (2012) definition of multicompetence, which while taking the multilingual individual as different from a monolingual, appears to use the traditional construct of named languages as its starting point.

Hall et al.'s (2006) interpretation seems to place a larger amount of emphasis on the type of knowledge afforded by communicative experiences with language varieties, even should those experiences be had within a single linguistic system. This interpretation seems in line with understandings of language based on a translanguaging perspective (e.g., García & Wei, 2013; Otheguy et al., 2015; Wei, 2018; Wei & Ho, 2018), which argue that languages are not distinct within the mind, and that individuals engage their entire linguistic repertoire via an idiolect, choosing features based on the specific context. However, translanguaging perspectives typically center on users of two or more named languages, looking to legitimize the language practices of bi- and multilingual subjects in the way Cook's (1992, 2012) multicompetence does. Ultimately, Hall et al.'s (2006) argument that monolingualism can be equated with multicompetence may hinder efforts to achieve equity for multilingual subjects, an equity which appears to be one purpose of multicompetence.

3.2.3. *DMM*

One model of multilingual language development based on a multicompetence framework is the Dynamic Model of Multilingualism (DMM) (Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Jessner, 2008). This model, which also reflects the influence of CDST (Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2002, 2011, 2017), looks at the multilingual linguistic system as unitary and ever-evolving due to the constant contact between the individual language systems within a multilingual's overall linguistic system. According to the DMM, "The multilingual system is accordingly characterized by continuous change and nonlinear growth. As an adaptive system, it possesses the property of elasticity, the ability to adapt to temporary changes in the systems environment, and plasticity, the

ability to develop new systems properties in response to altered conditions” (Jessner, 2008, p. 273). One significant emergent property is the M(ultilingualism) factor, which Jessner (2008) links to metalinguistic awareness and notes as unique to multilingual systems.

In the DMM, the multilingual system may be affected by a number of social and psychological factors and is dependent upon the perceived communicative and sociocultural needs of the individual (Jessner, 2008). Further, the DMM argues for nonlinear change and accounts for both language development and attrition as natural processes in the evolution of the overall system. The DMM takes a holistic view of the multilingual system, which is important in that while each individual language system may experience attrition at some time, the integrity of the overall system is maintained. That is, through the perspective afforded by the DMM, a multilingual individual will not be seen as deficient just because they have experienced attrition in one of their languages. Such a change is seen as natural in the DMM. This view is in line with Cook (2012) and Grosjean (1997, 2001) and helps to avoid negative views of bi- and multilingual subjects.

Although this model seems to preserve the distinctions between languages that Hall et al.’s (2006) more radical definition of multicompetence argues is fallacious, it does so by allowing for transgression of those distinctions and by qualifying individual languages as sub-systems within a single, unitary psycholinguistic system. Furthermore, since the DMM argues that language development and use is dependent upon social, psychological and individual factors (Herdina & Jessner, 2002), it helps to explain why a multilingual subject might choose to work in monolingual mode versus bilingual, trilingual, or n-lingual mode (Grosjean, 2001). The DMM also attempts to explain how

someone developing a third, fourth, or nth language relies upon preexisting knowledge and experiences related to all their languages, not just their L1 (Jessner, 2008). This model therefore maintains the basic tenets of multicompetence (V. Cook, 1992, 2012), as it includes both individual and social elements, and looks at individual development in relation to the surrounding social context.

3.2.4. *Multilinguality and Dominant Language Constellations*

Aronin (2006, 2016) reflects the influence of multicompetence in the concepts of multilinguality and Dominant Language Constellations (DLC), concepts that also depend in part on the surrounding social context. Multilinguality (Aronin & Ó Laoire, 2004) is defined as a particular language-based identity, although it is not limited to the languages one uses; it also reflects physiological, psychological, and social dimensions. Aronin (2016) states that multilinguality “embraces *everything that results from* using and learning several languages, both in the present and also potentially in the future” (p. 193). The foundation for one’s multilinguality is found in the concept of multicompetence, as Aronin suggests that the basis of the dimensions of multilinguality can be found in the development of one’s multicompetence.

Related to the idea of multilinguality are DLCs, which are defined as the set of dominant languages in one’s life (Aronin, 2006, 2016). The DLC does not necessarily equate to one’s entire linguistic repertoire, that is, one’s DLC is not the same as one’s entire repertoire. The DLC “includes only the most expedient languages for a person, rather than all the languages known to them” (Aronin, 2016, p. 196). Equal or balanced proficiency is not a prerequisite for a language’s inclusion in the DLC; instead, it reflects a usage-based view of language, whereby the languages used to get along in daily life are

those that are included (Aronin, 2016; lo Bianco & Aronin, 2020). Like multicompetence, DLCs exist on both the individual and societal levels. Moreover, a community may have a DLC that influences the way services are offered to its members, for example the influence of a community's DLC on its language-in-education policy (e.g., Banda, 2020; Coetzee–Van Rooy, 2020). DLCs, then, may be interpreted as an interface between the multicompetence of an individual and that of a community. Indeed, the languages that constitute an individual's DLC depend mostly on the social context of that individual, or in other words, on the DLC of the community. Therefore, one's DLC may change as one moves to different locales and engages with new communities.

3.2.5. Summary

While at first the concepts of bi- and multilingualism may be seen as nebulous due to the multiple approaches used to define them, what the presence of multiple approaches reveals is the inherently dynamic and multifaceted nature of the phenomena. In other words, the multiple approaches allow for the hypotheses that there is no one singular way to be multilingual, and that multilingualism relates to much more than the knowledge of multiple languages. Dewaele (2015) comments that the interdisciplinary nature of the phenomenon of bilingualism leads to researchers adopting different criteria in defining bilingualism, while Cenoz (2013) notes that as a complex phenomenon, multilingualism is often researched from various perspectives, leading to several working definitions. Bassetti and Cook (2011) argue that definitions of bilingualism depend on the needs of those defining it: bi- and multilingualism for education will be thought of differently than bi- and multilingualism for political purposes, for example. De Angelis (2017) remarks that researchers will often base definitions of multilingual language users

on their own preferences or biases. She further comments that such practice may make it difficult to conduct empirical research, where definitions and clear categories are needed to generate and qualify results. While I agree that these are notable challenges in specific contexts, in research investigating individual multilingualism on a personal level, the variety in definitions can prove advantageous in that it allows for an exploration of how an individual's perceives their own multilingualism and how it affects them on various levels.

There is also some question regarding the distinction between when to use the terms bilingual and multilingual (Cenoz, 2013). Although there are demonstrated differences between the two, "bilingual" has traditionally been used as the generic term, indicating the use of two languages but with the caveat that more than two languages can be included in the definition (e.g., Bassetti & Cook, 2011). In this case, multilingualism can be seen as an instance of bilingualism. However, contemporary research has seen a general shift to where "multilingual" is the generic term, with bilingualism being considered a type of multilingualism. Still, there are those who distinguish the terms completely, with bilingualism indicating the use of only two languages, and multilingualism meaning the use of three or more (e.g., de Groot, 2011). This is due to demonstrated differences between bilinguals and multilinguals in several regards.

It should be noted that the popular view of bi- and multilingualism still aligns more closely with more traditional definitions, such as "balanced bilingual." As such, it may be that an individual whom a researcher considers a bi- or multilingual may not consider themselves one at all. The interaction between an individual and their context is a vital element in determining the label of multilingual, especially if the context's definition is at odds with one's own self-perception. While I use the definitions and concepts in this

section as a guide, it is important to note that what research participants think about the labels of “language” and “multilingual” is also of great interest.

For this project, I will use “multilingualism” as the generic term, referring specifically to “bilingualism” to emphasize when only two languages are concerned.

“Monolingualism” will refer to the use of only one language.

3.3. Social dimensions of multilingualism

Multilingualism is not only an individual phenomenon but also exists on a social level (Cenoz, 2013). Cook (2012), in defining multicompetence, notes that it applies both to an individual and a community. While societal multilingualism has a long history, Aronin et al. (2013) distinguish between historical and current multilingualism, commenting that current multilingualism serves as a foundation upon which is built a specific social reality. It is more of a necessity in contemporary times, accounting for a range of things such as educational success, career and job prospects, and social identity. Aronin (2007) has labelled multilingualism as a “new global societal arrangement” (p. 1) and sees the current global society as heavily dependent on multilingualism for functioning, a major difference from historical multilingualism, which is considered more supplementary in nature (Aronin et al., 2013).

In this section, I will first present a summary of problems and controversies surrounding societal multilingualism, although some problems may also extend into the personal realm. I will then discuss how multilingualism is involved with discussions in research disciplines such as SLA and education, moving on to a review of two approaches to multilingual education and policy, plurilingualism and translanguaging.

3.3.1. *Problematizing multilingualism*

Multilingualism in contemporary society is not without its controversies:

Blommaert et al. (2012) state that “even if multilingualism is *in general* and *in principle* a positive thing, it can *in actual fact* be a problem for individuals and social groups” (p. 1).

They note a tension between the high-modern understanding of language and multilingualism, which saw language diversity as a problem for the nation-state, and the post-modern understanding that, like Aronin (2007), posits multilingualism as a boon.

Blommaert et al. (2012) focus their critique on the ethnolinguistic assumption, which they define in the following way: “Full membership of a nation was predicated on full (and exclusive) membership of an ethnolinguistic community: a community defined by one language and one culture” (p. 3). With this assumption, “Speaking another language...creates a fundamental problem of otherness” (Blommaert et al., 2012, p. 3).

Blommaert et al.’s (2012) argument is in line with Anderson’s (2016) discussion of the development of the nation-state. He argues that the development of the nation-state was achieved in part via the advent of print media, which entailed the use of a standardized version of language that could be comprehended by every member of that nation-state. Language, then, was seen as the vehicle of citizenship: knowing the language affirmed one’s status as a citizen of the nation. Languages were not only standardized for this purpose, but also nationalized in that they became one seemingly concrete link between all citizens of a nation-state. Before the development of the modern nation-state, it was allegiance to a monarch that often distinguished a member of one nation from another (Anderson, 2016); language was not as much an issue, so long as one was loyal to the throne, wherever that throne might be. With the nation-state, allegiance shifted from the monarch to the collective living on a piece of land with

decided borders, and language became the common element. Anderson (2016) comments that language diversity was “immense” before print media led to the privileging of certain languages over others and the collection of various dialects into standardized, nationalized languages.

Ironically, this ethnolinguistic assumption has been strengthened by increased attention on minority languages (Blommaert et al., 2012). Fighting for and establishing the right to learn and use minority languages may be interpreted as causing further separation into tribes of “us” and “them.” While empowering minority populations has been a positive effect, it has been done using the same understanding of language as a unifying feature of a particular ethnic or cultural group against other such groups (Blommaert et al., 2012, p. 4). It may simply be a symptom of the times: Blommaert et al. (2012) state that, “Modernity, as we have seen, rejected ambivalence, the fact that things can have multiple forms, functions and meanings. In the field of language in society, it rejected sociolinguistic diversity, and if such rejection was impossible it ordered, regimented and policed such ‘chaotic’ sociolinguistic realities by means of modernist language policies and planning efforts” (p. 7). Contemporary attempts to manage languages in society, then, are seen as attempts to assert control over a naturally dynamic phenomenon, namely, multilingualism. Providing a space for minority languages has also been interpreted as a colonial holdover (e.g., Makoni & Pennycook, 2006), further cementing divides between populations.

The ethnolinguistic assumption (Blommaert et al., 2012) has made it so that languages can serve as both inclusionary and exclusionary forces, defining both who belongs to a community and who does not. Although Anderson (2016) is correct in stating that “Language is not an instrument of exclusion: in principle, anyone can learn any

language” (p. 134), in reality, language can be used to exclude those who cannot speak the language, especially if they are not offered the opportunity to learn. When taken to an extreme, loyalty to a nation might entail loyalty to a language, and anyone who speaks more than one language might have their loyalties questioned. Bilingualism and multilingualism therefore pose a problem for nation-states built on a national language. Ruíz (1984) notes how such a language-as-problem orientation has influenced language planning and policy within educational systems: bilingual education programs in the US, for example, are typically used to propagate English without the promise of maintaining a student’s other languages. While this may lead to a fuller membership within the community of the United States (inclusion), it does so by seeking to reduce or eliminate one’s membership in other language communities (forcing exclusion).

Pennycook (2002) further problematizes the construct of multilingualism by arguing that it is simply reproducing colonial legacies rather than deconstructing them. Moreover, Makoni and Pennycook (2006) criticize the invention and taxonomy of languages as European colonial efforts to manage and govern, similar to Blommaert et al.’s (2012) assertion that language planning policies are an attempt to reign in multilingualism. Makoni and Pennycook’s (2006) argument appears to be partly based on the premise that traditional linguistic inquiry sought to generalize and decontextualize language as an object of study, and that this was done to both further the European colonial agenda and to abide by the tenets of scientific study; however, they question the very nature of those tenets, namely the system of taxonomy used to delineate and enumerate languages: “Part of our argument, then, is that current approaches to diversity, multilingualism and so forth, all too often start with the enumerative strategy of

counting languages and romanticizing a plurality based on these putative language counts” (p. 16).

Essentially, they are critical of what they see as the preeminent definition of multilingualism, namely, “a pluralization of monolingualism” (Makoni & Pennycook, 2006, p. 29). Key to their argument is that, despite what can be seen as the fictitious nature of languages, the material effects that naming and categorizing languages have had on people are very real, particularly in terms of “how languages have been understood, how language policies have been constructed, how education has been pursued, how language tests have been developed and administered, and how people have come to identify with particular labels and at times even to die for them” (Makoni & Pennycook, 2006, p. 3). However, while Makoni & Pennycook seem to use this argument to propose disinventing the concept of language in an effort to help heal the damage that it has done, the paradigm shift they seek will take time if it is to happen at all. In the meantime, researchers must use the given concept, with all its faults, in order to assist language learners facing these real material effects.

3.3.2. Multilingualism in SLA and language education

Building on the proposition that the current iteration of multilingualism is the basis of a new global societal arrangement (Aronin, 2007; Aronin et al., 2013), the Douglas Fir Group (DFG) (Atkinson et al., 2016) has stated that modern multilingualism is a “new world order” (p. 19). They cite technological innovation, globalization, and increased mobility as powers shaping modern society and highlight the importance of multilingualism in such a society; against this backdrop, they argue for a need for the field

of SLA to seriously consider the implications of being, or not being, multilingual in modern society.

The argument they present addresses the role that education plays in multilingual development: on discussing the impetus for their project, they state, “our present collective text is motivated by the conviction that SLA must now be particularly responsive to the pressing needs of people who learn to live—and in fact do live—with more than one language at various points in their lives, with regard to their education, their multilingual and multiliterate development, social integration, and performance across diverse contexts” (Atkinson et al., 2016, p. 21). Importantly, they posit that ideological concerns are behind the learning of additional languages, as language ideologies can affect public language policy, language offerings in education, public reception of certain languages or varieties, and learners’ choices of which languages to study and speak. This relates to the concept of DLCs (Aronin, 2006, 2016), which on the societal level may reflect the dominant language ideologies of a given context.

However, while the group’s project does shed light on serious shortcomings that are prevalent in SLA research, and while it does provide a way forward in reshaping SLA so that it can better account for multilingual experience, the focus seems to be on language learning and not on multilingualism per se. Ortega (2019) notes that the framework proposed by the Douglas Fir Group (Atkinson et al., 2016) does not address multilingualism specifically, and instead argues that rather than as an additional concern, multilingualism should be the primary focus of SLA. While she seems to agree with the DFG that SLA has been home to damaging ideologies such as the monolingual bias and native speaker bias, she takes a stronger position in criticizing the field for the propagation of the critical period hypothesis (Lenneberg, 1967) and for historically

ignoring other languages a person may know while attempting to understand L2 development (Ortega, 2019, pp. 24–25; see also Cenoz & Gorter, 2019). This last point can be supported with evidence on cross-linguistic influence and interaction (e.g., de Angelis & Jessner, 2012). Ortega (2019) states that CLI and language transfer “are part of the broader reality of bilingualism” and not simply indicative of a lower proficiency or some stage to be overcome on the way to mastery of any one language (p. 25). This is just one way that SLA has had trouble producing an accurate picture of the multilingual experience.

Ortega (2019) attempts to redefine language or L2 learning as “late-timed multilingualism,” echoing Wei’s (2018) assertion that language learning’s actual purpose is to become bi- or multilingual. For Ortega, it is important to reframe language learning, or L2 learning, as “learning to become bilingual later in life,” and that bilingual acquisition (rather than language acquisition) be conceived of as a singular phenomenon on a continuum, with early or childhood bilingualism at one end and adult bilingualism at the other (2019, p. 26). She sees SLA’s overarching goal of understanding language development as being closely aligned with an ethical imperative related to the goals of social justice, an imperative that she argues is crucial to a successful reframing of SLA in the way envisioned in the DFG’s (2016) project. Cook’s (2012) version of multicompetence appears to have a similar ethical goal in mind, as it completes Grosjean’s (1989, 1997) theory that bi- and multilinguals should be looked at in their own right and not as linguistically deficient as compared to a monolingual, a comparison that has historically done more harm than good.

SLA is, in a sense, incomplete precisely because it has a history of restricting the contexts from which it has gained knowledge about language acquisition and

development often through self-imposed limits in terms of focusing on (or using as standard) monolinguals, native speakers, children, or college students, the last of which Ortega (2019) notes as having been primary source for researchers attempting to construct knowledge about linguistic, as well as psychological, knowledge. The problematic history of generalizing hypotheses about the human capacity for language on a restricted and privileged population is a major aspect of SLA that Ortega challenges, as she argues for diversification in selectivity for research purposes. Such diversification is crucial to the attempt to restructure SLA around bi- and multilingual acquisition (Ortega, 2013, 2019). Such diversification also entails grappling with issues of justice and equity that often accompany the lives of multilingual individuals and communities, and often manifest themselves in educational contexts.

3.3.3. Multilingualism in education, language learning, and motivation

Attitudes towards multilingualism in educational contexts, as well as policies, plans and curricula for multilingual education, can be ambivalent or contradictory even when a context professes itself to be supportive of multilingual development. In proposing multilingualism as an approach in education, Cenoz and Gorter (2014) observe a “gap between the traditional focus on one language at a time at school and in research and real multilingualism that considers all the languages and multilingual discursive practices” (p. 242). Further, they note the prevalence of the native speaker ideal in education and research (2014, p. 245), despite mounting evidence in favor of adopting a perspective more indicative of the multilingual experience, which does not align completely with concepts based on the native speaker ideal. Contrary to Makoni & Pennycook (2006), Cenoz and Gorter (2014) seem to assert that languages can be treated

as distinct entities precisely because “they are treated as such by social actors in the school context” (p. 242). Rather than try to deconstruct divisions between languages, Cenoz and Gorter propose to bridge the gap between two distinct realities: languages as separate entities in the school context, and languages with porous boundaries when viewed from the perspective of a multilingual.

This is somewhat different from MacSwan (2017), who, in critiquing translanguaging perspectives that use Makoni and Pennycook’s (2006) argument, contends that while the divisions between languages may be arbitrary when language is viewed from a sociopolitical standpoint, there is reason to believe that multilingual individuals have a single, unitary linguistic system “with some internal language-specific differentiation” (p. 179); that is, while the system as a whole may be conceived of as one single system, within the system there may be some domains typified by grammatical features that belong to one specific language.

Ortega (2019) also comments that language users tend to mentally differentiate between languages. Despite this difference in focus, however, a common thread can be found in the premise that the divisions between languages, whether arbitrary or real, carry implications for speakers of said languages (Makoni & Pennycook, 2006). For instance, languages as taught in a school setting tend to be taught in isolation from each other, at least nominally, which can result in multilingual students not being made aware of the linguistic resources they have nor how to use them (Cenoz & Gorter, 2014).

Another such implication is the way such divisions compel learners to make choices about which languages to study and use. Cenoz and Gorter (2019) discuss the vital role of competition in regard to the resources available for an individual learning a language. A person has only so much “time, effort, attention and interest” (p. 245) to

devote to study, and these resources must be shared not only across languages being studied but across all subjects and disciplines a student encounters throughout the course of a day. Motivation can also be considered a resource: as stated in Chapter 1, research into language learning motivation has not yet sufficiently considered multilingualism, instead choosing to focus on one language (i.e. the monolingual model) and the motivation to learn it. Prevalent theories of motivation, such as Dörnyei's (2009b) L2 self-system, do not typically consider multiple languages at once. Instead, Henry (2017) argues for a holistic view of motivation that is more representative of multilingual motivation, as it integrates individual motivations for the learning of specific languages, noting that "L2 motivation research has treated the motivational systems of different languages separately, rather than as cognitively interconnected" (p. 3). Competition for attention and motivation among different languages in a school curriculum or other social context appears to be a comparatively unexplored dimension of language learning motivation. Similarly, the argument that a multilingual has different, complementary proficiencies among all their languages may also be extended into conceptualizing multilingual motivation as complementary between languages, which is what Henry (2017) appears to be working toward.

Ushioda (2017), in discussing motivation to learn languages other than English (LOTE), argues that current theories of language learning motivation may not be adequate for shaping policy to encourage linguistic diversity, which is closely related to both individual and societal multilingualism. Current theories have largely been based on a framework of goal directed behavior, resulting in prevalent theories such as L2 self-guides (Dörnyei, 2009b) or that of investment (Norton Peirce, 1995). Such theorization was made possible by the field's focus on English language learning. However, Ushioda

(2017) notes that English language learning has become a necessity in many contexts, with motivation to learn English being based on an instrumentalist view of the language (R. C. Gardner, 2010; R. C. Gardner & Lambert, 1972; R. C. Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991). This instrumentalist view, derived from people's motivation to study English, has then formed the general framework for understanding motivation to study all languages, as well as influencing policy and language planning decisions in a variety of contexts. She notes, however, that "such a view (and its associated ideologies and discourses) may communicate a somewhat restricted set of motivations for learning languages in general that will not necessarily be helpful in promoting uptake or enhancing societal and individual engagement with language diversity" (Ushioda, 2017, p. 471).

Instead, Ushioda (2017) argues for a holistic, "constitutive" view of language learning motivation, more in line with holistic, multicompetence views of language acquisition and development and multilingual practices. In accord with Henry (2017), she notes that "a linguistic multi-competence approach to framing motivation would broaden the scope to consider motivation holistically in relation to the total composite system of languages and associated cultural and intercultural fluency developed by the individual" (Ushioda, 2017, p. 477).

Still, such an approach to motivation is relatively new, especially due to the comparative scarcity of studies on motivation to learn LOTE as compared to those focusing on English language learning. Henry (2017) and Henry and Thorsen's (2018a) work supports the adoption of a holistic view of multilingual motivation; for example, Henry and Thorsen (2018a) demonstrate how the theoretical construct of an ideal multilingual self operates distinctly from, while simultaneously influencing and providing context for, ideal L2 selves operating within learners' L2 self-systems. They go on to

suggest the development of pedagogical interventions designed to support the multilingual self, stating that other pedagogical interventions, created with the monolingual framing typical of formal education, may not be fit for purpose.

3.3.4. Motivation in multiple language learning

Learners engaged in the learning of multiple languages, whether simultaneously or consecutively, may find themselves having to respond to a number of contextual factors, such as social and cultural forces that influence their motivation. These factors may manifest in different ways depending on the language being discussed, with English featuring prominently. In a large-scale study on views of plurilingualism among adolescents in Europe, Busse (2017) found that learner attitudes and motivation were influenced by the perceived social value of languages; for many participants, it seemed that the perceived importance of English tended to affect their motivation to study other languages that might be deemed inferior, a conclusion previously reached by Henry (2011a).

Elsewhere, Chen et al. (2021) suggested that the results of their study, and consequently the participants' motivational profiles, may have been influenced by the research context: they hypothesized that their university's partnership with a German university may have led, in part, to their German-learning participants' motivation being more instrumentally oriented, whereas for participants studying French, the motivation may have had more to do with stronger internalized ideal L2 selves among the learners and less to do with instrumentality. When compared to the participants' study of English alongside these other languages, the researchers found that the participants were more motivated by the perceived cultural value of German and French as opposed to English,

perhaps due to the ubiquity of English as a “global” language. In an investigation into the motivation of Chinese university students studying multiple languages, Zheng et al. (2019) also emphasized, in addition to the strong influence of the national foreign language policy, the perception of English as a “gatekeeper,” or mediating factor, to language learners’ motivation to study other languages. Interestingly, they found that students seemed to recognize that participation in the international community may necessitate the learning of multiple languages and not just English, and that the development of a multilingual identity and multilingual posture (based on Yashima’s (2009) concept of international posture) be required to participate in the international community.

The influence of contextual factors has elsewhere been noticed by Wang and Zheng (2021), who observed that participants developed English and Japanese L2 selves, along with some development of a multilingual self, in light of several social and pedagogical factors, such as the social discourse surrounding English and Japanese, their learning experience with each language, and their appreciation of cultural elements associated with each language. The researchers noticed a shift in participants’ appreciation of Japanese cultural elements, which in several cases started out negative and became positive after some time spent learning the language.

Within discussions of multilingualism and multiple language learning, there seems to be an observation that the pervasive presence of global English can lead to competition and comparisons between languages an individual is engaged in learning (Henry, 2011a, 2014, 2017). In European contexts, a learner’s preferred order of language learning (i.e., whether English is the first foreign language learned) has been shown to impact upon learner motivation (Csizér & Lukács, 2010). Among Chinese learners of

multiple languages, Wang and Zheng (2021) observed how participants compared their relative experiences with and proficiency in English and Japanese when discussing their motivation to study each language. They also suggested that conflict and contradiction may manifest in the context learners are embedded in, with social and pedagogical concerns at odds with each other (participants were Japanese majors, but the social discourse surrounding English was more positive). A similar theme was noticed in Chen et al. (2021). Fukui and Yashima (2021) suggested that the perceived competition between languages may have been derived from the academic nature of language learning, where classes vie for students' time, energy, and attention.

However, rather than the negative interpretation within appeals to competition and conflict, an interpretation more akin to complementarity (Grosjean, 2015) or prioritization (van Huy, 2016) may be more fruitful, particularly when LOTEs are concerned (Nakamura, 2019). Nakamura (2015) found that students learning Japanese often had specific, domain-related motivations for learning the language; four domains were identified: interpersonal, extracurricular, career and education. Although there was some competition between languages, Nakamura observed that participants tended to speak about their languages in a complementary way that emphasized the coexistence of L2 selves. Noprival et al. (2021) also observed that individuals may have multiple sources of motivation to learn multiple languages, and that each language may have more than one kind of motivation relating to different domains, such as for pleasure, social intercourse, or academic purposes. By specifying the domain that each language may be active in, this view mutes the element of competition and casts multilingualism achieved through formal learning in a more positive and cooperative light, as students may be able to more easily envision a multilingual self (Henry, 2017; Henry & Thorsen, 2018b) that

encompasses distinct but interacting domain-specific language selves. Through such a lens, perceived changes in motivation to learn one language may be interpreted instead as a temporary redirecting of motivation towards a different language, or different subject, that may be a current priority.

As mentioned earlier, the notion of competition for resources may have been influenced by the nature of formal language learning (Fukui & Yashima, 2021) and the fact that much research takes place in educational contexts and for educational purposes. With respect to the proliferation of dynamic views of motivation (Dörnyei et al., 2014; Waninge et al., 2014) and multilingualism (Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Jessner, 2008), and reflecting views of bi- and multilingualism as complementary practices (Grosjean, 1989, 1997, 2015), this interpretation may be more beneficial in the current study.

The link between emotion and motivation may also benefit from a complementary perspective. There is some evidence to suggest that positive language learning experiences in one language may carry over into generating motivation to learn a new language (Mayumi & Zheng, 2021). Liu (2022), moreover, found that learners spoke about their positive experiences learning English and LOTEs in a similar fashion, and that positive emotions derived from their experiences studying all their languages were connected to their ideal multilingual selves. Although it was concluded that learners appeared to be more emotionally engaged in their English learning as compared to their other languages, Liu reasoned that the learners may have internalized the learning of LOTEs differently from English. Despite the comparison between the emotional engagement of the learners towards their different languages, the differentiation in how learners internalized their languages may have allowed their English learning experience to provide the basis from which their multilingual selves could emerge. The focus here

was less on competition and more on the cooperation and complementarity of the learners' different languages. The connection between emotion and motivation is explored further in Chapter 3.

3.3.5. Policy and pedagogy: Plurilingualism and translanguaging

The conceptualization of multilingualism as multicompetence has evolved into two seemingly differing ideologies that are enacted in educational and sociopolitical spheres: plurilingualism and translanguaging. Reserving the term “multilingual” to describe contexts where multiple languages are used, the European Union has designated individual multilingualism as “plurilingualism,” as it takes into account continuous language contact brought on by the number of languages present in the EU and the ideal of free movement. To promote understanding between the nations and peoples of the EU, and because EU citizens can be expected to encounter several languages throughout the course of their lives, the EU has adopted a linguistic and educational policy whereby citizens are expected to learn at least two languages in addition to their mother tongue. The official definition of plurilingualism, according to the Council of Europe (2001), states that it is

the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent, has proficiency of varying degrees, in several languages, and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the user may draw. (p. 168)

The influence of multicompetence theory can clearly be seen in the mention of “complex...competence,” whereas the purpose of language for use in communicative situations by a “social agent” evokes Hymes's (1972) theory of communicative

competence and Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory. Bakhtin's (1981) heteroglossia can be seen in other policy documents that mention the type of repertoire that might be expected by a European with a secondary school education: knowledge of a "national" language, the local variety of the national language, a regional minority language, and knowledge of other "foreign" languages to varying degrees (Council of Europe, 2001).

While this policy is in line with the general ideological foundations of multicompetence, it can be criticized for continuing to propagate the monolingual bias by utilizing the monolingual native speaker as a measuring stick. It has also been criticized for upholding "both the sociocultural and psycholinguistic reality of named languages" (García & Otheguy, 2020, p. 26). Because it may be argued that, to a multilingual subject, named languages do not compose differentiated linguistic systems within the mind but are rather components of one unitary linguistic system, the plurilingual concept has been deemed not to be reflective of a great majority of multilingual experience and practice. To compensate for this shortcoming, the concept of translanguaging has been developed as a competitor to plurilingual ideology.

Although plurilingualism appears to prioritize the language user, it also focuses on social distinctions of language: there are national languages, regional languages, and foreign languages. Further, plurilingualism reinforces the psychological separation of languages: languages are not only externally socially distinct, but they should be kept distinct in the mind, despite the official definition claiming otherwise. This can be seen in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001), which catalogues different levels of proficiency that individuals are at times asked to grade themselves on each of their languages. The descriptors are based on tasks that can be completed in that language, but each language is judged separately, with other

languages in the multilingual's repertoire not factoring into the evaluation. Building language education curricula on these proficiency levels is an apparent contradiction to the claims of plurilingualism as a composite or complex competence.

Translanguaging, on the other hand, not only prioritizes the language user but also minimizes the importance of social distinctions of languages while highlighting individual language practice. Originally used to refer to a specific pedagogical tool used within Welsh classrooms (Lewis et al., 2012), much contemporary work on translanguaging has modified the definition to describe bilingual and multilingual language practice in general. Otheguy et. al (2015) define translanguaging as "the full use of idiolectal repertoires without regard for named-language boundaries" (p. 304). They assert that what an individual speaks or uses to communicate is not one or another specific named language, but rather one's own idiolect, made up of a multitude of features typically associated with named languages.

Rather than a "linguistic repertoire," translanguaging posits the multilingual subject to have a unitary linguistic system developed via a range of social interactions (Otheguy et al., 2015) similar to the above definition of multicompetence (V. Cook, 2012). It also runs parallel to arguments that multilinguals have an integrated conceptual system that operates n languages (Kecskes, 2010). Furthermore, from this approach, one labelled a "multilingual" does not choose to activate a specific linguistic system, but activates certain features (morphological, phonological, lexical) based on the communicative context.

Thus, language use from a translanguaging perspective entails choosing the appropriate features for the given context; that the features can be said to be of a certain named language is of little consequence in this sense. Even though proponents of

translanguaging generally accept that there is social value to named languages and being able to function in “monolingual mode” (Grosjean, 2001), they argue that the different named languages a multilingual knows are not psycholinguistically distinct from each other and that a multilingual’s “monolingual” language performance is an abstraction necessitating the suppression of other portions of one’s full idiolect. Indeed, a translanguaging perspective asserts that the definitions of “bilingual” and “multilingual” are not linguistic constructs at all but rather social constructs, echoing Coulmas (2018), who states that multilingualism itself, as an object of inquiry in the Western world, “is not so much about a multiplicity of languages which...is ubiquitous throughout the world and nothing out of the ordinary, but about attitudes, policies, and ideologies” (p. 30).

While it can be said that both the plurilingual and the translanguaging perspectives provide space for speakers of minoritized languages to legitimately practice their full idiolect, in translanguaging this applies more to those who already speak those languages than to those wishing to learn additional languages. The translanguaging perspective can be seen as advocating for recognition of the language practices of multilingual individuals as legitimate ways of languaging, because it is these practices that have been historically discouraged. It seeks to deconstruct the boundaries between languages and assert that the main difference between a monolingual and a multilingual is the kind and number of communicative experiences had rather than the number of named languages one might know.

The plurilingual perspective, however, does not necessarily seek to undo the social boundaries drawn between named languages, but rather to advocate for a legitimate crossing of those boundaries; after all, the maintenance of these boundaries can be considered important for language education and preservation efforts. Like the

translanguaging approach, plurilingualism seeks to legitimize multilingual language practices; in contrast to translanguaging, though, it seems to also be concerned with how one develops and expands these practices, which includes language learning (Vallejo & Dooly, 2020). Because, from a translanguaging perspective, “the language of bilinguals is always and at every stage complete” (García & Otheguy, 2020, p. 28), translanguaging as a pedagogical stance works more on refinement of one’s existing multilingual language practices and the development of one’s confidence as a bilingual or multilingual subject; plurilingualism as educational policy, however, is concerned with the development and expansion of one’s linguistic repertoire in order to more fully participate in cultural and communicative exchanges.

3.3.6. Summary

There is a well-noted gap between research on multilingualism and research on language learning, due in part to the nature of formal language learning taking place in a “monolingual” environment, such as a language classroom focused on the instruction of one specific language (Wei, 2018); such an environment often is not friendly to what might be considered natural multilingual language practices. Further, since several contemporary ideologies of multilingualism question the boundaries between named languages based on the argument that such divisions are not psychologically real, the formal language learning classroom can sometimes be seen as an inauthentic language environment. After all, language learned in a classroom does not always reflect the “real” version of a language used outside of the classroom. Additionally, language education and multilingual education programs based on monolingual norms of “pure” language has been argued to be detrimental to both monolinguals and multilinguals: for

monolinguals, the expected standard of performance in a new language is high enough to discourage further learning; for multilinguals used to mixing their languages, the expectation to perform in one language while silencing the others can often feel like an insurmountable task (García & Otheguy, 2020).

Although it is fair to say that the monolingual bias has negatively affected classroom language learning, to argue that the language classroom is an inauthentic environment is to argue that one of the primary avenues for exposure to and instruction in other languages is somehow less legitimate for students who otherwise would have no exposure to a different language than their own. Furthermore, as school can be considered the primary occupation for children and adolescents, what is learned in the school is of great relevancy for the time a student spends there, although it may not always be acknowledged as immediately relevant for life outside the school's walls. While the two approaches to multilingualism in education mentioned here, plurilingualism and translanguaging, can be critical of the classroom, each seek to inform policy and pedagogy in their own way in order to improve the experience for students and teachers alike.

Translanguaging and plurilingualism are often juxtaposed, and there is considerable overlap between the two approaches, just as there are considerable discrepancies. Ultimately, however, the approaches of translanguaging and plurilingualism can be used in tandem to help explain the different ways that multilingualism can be experienced and performed by individual subjects. Plurilingualism is a policy and translanguaging is practice. Despite the fact that plurilingualism refers to individual multilingualism, its primary goal is in the development of a citizenry that upholds the value of the collective. Although it finds its birthplace in the European Union, pedagogical practices based on plurilingual policy can be found in several other locations around the globe. While plurilingualism may influence the nature of a curriculum, a translanguaging

approach can shape the interactions that take place on a smaller scale, within a classroom on a daily basis.

The nature of this study is such that plurilingualism will be prioritized; the study is an investigation into the motivation of individuals learning multiple languages in a formal educational context, and plurilingual policies shape both social and educational policy as well as pedagogy. While the focus is not on translanguaging per se, the current discussion on how multilingualism in education is viewed and theorized necessitated a clear explanation of current trends in societal multilingualism. Hence, a treatment of translanguaging was required in order to clarify definitions and perspectives. An understanding of the principles of translanguaging is also useful when dealing with complex constructs, as it exemplifies the principles of complexity theory and its effects on the linguistic disciplines.

4. Methodology and contexts

4.1. Introduction

My choice of research methodology for this project was based on three significant concerns I had with most empirical research on language learning motivation, two of which have been previously voiced by Ushioda (2009, 2016). The first concern is that research on motivation tends to focus on results rather than processes, a focus that has led to language learning motivation research being found outside of mainstream SLA research. Ushioda (2009, 2016) comments that much of the existing research frames motivation as a construct linked to general learning behaviors and outcomes but does not often focus on more “finegrained” elements such as the development of internal linguistic processes or the acquisition of specific target language elements. Dörnyei (2014) makes a similar observation, noting that “the original product-oriented conception of the two key ID [individual difference] factors, aptitude and motivation, was incompatible with the inherently process-oriented stance of SLA” (p. 6). While contemporary conceptualizations of motivation, such as the L2 self-system (2009b), have attempted to bring motivation closer to the concerns of mainstream SLA research by acknowledging process and change, there is still ground to cover.

A second concern mentioned by Ushioda (2016) is the relative lack of “insider” or practitioner-led research activity in motivation and a prevalence of “outsider” research in the field. Most studies in motivation are often conducted from an etic perspective, with the researcher standing external to the learning environment. Contexts and results are often presented in a general way and may not consider the specific context of the classroom, or the teacher’s or learner’s specific experiences. This has led Ushioda (2016) to comment on the noticeable dearth of studies conducted in specific contexts and

communities of practice, and an even greater lack of studies conducted by teachers, especially “those shaped by teachers’ own pedagogically oriented research inquiry” (p. 566).

This last comment is a telling one: there seems to be a conspicuous incongruity between prevalent theories of motivation and pedagogies of language teaching. Ushioda appears to appreciate how knowledge of motivational processes may assist teachers in performing their job, and that our current knowledge of motivation could benefit from pedagogically oriented theories, but that the existing research may not directly relate to the specific learning environment. In other words, while we may have learned a lot about a person’s motivation to learn languages, we have not yet been able to fully use this knowledge to assist teachers in the classroom. This recognition is clear as Ushioda (2016) concludes, “This general lack of pedagogically oriented research on motivation grounded in specific contexts of practice means that we have limited understanding of how processes of motivation evolve through day-to-day interactions and events in the classroom, and of how teachers can work responsively and adaptively to shape these interactions and events in motivationally constructive ways” (p. 566). Based on the premise that a motivated learner will succeed in learning language (R. C. Gardner & Lambert, 1972), teachers may benefit from understanding motivation in order to better activate it within their students, yet this potential is not always fulfilled due to a general disconnect between researchers and the learning environment.

One reason for the lack of teacher-led studies is concern about the validity of results due to the relationship between teachers and students in a classroom. The potential lack of objectivity runs counter to what might be considered “good science.” To present a sense of objectivity, studies on motivation tend to depersonalize participants

and shift focus to theories of motivation in general, or to focus on a specific language (i.e., L2 learners of French), or even to develop abstract learner types (e.g., Chan et al., 2015). While learner types may eventually prove to be helpful to practitioners, the classroom environment often demands a more personal relationship between teachers and learners that may not be compatible with generalizations to predetermined “learner types.” Although students and teachers may be included as participants, they may not typically be the subject of the research per se, leading to a seemingly more objective but less personal approach to SLA research.

The relative lack of insider research links as well to the tendency of SLA research to focus on language acquisition and development instead of the learner. Kramsch (2009) highlights this criticism by arguing that “second language acquisition research has traditionally given more attention to the processes of acquisition than to the flesh-and-blood individuals who are doing the learning” (p. 2). Without an intentional focus on teachers, learners, and the “human” aspect of motivation, what we discover about the motivation to learn language will continue to be limited.

In short, two of the three concerns facing me as I composed this project were the tendency of research on LL motivation to focus on the end product (proficiency/acquisition) rather than the process of learning, and the nature of LL motivation research to discuss “motivation” in a general sense while not focusing on specific contexts or individuals. An underlying issue to both these concerns is the alignment of research with classroom pedagogy.

My third concern was that LL motivation research, like much of the existing SLA research, did not seem to sufficiently account for multilingualism, which I discussed in Chapters 1 and 3. Motivation research tends to be about learning a specific language, but

I wanted to investigate the motivation to become multilingual through the study and use of multiple languages. My intention in this project was to concentrate on the learners' individual experiences with language learning and how their memories of those experiences influenced their motivation for further learning, whether it be further learning of a language the learner had already begun to study or the learning of another language altogether, and I looked for a methodology that could answer these concerns.

Thinking about the first concern, that LL motivation research does not sufficiently account for the process of development or acquisition, I thought to approach language learning and development as a continuous, lifelong process and sought to understand how individuals experience the process of their language development. I wanted to know how people felt about the paths they took in learning languages, both how they remembered feeling and how they felt in the present. I wanted to know what salient memories they had of language learning and how those memories affected their language-related choices, such as which languages and which varieties they focused their study on, and what experiences the languages enabled them to have. Motivation can be defined as the desire to do something or the drive to act in accord with one's feelings or judgements; I sought to understand how motivation felt to the individual. In other words, I wanted to know what it felt like to be a motivated learner.

Moreover, thinking about the concern for specific contexts and individual experiences, I needed a methodology that would allow for an emic perspective to be represented. I looked for a methodology that would prioritize the perspective of the learner and could be beneficial to current and future practitioners by giving them a window into their students' minds as well as a way to open that window, thereby assisting their pedagogically oriented aims. Finally, regarding the lack of a multilingual

view of motivation, I needed a way to explore what led individuals not just to learn languages but to want to become multilingual, what motivation to become multilingual felt like and how that motivation changed over time.

4.2. Overview of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

Based on the above concerns, I chose Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as the cornerstone for my methodology. IPA is rooted in the philosophical tradition of phenomenology and counts Husserl, Heidegger, Gadamer, Merleau-Ponty, Sartre and Ricœur among those who have had a hand in its inception. Though phenomenology has its roots in philosophy, there are several qualitative methodologies based on phenomenology that are used in health and social science research.

IPA is a qualitative methodology, although due to its flexibility in data collection and analysis it has been described as more of a stance or perspective than a strict method (Larkin et al., 2006), and is primarily concerned with the individual and the nature of experience. Larkin et. al (2006) lament that “It remains a disappointment that so many psychological methods and approaches (even qualitative methods) have continued to push ‘people’ to one side” (p. 108), and IPA seeks to rectify this by bringing people to the center. Eatough and Smith (2017) write that, in IPA, one pays attention to the experiences that matter to the individual and that have some importance in the individual’s self-conception and self-awareness. This means paying attention to how that experience is unique to the individual, who is an “experiential expert in the phenomenon of interest” (Eatough & Smith, 2017, p. 201). Since the individual is the expert in what they are thinking and feeling, the researcher takes a secondary position to the individual participant and is there to listen, consider and respond.

Due to its focus on the experiential dimension of human psychology, IPA's goal is to understand how people make sense of their experience of a particular phenomenon, and so prioritizes the qualitative data of people's feelings, thoughts, and memories, and includes interpretations of that data. Regarding interpretation, Smith (2004) states that IPA engages in a double hermeneutics, or a double interpretation: "The participant is trying to make sense of their personal and social world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of their personal and social world" (p. 40). According to Pietkiewicz and Smith (2012), IPA helps shed light on how people attempt to interpret the events and experiences in their lives; Eatough and Smith (2017) note that the interest of IPA "is the person's experience of the phenomenon and the sense they make of their experience" (p. 3). Thus, adopting this approach means adopting a concern with the processes of interpretation and meaning-making that a person undergoes as they reflect upon their life experiences.

What IPA seeks to disclose is how an individual understands themselves and their life, and this involves two strategies of engagement (an elaboration of the double hermeneutic described above) in determining the meaning of experience: empathic engagement (seeing it as the participant sees it) and critical engagement (asking questions about what the participant sees) with the data (Shinebourne, 2011; Smith, 2004). As Shinebourne (2011) writes, "IPA is concerned with trying to understand what it is like from the point of view of the participants. At the same time, a detailed IPA analysis can also involve asking critical questions of participants' accounts" (p. 21). IPA studies, therefore, provide a rich description of the phenomenon under investigation in order to fulfill the first stage (seeing it as they see it), and then engage in a closer analysis and interpretation of the description provided by the participant.

IPA has been utilized in fields like health and clinical psychology to document “the existence of actual patterns of life” (Smith & Osborn, 2004). It is a way of exploring a phenomenon by interpreting first-person experience through and with a third-person perspective (Larkin et al., 2011) assisting in the interpretation; the role of the researcher is to serve as a foil to the individual participant and offer alternative perspectives with the intention of coming to a deeper combined understanding of the phenomenon in question. The interpretive act is what differentiates this approach from a purely descriptive approach: when interpreting the data using an IPA approach, it is possible to use different preexisting theoretical methods, and IPA allows for this kind of flexibility on the part of the researcher (Larkin et al., 2006). It is also understood that, just like the account of the phenomenon is incapable of being fully complete, the interpretation as well will be a partial interpretation, but still able to shed light on certain aspects of meaning produced by the participant within a specific context.

IPA is sometimes criticized for a lack of rigor; however, this criticism has been characterized as unfair because, while IPA is a flexible and accessible approach to qualitative data collection and analysis, it maintains a level of complexity that makes it a sufficiently challenging and rewarding approach (Larkin et al., 2006). The prioritization of participant voice may make it an attractive option for researchers to stop at a faithful description of the participant’s account, but IPA’s second level of critical engagement is what gives the approach sufficient rigor: the interpretative act allows for the consideration of a participant’s experience against the wider sociocultural context (Larkin et al., 2006), which is in keeping with a person-in-context relational approach, as well as allowing for the abstraction of the idiographic nature of personal experience into common themes that may emerge from multiple accounts. IPA has a further benefit of

challenging the researcher's presuppositions, since it is possible that a participant may highlight something in their account that the researcher did not anticipate (Smith, 2004), or provide information that runs counter to what the researcher has hypothesized.

When attempting to examine someone's motivation for learning, in this case for learning a language, it is vital to understand that motivation may not necessarily emanate from some discrete element but rather may come from a complex of factors and it may change over a period of time. The dynamic perspective afforded by the introduction of dynamic systems theory into SLA research (Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2002, 2011, 2017) has made way for approaches that highlight that complex nature of motivation, as it allows for an investigation into relationships between elements and the prospect of emergent motivation. Furthermore, traditional motivation studies have not always considered the possibility of change over time, such as a student eager to learn French for the first two years of secondary school only to grow to dislike it so much that they never want to engage with it again. One study may, for example, have considered that this hypothetical student wanted to learn French at the beginning, while a separate study conducted later may focus on this student not wanting to deal with French ever again, but a much less answered set of questions is, what happened in the interim? Why did this student's motivation change? Is it just for French, or for all languages? For such questions, an approach like that of IPA may be appropriate. In previous studies that attempted to understand change over time, Henry (2011a, 2015a) explicitly adopted IPA when working with Swedish students on topics such as L3 motivation and the influence of L2 English on L3 learning. Still, IPA approaches remain rare in motivation research, especially in a multilingual learning context.

4.2.1. *The IPA approach*

There are typically two stages to research using an IPA approach. The first stage is descriptive, in that the primary goal is developing an account of the phenomenon from the point of view of the respondent. At this stage, it is important that the researcher attempts, insofar as is possible, to understand and record what this phenomenon is like for that respondent; the fundamental underpinnings of phenomenology indicate that the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon for the participant will never be complete, so the goal is simply to get as close as possible by developing a "coherent, third-person, and psychologically informed description" (Larkin et al., 2006, p. 104).

The second stage allows for the researcher to adopt a more interpretive stance. The objective in this stage is to attempt to determine the meaning behind the respondent's experience; in explaining this, Smith and Osborn (2004) write that "While IPA is committed to the value of attempting to understand the world from the perspective of one's participants, it also recognizes that this cannot be done without interpretative work by the researcher who is trying to make sense of what the participant is saying" (p. 230). Thus, while in the first stage the researcher should attempt to withhold their own biases or interpretations, in this second stage the researcher is allowed to theorize about what this phenomenon means to the respondent. As Larkin et al. (2006) note, while in the first stage the question being answered is "what is this like for this person?", in the second stage it is rather the question of "what does this mean for this person?" that is to be answered, and several tools are available to the researcher for this interpretation.

IPA studies are idiographic and rely on a detailed analysis of stories told by a limited number of participants (Larkin et al., 2006; Smith & Osborn, 2004); Smith and

Osborn (2004) give the range of 6-15 participants as an example. Regarding participant selection, researchers do not typically choose participants at random but rather attempt to choose a group of participants that is somewhat homogenous, based on recognizable socioeconomic factors such as age or level of education. Thus, the goal of an IPA study is not a broadly generalizable hypothesis but instead partial, tentative, and conditional conclusions that may lead to further investigation of the phenomenon. However, while homogeneity is generally the case, not all IPA studies prioritize it: Henry (2011b) looked for maximum variation within his participants in order to investigate different experiences of the relationship of L2 English with L3 selves, with the argument that the significance of any commonalities would be strengthened. Still, homogeneity in that study was provided by the context and the similarity of the educational background of the participants, who were all Swedish secondary school students.

4.2.2. Empathic engagement and participant voice

There are various methods of data collection available when conducting an IPA study, such as semi-structured interviews, participant journals, and focus group interviews. In the case of semi-structured interviews, which I used for this study, it is important to record and later transcribe an accurate, verbatim copy of the content of the interviews. While the level of detail does not necessarily have to be the same as that needed for discourse analysis, the transcription should still be accurate enough to allow for a thematic analysis.

With semi-structured interviews, although it is advisable to develop an interview schedule beforehand, the interview itself should be guided by what the respondent is saying; during the interview, the researcher is expected to listen carefully and follow a

line of questioning that will allow them to gain a better insight what the respondent is describing (Smith & Osborn, 2004). The interview schedule may serve as a general guide and may be referred to when another line of questioning has seemingly reached its end. The researcher should try to ask questions that allow the respondent to talk about their experience as much as possible to generate a rich description.

4.2.3. Critical engagement

Following the interviews and the transcription process, the transcriptions are read several times for the researcher to fully acquaint themselves with the participants' account. While reading, the researcher takes note of salient words, phrases, and ideas and compiles a record of them, such as by taking notes along the margin. By interrogating the text in this way, the researcher is attempting to come to a fuller understanding of the participant's experience. After the first set of comments are complete, the researcher then attempts to cluster ideas that are related to each other or that appear to form a theme. These themes are then taken back to the text, with the researcher looking for salient points that might have been missed in the first reading. This shuttling between big (themes) to small (examples within the text) mimics a hermeneutic process, whereby a part is compared to the whole, and the whole compared to a part, in a constant and perpetual process whose goal is a better understanding of the text in question.

While an IPA approach does not necessarily involve the participants in this interpretive process, there have been some examples where the researcher has engaged in a co-interpretation of the participant's experience with the participant themselves. One such is example is Harvey's (2015, 2017) study of the experience of English language learning among internationals in the UK. Although it did not explicitly use an IPA

approach, the study involved many of the same elements, such as in-depth interviews and thematic analysis; during the study, Harvey sent researcher notes to participants for further commentary, resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of the individual experiences the participants described. This is something more than member checking, which generally entails sending transcripts back to participants to check for the accuracy of the text. Having the participants engage their own story critically alongside the researcher may lead to a more well-rounded insight into their experiences in addition to ensuring the accuracy of the transcribed interview text. Harvey further amended this process by providing the participants with the thematic analysis that emerged from all participants' stories, thereby revealing to each of the participants the elements they shared in common with each other and inviting the participants even further into the interpretational stage.

4.2.4. Why this method fits the research questions

The research questions guiding this project allow for an approach like IPA due to their concern with memory of, emotion related to, and change in motivation. As stated earlier, the questions are:

1. What do young multilingual subjects remember about their language learning experiences, especially of those languages they learned in secondary school, and in what manner do they recall these memories? To what extent are emotions represented in these memories?
2. How do these memories of their language learning experiences continue to impact the motivation to learn, develop and use different languages (i.e., practice their multilingualism)?

These questions deal with subjective experiences and perception, in which case a platform for participant voice needs to exist. My purpose in conducting this study was to attempt to understand how individuals go about becoming multilingual, practice their multilinguality, and how they feel about being and becoming multilingual, so I wanted to be able to listen to participants tell their stories. Further, I wanted to determine if participants identified any aspects of motivation that have not made their way into existing studies on language learning motivation.

An exploratory approach like IPA allows for the admittedly broad scope of the questions; it prevents premature hypothesizing about what the participants might say, since there are no clear limits to what a participant will discuss. Moreover, an IPA approach allowed me to interrogate the varied experiences of students while first forcing me to withhold any preconceived opinions or judgements based on my own knowledge and experience, but then allowing me to use my experience to provide a further dimension to the participants' experiences via interpretation.

4.2.5. Researcher's bias

Projects adopting a methodological framework based in phenomenology often ask the researcher to recognize potential sources of bias. Instead of claiming to avoid bias, the premise of qualitative research conducted in the interpretive phenomenological tradition admits that everybody has some biases or preconceptions simply from being in the world (Heidegger, 1962; Ladkin, 2005; LeVasseur, 2003), even researchers. It is often suggested that researchers take time to notice sources of potential bias beforehand so that the report can be understood as the product of one with those biases (Ladkin, 2005). This is a type of phenomenological "bracketing." However, the purpose of bracketing in

this study is not to name and eliminate, even if only temporarily, the influence that biases and preconceptions may have on interpretations of the participants' experiential data; rather, it is to acknowledge that those preconceptions will certainly have an influence on the interpretations. It is an embrace of the subjectivity of the researcher, namely myself, and my subjective knowledge of the world that forms the frameworks of knowing that I bring to this study.

In addition to the research-related biases I have adopted in composing this project, which can be seen in the topics I covered in the literature review, there are sources of personal bias that I would like to disclose. I am an American citizen, born in New York City to a family of Puerto Rican descent. I was raised in a bilingual household, with both Spanish and English being used around me, and I grew up using both. Throughout my childhood, I spent a significant part of my time with my grandparents, who spoke only Spanish. I attended public and private schools throughout my primary and secondary education. At school, I was instructed through English, except for language classes in secondary school, for which I took Spanish. Early in primary school, I was placed in an ESL class due to my name and background, but that was quickly rectified. I attended college in New York and continued studying Spanish. After college, I traveled to South Korea and lived there for close to 12 years, becoming fluent in Korean. In Korea, I worked primarily in secondary education as an English language teacher. Currently, I am completing this work while living in Dublin, Ireland, where I also continued teaching and became more familiar with the European context of language education.

It was my experience as a teacher and learner in South Korea, against the background of my experience as a bilingual student in New York, that led to me undertaking this project. Besides the aspect of language, my household could be

described as bicultural, since although we were based in New York, my family held strong connections to our Puerto Rican heritage and the family who lived there, and our traditions were a hybrid of the two cultures. Our household had firm beliefs in the place of the Spanish language within our domestic culture.

Pavlenko (2005b), in discussing research on language and emotion, comments that much of the available research fails to provide information about the researchers' knowledge of the languages and cultures under investigation, a criticism that parallels Ushioda's (2016) comment on the lack of emic perspectives within motivation research. Pavlenko's argument appears to be that bilingual and multilingual researchers may be able to offer different and possibly more relevant hypotheses and explanations of issues revolving around bilingualism and multilingualism. In other words, a kind of sympathy is lacking when a monolingual attempts to explain multilingualism, which is the crux of the criticism against the monolingual standard in SLA research. I adapt this argument by suggesting that multilingual researchers can offer alternative perspectives on a variety of topics within SLA, including motivation to develop and use multiple languages. It is with these arguments in mind that I provide the above "bracketing" of my background and context.

4.3. Irish and Korean research contexts

This section will provide a description of the research contexts, with a concentration on the educational policies and curricula that form the foundation of the school contexts which the participants recall in their narratives. Although both national language and foreign language curricula will be covered, the focus will be on foreign

language curricula and its relationship to national language curricula within the school context.

4.3.1. Introduction

Ireland and South Korea, the two countries where participants were recruited, share several relevant qualities. Both countries have seen an increase in immigration numbers and diversity within the population. Both countries have an educational system that, for secondary education, relies on rote learning, culminating in a set of exams that heavily influences, and in many cases determines, university entrance prospects. Finally, both countries stress instruction in at least two languages: Ireland requires students to study both of its national languages, Irish and English, adding a third language in secondary school; Korea has invested much into English language education within its schools, starting English education in primary school, and later adding a third language in secondary school.

Language education in general is a concern in both contexts and causes undeniably strong reactions from all participants in education, especially students. Furthermore, both countries are attempting to deal with an influx of new languages and cultures, and these incoming cultures exert no small influence on the existing population and society, thereby suggesting that an investigation into the system and its students is worthwhile.

Table 1 below offers a breakdown language offerings and requirements that students will encounter in public education in each of the countries. While this study focused on participants found in Ireland and Spain, two of participants did their schooling in Spain and Morocco, so I have included a breakdown of language education in those

countries as well. Third level education, or higher education, has not been included as the language offerings and requirements will differ greatly depending on the institute and the discipline in which the student is enrolled.

Table 1

Language education in school systems participants attended

	Ireland	Korea	Spain	Morocco
Primary School	Total of 6 years; Irish and English taught concurrently	Total of 6 years; Korean for 6 years, English (EFL) for 4 years (grades 3-6)	Total of 6 years; Castilian Spanish + regional language (e.g., Catalan, Basque, Galician, Aranes) + first foreign language (English, German, French, Italian or Portuguese) for 6 years; second foreign language for 1 year (grade 6)	Total of 6 years; Modern Standard Arabic, Amazigh and French for 6 years (as of 2017; prior to 2017, French was introduced in 3 rd grade) + English for 3 years (grades 4-6) (as of 2017; prior to 2017, English was introduced in secondary school)
Lower Secondary School	Total of 3 years; Irish + English + foreign language (French, Spanish, Italian or German)	Total of 3 years; Korean + English (EFL) + foreign language (Japanese or Mandarin Chinese)	Total of 4 years; Castilian Spanish + regional language + 2 foreign languages (English, German, French, Italian or Portuguese)	Total of 3 years; Arabic + French + second foreign language (English, Spanish, German, Italian)
Upper Secondary School	Total of 3 years, 2 mandatory; Irish + English + foreign language (Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Polish, Mandarin Chinese, Arabic, Lithuanian, Japanese and Portuguese)	Total of 3 years; Korean + English (EFL) + foreign language (Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, French, Spanish, Arabic*, Vietnamese*, Russian, German, and Hanmun) *no provision in the curriculum, despite availability on KSAT	Total of 2 years (optional) – choice of Bachillerato (university preparation) or formación profesional (vocational training); Bachillerato: Castilian Spanish + regional language + first foreign language + second foreign language (optional)	Total of 3 years (optional) – choice of baccalaureate or vocational training; language (Arabic or French) depends on discipline

4.3.2. *Language context in Ireland*

Although the migratory history of Ireland has generally been one of net emigration rather than immigration, 1996 saw immigration numbers supersede those of emigration for the first time in several years (Carson et al., 2015). A short drop coincided with the economic crisis in the early 2000s, but 2015 saw the numbers rise again. Already a country with two official languages (Irish and English), the increase in both the numbers and diversity of those entering the country has led to a parallel increase in the number of languages spoken in the country (albeit primarily in urban areas): a 2016 census showed approximately 612,000 people (roughly 12% of the population) reported speaking a language other than Irish or English at home (Central Statistics Office, 2018). Of that number, approximately 40% were Irish nationals, meaning that a significant proportion of the citizenry may not be covered under official language policies that focus solely on Irish and English (Liberio & Oliveras, 2021).

Moreover, the European Union has adopted a policy of plurilingualism for its citizens, with the goal of each citizen being educated in at least two languages in addition to their “mother tongue”; as part of the EU, Ireland participates in enacting this policy. This goal was established as the result of a meeting of European heads of state in Barcelona (European Council, 2002), but doubts remain as to whether the intervening 20 years has allowed for much progress in reaching this goal. Still, as the official one-line policy regarding language education in European nations, it has provided at least a guidepost for language education within each member state.

In recognition of the plurilingual policy set by the EU and the need to communicate with non-English and non-Irish speakers within its borders and across Europe, the Irish government has funded initiatives, such as the Post-Primary Languages

Connect initiative, to stimulate interest in language education (Department of Education and Skills, 2017). This is in conjunction with continued efforts to buttress Irish language education and English education for speakers of other languages.

In summary, Ireland appears to be proactive with its language policies and educational initiatives, at least in recent years, due to the influence of the European project and a population that is quickly diversifying. The country's official bilingualism provides a starting point for an emerging plurilingual policy, and the guidance of the EU's resolution is a further steppingstone in the plurilingual direction. However, the languages involved in Ireland's bilingual policy hold a value and weight that may slow the steps of the emergent multilingualism in the country. As of yet, there is no official policy on multilingualism within the country: Ó Laoire (2012) has suggested that it has become "imperative for the language policy discourse and debates to address not merely issues of bilingualism as it had been doing for decades but now to be concerned with multilingualism as well," with a "need to include all the languages of Ireland, not just Irish and English" (p. 23).

4.3.3. School in Ireland

Schooling in Ireland is divided into three levels: primary, secondary, and third level education. There is a linguistic divide in the school system throughout primary and secondary education: students may attend either English-medium or Irish-medium schools. In Irish-medium schools, students will take all their subjects through Irish, with the exception of English. In English-medium schools, students will typically take their subjects through English, except for Irish.

In primary education, teachers are asked to teach multiple subjects, thereby establishing a need for teachers who are proficient using both English and Irish. On the secondary level, however, teachers tend to be specialized, and while they are usually qualified to teach more than one subject, the Irish language requirement for teachers in secondary schools is not as stringent as that for teachers at primary schools. While some primary schools may introduce foreign languages or have provision for students' home languages, this is often left up to the discretion of the school administration. There is also support for students who do not use English or Irish at home and may need additional language education, such as ESL.

Secondary education lasts either five or six years. There are two sub-levels in Irish secondary schools: the Junior Cycle/Junior Certificate (Junior Cert), which comprises the first three years of secondary school; and the Senior Cycle/Leaving Certificate (Leaving Cert), which lasts two years. The Transition Year is an optional year that occurs after the Junior Certificate has been completed and before the Leaving Certificate has commenced.

As the two official languages of the country, both English and Irish are represented on the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate. The curriculum for each differs based on whether the school is an English-medium school or an Irish-medium school. For the Junior Certificate, in addition to the two official languages, Spanish, French, German or Italian can be offered as foreign languages, subject to availability at the school: not all schools get the same offering of languages. For the Leaving Certificate, students can select a language specification for their exam and study it during their Senior Cycle; languages available, according to the national curriculum, are Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Polish, Mandarin Chinese, Arabic, Lithuanian, Japanese and Portuguese, again subject to availability in the school (National Council for

Curriculum and Assessment, 2019). Students can choose to continue studying a language they began earlier or can start with a new language once they begin the Senior Cycle.

Subjects in both cycles (Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate) are typically divided into Ordinary level and Higher level, relating to the difficulty of the exam at the end of the cycle. Additionally, students who already have proficiency in one of the available languages can choose to do a specification in that language. A student who speaks Polish at home, for instance, can choose to take the Polish exam even without having studied it in school. Students may also choose not to take an exam in any foreign language if their chosen university course does not require a language.

During transition year (between the final year of the Junior Cycle and the first year of the Senior Cycle), students may explore another foreign language, or they may continue to study the language that they studied for the Junior Cycle. However, as the subjects studied during transition year are not expected to be assessed for the Leaving Certificate, the language learning experiences during this year may differ from the typical language learning experience at an Irish secondary school. The transition year is meant to provide secondary school students with opportunities to enrich their compulsory education through a variety of programs, such as work experience, new or extra subjects, and the like. Further, in cases where a foreign language is offered during transition year, it may be in the form of a language that is not usually offered at that school and for which there is no further learning opportunity available after transition year.

A typical secondary school student in Ireland can expect approximately five to six years of compulsory foreign language education. This is in addition to instruction in both of Ireland's national languages, English and Irish. The Irish language learning experience can differ greatly depending on both school and region; Irish-medium schools, for

example, would provide more opportunities for using Irish on a regular basis. For some students, an exemption from studying Irish is available; these exemptions are reserved for students who have spent more than six years outside of the Irish educational system or for whom there is some other extenuating circumstance.

While a foreign language requirement does not exist for many courses of study at university, some universities, such as the National University of Ireland, require all applicants to have taken the examination in Irish during their Leaving Certificate.

Disciplines that may require demonstrated proficiency in Irish, English, and/or a foreign language include education, international affairs, politics, law, and literature.

As part of the European Union, Ireland participates in the Erasmus program. The Erasmus program for university students consists of a period of international exchange, either one semester or one full year, in which the student is expected to spend that period living and studying in a different country. While the subjects at their visiting university may be taught through English, it is far more common for them to be taught through the language of the country in which the university is based. Therefore, students may be asked to exhibit a certain proficiency in the language of the country that they are visiting.

In summary, language education, comprising both national language education and foreign language education, forms a significant part of an Irish student's life. Before entering university, students may be expected to show some ability in at least three languages, including their mother tongue(s). Students will have generally spent their entire education studying both English and Irish and, depending on their home situation, perhaps yet another language. Once they enter secondary school, they are expected to study yet another language. Much has been made of the resulting proficiency of

languages studied formally through education, specifically public education, and while that is admittedly a significant concern (for example, many of those who attend English-medium schools feel their Irish is not where it should be) what is left to investigate is the relationship between the experience of language learning in formal education and students' motivation to continue learning and using multiple languages after they have finished their compulsory education.

4.3.4. Language context in Korea

Korean society has been described as an aging society with a decreasing birth rate. However, statistics show that the proportion of "immigrant children," namely children for whom at least one parent is non-Korean, is on the rise and accounted for approximately 5.3% of children born in 2017 (Statistics Korea, 2017). It should be noted that even naturalized Korean parents are still listed under "immigrant" in official documentation. The number of students in multicultural families (i.e., families with at least one non-Korean parent) also eclipsed 100,000 students for the first time. And it is possible that these families use languages other than Korean in the home, although the census does not ask about language use.

Additionally, there has been a general rise in the number of foreign nationals residing in Korea: the last census in 2017 saw an increase of approximately 70,000 foreign nationals over the previous year (Statistics Korea, 2018). Although foreign nationals occupy a comparatively small 3% of the total reported population, the relative share seems to be growing, with the majority coming from countries such as China, Vietnam, and Thailand. In short, the demographics are changing, and with it the languages present in society. While Korean is the language of the country and English continues to maintain

importance within education and the public sphere, there is increasingly more effort, at least within business and commercial realms, to cater to speakers of other languages.

Despite individual efforts, though, government policy on language seems to be lacking. Unlike Ireland, South Korea does not belong to any formal collective with linguistic policy goals, nor does it seem to have a comprehensive policy on its emergent societal multilingualism (Song, 2012). Still, it has developed a specific approach to languages reflected in its educational system, especially in the secondary school curriculum.

This development is partly due to a number of developments in the country's history and its unique position in East Asia. Because of its relatively long relationship with the United States, its position between Japan and China, its transition from an impoverished country to one of the wealthiest in the world in a matter of decades, its role as a magnet nation for migrant workers from other Asian countries, and its current position as a producer and exporter of cultural and technological phenomena, the country has grown into an integral part of the global network. This has meant that provision for language education within formal education has been shaped in part by these political and economic forces, with language proficiency being seen to increase one's own economic potential. Nowhere can this be seen better than Korea's relationship with English, a language which sometimes acts as a gatekeeping tool for entrance into top universities and companies.

Both inside and outside of the educational sector, the Korean government's approach to non-Korean language planning and policy has been characterized as minimalist and based almost completely on free market forces (Song, 2012). The Korean government has not yet made any official policy decisions on multilingualism or the place

of other languages within the country; it has instead let economic matters be the guiding hand in determining the place of different languages alongside Korean. Even in matters related to multilingualism in schools and the needs of emerging multilingual communities, it is several smaller government ministries, local seats of government, and academic organizations that are involved with managing language-related issues, and the numerous parties sometimes find themselves in conflict over what decisions to make (Song, 2012). One gap being filled by these myriad organizations and local school initiatives is the lack of an official Korean as a Second Language curriculum for children about to attend, or already attending, school and who might need Korean language assistance.

In short, aside from the provision for language education within schools, Korea does not have an existing governmental policy on multilingualism or language planning. This is possibly due to a perceived lack of a need to provide for languages aside from Korea due to the relatively small share of the population that might use a language besides Korean in the home. However, within the private sphere, such as in heavily commercial areas populated by privately-owned businesses, it is not uncommon to see multilingualism being practiced; this can be viewed as an example of the free-market forces shaping language planning without government intervention.

4.3.5. School in Korea

Like Ireland, formal education in Korea is divided into two levels: primary and secondary. Primary education lasts six years, as does secondary. Secondary education is further split into middle school and high school, which each last three years. Although it is not part of compulsory education, kindergarten is attended by many Korean children. At

these kindergartens, it is not uncommon for children to learn their first words of English, although English does not become mandatory in Korean education until the third year of primary school. Families may also begin teaching young children English before they enter school.

Aside from Korean, which is the national language and the first language for most students in Korea, and the introduction of English in primary school, there are usually no other languages taught during primary school. Unless students are receiving extra instruction, or are involved in some special program, the national curriculum does not have any provision for additional foreign language education in primary school. Indeed, the term “foreign language” in Korea is commonly understood to mean English, while other languages are grouped under the heading of “second foreign language.” Education in a second foreign language begins in middle school.

Languages introduced in middle school are usually limited to Japanese and Mandarin Chinese. These are also the typical offerings at most high schools. Students choosing to continue their language learning from middle school through high school may then be expected to have studied a foreign language for approximately six years by the end of high school. However, upon entering high school, students may decide to study a different second foreign language, again depending on the options offered by the school. Some private high schools and specially designated public “foreign language high schools” can offer more options, such as Spanish, French, German and Russian. The majority of schools in Korea are Korean-medium, although some private high schools are English-medium.

Students have a variety of methods open to them to apply to university. One of the more traditional methods has been the Korean College Scholastic Achievement Test

(Korean SAT, KSAT or CSAT), which consists of four compulsory subjects, Korean, mathematics, history and English, as well as several optional subject tests. Among the optional subjects tested are second foreign languages, and students may choose from Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, French, Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese, Russian, German, and Hanmun, which are traditional Chinese characters used in classical Korean writing. Although most students end up taking an exam in the foreign language they studied throughout high school, a student may choose to take the exam of any language they choose. However, the second foreign language exam is optional and sitting this part of the exam is dependent upon which university and which major the student intends to apply to. Exams on second foreign languages are based on what the student is expected to learn during three years of education in that language during high school; languages studied during middle school are not tested directly by these exams. Despite their availability as choices for students on the exam, neither Arabic nor Vietnamese are mentioned in the last national curriculum, meaning no provision for instruction in Arabic or Vietnamese seems to have been made (Ministry of Education, 2021).

A second method of applying to university consists of an application package, which may include submitting a transcript of grades, application essays, and a portfolio of one's work as a student in high school. Part of this portfolio may be made up of work done in a foreign language, such as certificates of participation in foreign language competitions or official scores from standardized language exams, such as the TOEFL, DELF or DELE.

Upon entering university, there may be a language requirement to be fulfilled before graduation. This language requirement may be an English-language requirement

or may be an additional foreign language requirement if English is considered compulsory for that course of study. Again, the available options vary depending on the university.

Although the “mother tongue + 2” directive does not exist in South Korea, the education system is set up in such a way as to have the students educated in at least two languages in addition to the mother tongue, which in this case is assumed to be Korean. Still, one of the major complaints of the school system is that despite the minimum 10 years of English education that every Korean student must undertake, and the additional 3-6 years of an additional language, most students graduate without confidence in their proficiency in a language aside from Korean. This is especially true of English.

While Korea has traditionally prided itself on being a monocultural nation, the growing presence of immigrants from other parts of Asia as well as the rest of the world at large has meant that there has also been an increase in the possibility of students from bilingual or multilingual households entering the school system. Thus, it is possible that students may have some experience in a language outside of Korean or English at home. Further, Korea’s growing influence in the global economic market has meant that, at least for some members of society, there have been increased opportunities for working abroad. The children of these families, if they are born abroad or have some school experience abroad, may bring back with them experience of another language. Some families have even sent their children to live in foreign countries with family members in the hopes that they will return with some proficiency in the language of that country. Much of this is done to give children an advantage in the competition to enter top-tier universities and later improve their career prospects.

4.3.6. Similarities between the Irish and Korean contexts

There are some intriguing similarities between the Republic of Ireland and the Republic of Korea. Within the education system of both nations, the main (or in the case of Ireland, the only) road to university is via a high-stakes exam at the end of compulsory education, the preparation for which typically consists of a copious amount of rote learning of required subjects. Both countries struggle with foreign language education, in that a common complaint is that students may study a language at school for a decade or more yet leave school feeling as though they do not really know the language. In Korea, this sentiment is often mentioned regarding English, but it may apply to a smaller extent to other foreign languages taught in Korean schools. In Ireland, it is Irish, not a foreign language but a national language, that sometimes engenders this feeling; again, however, the same can be said for foreign languages taught in Irish schools.

Furthermore, the two nations share common threads in their individual histories. Both countries encompass the southern portion of what is sometimes considered a divided nation: while the Republic of Korea is a distinct nation-state unto itself and has a tense relationship with the country of North Korea, the vision of a United Korea still holds in the minds of a significant part of the population, as well as in the government, in the form of an administrative department for unification. In fact, the official stance of both North Korea and the Republic of Korea is that their respective governments are the only legitimate government of the entire peninsula; the other government is viewed as a rogue operation. Regarding the Republic of Ireland, the separation resulted from a compromise between a young nation and its former colonizer, and while Northern Ireland occupies a unique space between United Kingdom and Ireland, there are many who would like to see the reunification of the island; indeed, the existence of a

mechanism for a vote on reunification in the Good Friday Accords is a signal that this remains a possibility.

Both nations experience a fraught relationship with a neighboring country. Korea's contentious political relationship with Japan at times overshadows much of the mutual appreciation for arts and entertainment. From the period after World War II and until the 1990s, Korea limited or outright banned Japanese media from playing on television or radio within the country. Books, including manga, were also included in the ban. While there was no official ban on the Japanese language, it was not taught in schools until the 1970s, and there have been efforts to reduce or remove Japanese words from the vocabulary typically used in "standard" or everyday Korean (n.b. such efforts have been extended to many words of foreign origin in standard Korean). These laws can be seen as a response to the suppression of the Korean language during the period of Japanese occupation and colonization, which lasted from 1910-1945. The actions of Japan during World War II still exert a heavy influence on the relationship between the two countries, examples being the enshrinement of Japanese war criminals in the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo and the continued disagreement over recognition of and apology for the forced sexual enslavement of Korean women during the war.

The tenuous relationship between the Republic of Ireland and the UK is also based on a history fraught with subjugation and colonization. It is well-known that the island of Ireland existed as a colony under the rule of the United Kingdom for several centuries; the figure of 800 years is used colloquially to characterize the length of this relationship. This extended period of colonization resulted in the gradual supplantation of the Irish language as the vernacular with English. The current situation is that English remains the

majority language while Irish maintains its status as the first national language, despite only being used daily by a minority of the population (Central Statistics Office, 2018).

The linguistic needs of both Ireland and Korea are often influenced by the positions they maintain within regional and global politics, as well as educational investment and values. As part of the EU, Ireland has agreed to a policy of plurilingualism, integral to the European project. Participation in the Erasmus program also provides Irish students an opportunity for language and cultural education. South Korea, for its part, is often involved in affairs involving the US, North Korea, and China, due to its location and the remaining American military presence on the peninsula. Aside from political issues, ability in multiple languages is sometimes seen as a marker of a global metropolitan mindset, perhaps due to the perceived investment needed to achieve proficiency in multiple languages, the methods of learning (including study abroad), and the perceived lack of a need to use multiple languages within the country. In other words, learning a language often indicates a desire to go somewhere where the language can be used, and the motivation to fulfill that desire, reminiscent of an international posture (Yashima, 2009).

Although this is not intended to be a comparative study, working with participants who live and study in two environments with similarities could provide insight into the student experience in other similar environments. Further, compared to other countries, neither Ireland nor Korea are as widely featured within the existing research, particularly in relation to multilingual learning and development. Ireland's hallmark is that of Irish language and bilingualism, while Korean learners may be featured in studies on English language learning. There is relatively less research concerning languages other than English and emerging multilingualism in the Irish and Korean context.

While this study focuses primarily on the Irish and Korean context, two participants went through secondary school in an altogether different country. One participant attended school in Morocco and later France, going on Erasmus to Ireland. Another participant studied in Spain and is now attending university in Ireland. Although their individual histories differ from others in the study, their stories were included here as representative of alternative learner histories that could be found within the Irish European context. Ireland's place in Europe means it will play host to students such as these, and their insight can prove valuable in understanding how language learning motivation may be related to a different context than what they are used to. Unfortunately, similar students in Korea could not be recruited for this study.

4.4. Target age group

I limited the target age range for participants to those between the ages of 18 to 25. The purpose for limiting the age range of participants was because the focus of the study is language learning experiences in secondary school, and how memory of those experiences influences further language development and use. Those in this age range are still close enough to their school experience that they might still have a vivid enough recollection of what it was like to be a secondary school student, and though they have been temporarily removed from the secondary school context, what they are working with as they continue their development into multilingual subjects are their memories of the experience, particularly the salient ones. Students in this age range are likely university students for whom language learning, development and use may still be an issue.

School systems tend to focus resources and energy on language learning during the secondary school period. Students chosen for this study finished secondary education having spent most of their educational careers with at least two languages. Further, students go through adolescence with several languages surrounding them, and adolescence is the period when decisions about whether to continue with those languages are often made. Such decisions are typically made based partly on experiences with language learning in secondary school.

4.5. Learner narratives

Since IPA research is primarily idiographic in nature, reports that have used the IPA approach are commonly written up as narrative accounts. Narrative accounts are helpful in maintaining the idiographic sense and can help in communicating an individual's story in the way they have imagined it and communicated it themselves. For the current project, learner experience framed as a phenomenological narrative can give insight into how people choose to understand their lives, and more importantly, what role languages play in one's life (Dörnyei, 2017).

Research using a phenomenological approach prioritizes first-order, or participant, sense-making, while simultaneously allowing for context to have an equal position to the person, rather than as a background against which the person acts (Henry, 2015a); it understands that the person and the context work in tandem and looks to discover how the person makes sense of what is going on in their immediate environment. This directly answers Ushioda's (2009) call to adopt a person-in-context relational approach to motivation, and IPA provides a much-needed perspective in understanding that motivation, particularly from the point of view of the individual. Henry (2015a), for

example, argues that “Because many participants in studies of language learning motivation cannot be presumed to have previously reflected much, if at all, on motivational processes, interpretive approaches such as IPA can be of value in that there is explicit recognition that, during an interview, participants are actively engaged in processes of sense-making” (p. 323). This suggests that the acts of reflection and sense-making may reveal something about motivation that may not have previously been apparent to the individual, and by extension, to the researcher.

The form of narrative based on participant responses and co-authored by the participant via member-checking reflects the premise that motivation, at least in part, arises from the organization of experience, in this case experience as a student. Narratives, in a sense, construct the self (Ricoeur, 1992) according to how an individual sees themselves and their experience in the world (Bruner, 2004). In other words, narratives reveal something about the identity a person has constructed for themselves (“identity” here denoting ipse identity, the essence of a thing which stays the same throughout change). Since this project is investigating dynamic elements of motivation, reconstructing and studying the participants’ narratives can help to reveal the rationale behind participants’ decisions.

Pavlenko (2002b) notes that narratives can be seen as complementary to the more traditional empirical work done in the field of applied linguistics, SLA in particular. She further comments that narratives are useful as they provide an opportunity where “researchers can gain rare insights into learners’ motivations, investments, struggles, losses, and gains as well as into language ideologies that guide their learning trajectories” (p. 214), while at the same time cautioning against ignoring the social, historical, and cultural forces that shape how people tell stories. Bruner (2004) and Habermas (2012)

make similar points, suggesting that culture provides the narrative structures that people may use in telling the story of their life; McAdams (2001) argues that culture serves as a co-author and provides the context for the life story. Pavlenko (2002b) also urges the understanding that stories are told to an audience, and this audience may also have a shaping hand in how the story is told. This last point is why narratives produced within an IPA framework do not claim to provide a full truth: interpretations made by the researcher are based on the given text, and the text provided by the participant may not be a full text itself.

Dörnyei (2017) explores the use of narrative identity in theorizing about learner characteristics, especially those that have been traditionally framed as individual differences. In an appeal to CDST, he suggests that learner characteristics are much more integrated and fluid than has been noted in the literature, where such characteristics have typically been presented as discrete and stable over time. What narrative identity offers is a way of perceiving learner characteristics from the point of view of the learner and can help indicate why a learner acts in the way they do. In writing that “narrative identity might be seen as the central organisational mechanism underlying learner characteristics. It connects to all parts of the learner’s psychology, and both drives and regulates any occurring change” (p. 91), Dörnyei is suggesting that an individual’s narrative identity, namely the story they tell about themselves and the story they become, offers an explanation why the learner is the way they are, all the while acting as a motivating force that draws from the cognitive, affective, and conative aspects of the individual’s mind.

In summary, the reason for presenting participant case studies as learner narratives is that such narratives expose, in part, the learner’s own self-made narrative

identity. The stories they told reveal how they conceive of themselves as individuals, how they relate to their contexts, and how they make and assign meaning in the various events they include in their narratives. These narratives also reveal the logic of the motivation behind the participants' actions; insofar as they relate to language-related issues, specifically language learning, development and usage, the narratives may help shed light not only on what the motivation is, but how the participant came to have that motivation, how they feel being motivated, and how motivation may change over the time considered in the narrative. Vitanova (2013) writes that narratives "function as cognitive organizers and a way of human knowing" (p. 244); by looking through the lens of the narrative, we might come to a fuller understanding of the participants' motivation as they understand it: as a dynamic and integrated force that finds its energy in several seemingly distinct elements within the participant's life.

Finally, narratives also help to expose others who may have had a shaping hand in an individual's life: in arguing for Bakhtinian dialogism as a mode of analysis of learner narratives within SLA, Vitanova (2013) observes that "The voices that are palpable in narrative data belong not only to the author of the narrative and the interviewer(s), for example, but also to others with whom narrators have entangled their own voices or positions" (p. 246). As motivation may have a social dimension, locating others' voices within an individual's story, insofar as the events are related to language learning and development, can reveal the extent to which others' voices have influenced one's motivation (e.g., Harvey, 2017).

This is first and foremost a study grounded in IPA, and so is concerned with the experience of motivation in an individual's becoming multilingual. The choice to present the learner's stories as narrative case studies is to take advantage of the ability of

narrative to reveal how the individual conceives of and reflects upon their life, and for the individuals who participated in this study, the process of becoming multilingual forms a significant part of their lives. Moreover, since participants were asked to describe and comment upon various moments and aspects of their lives, presenting their responses in narrative form is in keeping with the manner in which they responded.

4.6. Data collection

4.6.1. *Introduction*

I conducted the research for this project in Ireland and Korea beginning in the summer of 2019 and continuing through the autumn of 2020. All materials for recruitment and data collection can be found in Appendices B, C and D. This includes informational material (B), participant recruitment surveys (B), the interview schedule for the first interview (B), transcripts of all interviews (C), and thematic analyses (D).

After participant recruitment, the study took place in three stages. Each stage consisted of three sub-stages:

- a) semi-structured interview with each participant
- b) transcription and analysis of the interview text
- c) communication of my interpretations to the participants for their commentary

Participant commentary would form the basis of each consequent interview after the first.

During the interviews, participants were asked to discuss their language learning experiences during school, especially during secondary school. Rather than interviews, our meetings were more like discussions, and participants were welcome to discuss what

they wanted regarding their experiences learning languages. I asked questions only when it seemed the participant did not have anything to say.

Below is a summary of the participants, their ages (at the time of the interviews; due to a difference in counting, Koreans report two ages, a “Korean” age that is 1-2 years older than the age as counted in the West), and their language background. The first five were recruited from Korea, and the last five from Ireland. Names have been replaced with an initial, in the interest of privacy.

Table 2

Participant summary

Name	Age	Languages
K	20	Korean, English, Spanish, Chinese
P	21	Korean, English, Russian
Y	21	Korean, English, Russian, Chinese
J	22	Korean, English, Russian
H	20	Korean, English, Japanese
R	19	English, French, Irish, German
D	19	Spanish, English, French
A	18	Spanish, English, French, Irish
N	22	French, Moroccan Arabic, English, Standard Arabic, Spanish
S	18	English, Polish, Irish, French

4.6.2. Preliminary survey for recruitment

I produced the advertisement for recruitment, related consent forms and informational material, and preliminary questionnaire (Appendix B) in two languages, English and Korean, to align with the two research locations; recruitment in Korea took place through Korean, and recruitment in Ireland took place primarily through English.

Recruitment in Korea for participation in the study took place online through email and Facebook. I placed an advertisement for the preliminary questionnaire as a public post on my personal Facebook page. The link for the questionnaire was subsequently shared among communities of university students in Korea. In additions, I sent emails to a

number of universities in Korea, focusing on universities in Seoul, asking the departments of international student relations at those universities to distribute the call for participants among their student population. I also contacted student groups at those universities whose goal it was to assist international students. Further, I contacted language departments at a number of those universities, targeting students with extensive language learning experience starting in secondary school and stretching forward to university. The intent was to identify students for whom language was both an interest and an issue. However, while that was the intent, participants who answered the questionnaire did not necessarily come from a language-related discipline.

Recruitment in Ireland took place through similar means: a link to the English version of the preliminary survey was distributed through Facebook. In addition, I contacted student groups at Trinity College Dublin that worked with international students or students who had interest in language learning or language use. I contacted student-run societies such as the Afro Caribbean society and Cumann Gaelach (the Irish society) to request they email the call for participants to their members. I also reached out to instructors teaching in the Trinity language electives via email with the request to advertise the study to their classes.

The first step of participant recruitment took place in the form of a survey (Appendix B). The survey was designed to collect basic information about individual language profiles and learning experiences. The first part of the survey asked participants to provide information about the number of languages in which they had formal or informal learning experience (including native languages), how long they have spent with those languages, in what ways they studied those languages, and in what ways they used those languages. Participants were also asked to self-rate their proficiency in each

language based on CEFR-defined levels. Further, participants were asked to rate their enjoyment of each of their languages on a 10-point scale, with 1 signifying little to no enjoyment and 10 signifying a strong affection for and enjoyment of the language. The survey's last section consisted of a series of open-ended metaphors. First participants were asked to provide a metaphor describing language learning in general; then, participants were asked to describe one of their languages in terms of what it felt like read, right, speak, and hear that language. While previous studies have analyzed similar metaphors (e.g., Kramsch, 2003, from which the idea for the metaphors came), for this study the metaphors were used to initiate conversation during the interviews.

4.6.3. Participant selection for interviews

After collecting responses to the survey, I selected a total of 10 participants, 5 from respondents based in Korea and 5 from those based in Ireland, for the interview stage. I chose participants for the interview stage based on their language profile (i.e., the languages they mentioned having known or learned, the amount of time spent studying, and the domain of usage) and the manner in which they described language learning in the metaphors on the questionnaire; availability for the interviews was also a deciding factor. The 5 students from each area formed a subgroup, and 2 subgroups formed the final group of 10.

Typically, an IPA study tries to maintain homogeneity in the participant group; participants in this study were selected on both their similarities and their differences. The intention was to find a diversity of viewpoints. Thus, what the participants shared within each subgroup was their experience of language education in secondary school;

what was different was their particular profile and their different experiences with language learning and development.

4.6.4. First interviews

The first round of interviews took place between September 2019 and March 2020. Interviews in Korea were conducted at the beginning of September 2019 at the convenience of the interviewees, and all 5 first interviews took place in cafes that were near the universities which the participants attended. I conducted the interviews with Korean participants through Korean.

Interviews with participants who were attending school in Ireland began in March 2020 and took place primarily at Trinity College Dublin. These interviews I conducted in English. Due to the onset of the COVID-19 situation, two of the first interviews were forced to move online and were conducted via a videoconferencing platform. I recorded all interviews with the informed consent of the participants.

The interviews were semi-structured in nature, and I told all participants they would not have to answer any questions they were not comfortable answering. While I drew up an interview schedule beforehand (Appendix B), the schedule served more as a guide rather than a prescriptive set of questions that had to be asked. In summary, I asked participants to describe their language learning experience, talking about their native or mother languages as well as any foreign or other languages that they have experienced learning. Our discussions focused on experiences during secondary school and memorable experiences, teachers, or teaching styles. These first interviews lasted approximately one hour on average.

I transcribed recordings of the interviews verbatim; all transcriptions can be found in Appendix B. Interviews I conducted in Korean were transcribed in Korean, with relevant excerpts later translated to English. Transcriptions for the interviews in this study were faithful to what was said during the interview sessions, although I omitted some elements, such as “em” or “ah,” I deemed not to carry meaning. Parts of the conversations that did not relate specifically to this study, such as greetings or asking about each other's days, were also not included in the transcriptions. Because the placement of punctuation may change the meaning of a phrase, I added minimal punctuation to the transcripts, and this was done for convenience and in a way to preserve the meaning of each spoken item.

4.6.5. Thematic analysis

In keeping with an IPA framework, I read each individual transcript several times to become acquainted with the text. I listened to recordings of the interviews while reading to re-create as closely as possible the situation of the interview and allow me to recollect the tenor and the tone of what was said during the interview. During each reading and rereading of the transcripts, I took notes along the margins of the printed-out transcripts as well as in a notebook that I kept with me while reading. Thoughts and ideas I had during reading that were not immediately related to the participants' stories were noted as such, to avoid tainting the participant stories with premature interpretation.

The original notes were based on the ideas and emotions that were being communicated by the participants in their responses. I took the compiled notes and organized them into clusters that seemed to have common elements. These clusters

would eventually become themes that formed the basis for a thematic analysis of each participant's story. Taking these clusters, I returned to the original transcripts to refine the clusters and search for more evidence of preliminary themes related to each individual participant story. I then organized these themes and returned them to the participants, along with explanations and the evidence taken from their interviews that helped to develop those preliminary themes.

It was at this point when the member checking step was begun, following the protocol laid out by Harvey (2015, 2017). I asked participants to read through my commentary and notes and to prepare their own commentary for the following interview. They were specifically asked to comment on anything they disagreed with, felt I did not get quite right, or where they thought I was incorrect. Their commentary would form the basis of the next interview. My commentary is included in Appendix D.

4.6.6. Second interviews

This second round of interviews, which I conducted between April-June of 2020, were to give the participants an opportunity to share their thoughts on my commentary. These interviews were meant to be led by the participants, although I did ask questions as we talked. As was the case in the first round of interviews, the interviews with participants in Korea were conducted through Korean, and those with participants from Ireland were conducted through English. All interviews for the second round, and later the third round as well, were conducted online via a videoconferencing platform. Each of these second interviews lasted for approximately one hour. Two participants, Participants J and S, were unavailable for the second interviews.

Aside from just a few instances, participants generally agreed with my commentary and interpretations. Those instances in which there were some discrepancies between the participant's understanding and my understanding were typically the result of an incomplete understanding of the participant's story rather than a full misunderstanding. During these second interviews, several participants commented on the fact that the commentary allowed them to reflect on their own experience one more time and in a different way, which then allowed them to form a new insight or understanding which they communicated to me during the second interview.

4.6.7. Cross-thematic analysis

Following the second round of interviews, I looked for themes that occurred in more than one participant's story, as these common themes would become the basis of the next step in the project. As I did after the first round of interviews, I transcribed the second group of interviews in full. Again, punctuation was inserted to best preserve the meaning of each response. I read each transcript multiple times for familiarity.

I used the explanations and clarifications that emerged during the second interview with each participant to enrich each participant's individual story. I added to the individual themes that emerged during the first round of analysis and modified them in light of what was said during the second interviews. It was these modified themes, drawn from each individual participant's story, that I compared and compiled to get ready for the next step: the development of common themes. Despite them being labeled as "common" themes, the identified themes did not necessarily emerge in all participants' stories. However, I still found them to be meaningful themes that could lead

to valuable responses, and so they were included in the compilation. The compilation sent to each participant can be found in Appendix B.

During the second round of interviews, I observed that participants were willing to comment on things that they did not themselves see emerging in their own story, but rather things that I had identified and chosen to communicate to them. I thought that the participants would do the same with themes that did not seem to come from their own story. Indeed, seeing a theme or a topic emerge in others' stories could possibly cause the participants to reflect again on their own story and perhaps develop a new and different reading of their own experiences. This rationale falls in line with a dialogical hermeneutic method (Gadamer, 1975), where it is understood that a story may gain or change meaning depending on another's presence or story.

The compiled themes were then sent to each participant for their review. After review, participants would be interviewed one final time for their own commentary on the general themes.

4.6.8. Third interviews

The third, and final, interviews took place between July and September of 2020. The topic of the third interview was the compilation of emergent themes that I identified and sent to each participant for their response. Interviews lasted upwards of one hour in many cases, and the procedure for interviews was the same as the first two: interviews with Korean participants were conducted in Korean, and interviews with participants from Ireland were conducted in English.

The purpose of the final interview was to listen to participants' comments on the combined themes, as well as to clarify any remaining points that were still unclear. During

these final interviews, participants spoke at length about whether their experience matched with the themes. Many of the participants went through the analysis point by point, providing input on whether each theme applied to their story or not. They seemed interested to read about others' experiences and were sometimes surprised to find common ground.

4.6.9. Final analysis

Once the final interviews were over and transcribed, I once again went back to the previous documents: the first and second interviews, my analyses of the first interviews and the combined themes I composed before the final interviews. I went over each participant's words, adjusting my understanding of their stories based on new evidence emerging from their telling and re-telling of their stories. Finally, I used the available material to compose a narrative account for each participant, as well as adding to the combined analysis covering all participants.

4.7. Summary

This section reviewed both the method I used to conduct this project as well as the impetus for choosing IPA as the approach for this study. I argued that because of the relative scarcity of studies that represent an emic perspective as well as those that focus on process, change and development, an approach like that afforded by IPA would be beneficial in helping to highlight the learner perspective of continuous language education and plurilingual development. I explained how IPA allows for both the participant's voice to be heard while at the same time provides researchers with an opportunity to explore a phenomenon from a different point of view. Further, I presented

an overview of the contexts of the recruitment locations in the spirit of keeping true to a person-in-context relational approach to motivation. Finally, I described the steps I took in conducting this project.

The next section will present the individual narrative accounts, and the objective of the narratives will be to provide a representation of the person-in-context in each instance.

5. Narrative accounts

This section comprises the ten narrative accounts based on the participants' experiences with language learning, multilingualism and motivation. Each narrative is based on key memories centered around emotions, relationships, and interactions; in composing the narratives, I added commentary, both my own and the participant's, that explains and interprets the memories within the context of the participant's life. Commentary is based on material taken directly from my discussions with the participants, and the excerpts referenced by number can be found in Appendix A.

The narratives are organized roughly by language and run chronologically, although there are memories and interpretations that cut across linguistic divides. While the focus is on secondary school, memories from before and after secondary school also appear, especially when they connect directly with the participant's secondary school experience.

In the interest of privacy and in order to preserve anonymity, participant names have been replaced with an initial.

Original interview texts can be found in Appendix C. Excerpts used from interviews conducted in Korean have been translated into English and appear in Appendix A.

5.1. The case of K

K is a 23 year old South Korean student, majoring in economics and applied statistics at Yonsei University, yet much of her life has been influenced by languages and the international experiences they brought with them. Many of her college courses are taught through English using English textbooks, so she has seen firsthand how knowledge of additional languages, in this case English, has been a benefit to her academic career. Still, despite feeling that knowing multiple languages is ultimately a boon, K's experience with languages and language learning have not always been welcome, nor have they always been of her own choice.

5.1.1. *Early on*

Born in South Korea, K started learning English formally in 4th grade of elementary school (approximately 9 years old), although she was not a complete novice: she was introduced to English in kindergarten and her parents helped her learn at home using widely available learning tools such as workbooks and cassette tapes aimed towards young learners. This is fairly common for Korean children like K: parents often try to give their children a head start on learning all subjects, but especially English, due to the intense competition they are likely to face throughout their school careers. Also common at the time was enrolling young students into after-school academies for different subjects, including English.

K discusses in Excerpt 1 [Appendix A] how she attended an English academy starting in the 4th grade in order to better utilize the knowledge of and familiarity with English she had been fostering. The increase in proficiency due to the practice she received at the academy came at the price of beginning to dislike the language. But what

would not be so common would the period that would follow after elementary school, as K's family would be headed for a 3-year stay in Paraguay. This period would prove pivotal in K's overall linguistic development as well as her relationship with different languages.

5.1.2. In Paraguay

In 2011, upon being appointed to a position abroad, K's parents moved their entire family, which included not only K, her mother and her father, but also a younger sibling, to Asunción, Paraguay. The children would be enrolled in the American School, an officially bilingual school catering to a multinational and multilingual student community. The curriculum is taught primarily through English, with language classes in Castellano (Spanish) and Guaraní (the second official language of Paraguay), as well as a class in Estudios Sociales (Social Studies) taught through Spanish. K entered at the start of middle school while her younger sibling enrolled in the primary school.

Starting in middle school with limited proficiency in English and no knowledge of either Spanish or Guaraní meant that K might have faced some difficulties in completing classwork. Still, she mentions in Excerpt 2 how being immersed in an English environment led to her written proficiency noticeably improving.

While K was noticing improvements in her English ability, her experience with Spanish was somewhat different. K discussed what she felt was the effect of her age, and age in general, which she mentioned several times throughout her story. She believes that starting to learn a new language at the beginning of middle school put her at a disadvantage, a view that she felt was echoed by her Spanish teacher in school [Excerpt 3].

Instead, K depended on independent tutoring and impromptu conversations with locals for learning Spanish. School did not seem to provide the best learning atmosphere for the language. Although her English was noticeably improving and was helping her handle her classes, the Spanish she learned outside of the classroom did not seem to help her learn what she needed to do well in her classes, which led to her starting to dislike the new language [Excerpt 4].

Without her teacher pushing her, without finding a significant need for using Spanish with the other students, and with the feeling that her effort bore little fruit, K's experience with Spanish was limited to the needs of "survival," such as shopping or getting taxis, and even then, the family had the support of a secretary assigned to them for their basic needs. Still, there were some uses for the Spanish she was able to develop during her years in Asunción: K mentions doing volunteer work for a student-run newspaper providing translations from Spanish to Korean, as well as helping her parents by acting as a translator during their holidays in South America. Interestingly, while telling this story, K switches between present and past tense, making it seem like she still does not think she speaks Spanish well and that she continues to have difficulty trying to get better, even though K rates herself a B1 in Spanish proficiency.

While K did not always feel comfortable using Spanish, she found the residents of the areas she visited on holiday to be supportive of her attempts. In Excerpt 5, she recalls the surprised reaction she received when visiting Cuba. Despite what K felt was limited ability in Spanish, the fact that she, a Korean, was speaking Spanish at all seemed to delight the residents of Spanish-speaking Cuba. While she found an experience like this memorable, however, it did not seem to lead to a renewed motivation to better develop her Spanish ability for school. With both her and her sibling able to help the family travel

safely, and a secretary in charge of translating for the family's other affairs, K did not perceive any further need for Spanish beyond what was demanded of her, and not much was demanded of her in school. Low expectations held by both herself and her teacher led to a relaxed atmosphere where her effort was acknowledged, but she was not pushed beyond the bare minimum. In fact, she had already noticed that more effort did not yield better results, so K seemed satisfied enough with the Spanish she had been able to learn.

While the school's students usually were asked to take three non-English subjects, K was able to drop both Guaraní and Estudios Sociales (Social Studies) and keep only Castellano, thereby limiting her exposure to Spanish and cutting off Guaraní completely. Her sibling, two years younger, did not have the option of dropping any subjects and so had to take all three non-English subjects; this has led to her sibling being more proficient in both Castellano and Guaraní than she. Age plays a significant role in K's ideas about language: her younger sibling was able to develop multiple languages due to exposure at a slightly younger age, and her parents were not able to learn Spanish due to being older when they relocated to Paraguay. Though only two years older than her sibling, K believes that her age was, and continues to be, an obstacle in additional language learning, tempering her expectations for how proficient she will become.

English was the main language of school, and Spanish was the language of survival. K used Korean with her family and a handful of friends at the school. Korean being her "mother tongue," it was the language she felt was hers, while the other two continued to be "foreign." Still, with the amount of work she had to do through English, she was able to develop a high level of proficiency in the language. She read books exclusively in Korean, not liking books in English and not being able to understand Spanish well enough, nor liking it enough, to read in Spanish.

This was K's language life for the 3 years of middle school. Despite the availability of Spanish, K was not enthusiastic about practicing a language she felt no significant connection to. English was already important back home in Korea, but neither Spanish nor Guaraní, the language she did not even begin, held value for her. After all, her family's stay in Paraguay was fixed at three years, and she did not see staying any longer as a legitimate possibility. She was always going to return to Korea, which she did just before high school would begin for her, in the year 2014.

5.1.3. High school Chinese, "pain," and "stress"

Returning to Korea meant choosing a high school in which to enroll, and K had hoped to attend a foreign language high school. While there are some schools that offer Spanish, K's experience with the language, and her mixed feelings about it, led her away from selecting a school simply because it offered Spanish, which she discusses in Excerpt 6.

In addition to her personal feelings playing a role, the prohibitive cost of a private high school served as another deciding factor in her school selection. These comments, though, are taken from our second meeting. In our first meeting, she did not mention her dislike of the Spanish language when discussing her search for a high school; in fact, she at first looked for a school that offered Spanish, since having some experience of it could benefit her. But she could not find any public high schools that offered it. Her choice had been severely limited, so she decided to try something different, which led her to Chinese. She discusses this in Excerpt 7.

Assured that she could learn from the beginning even though she did not try it in middle school, K decided to take Chinese. At 15 years old, she had been convinced by

arguments around utility: the most valuable languages are the ones that are the most widely used. She already had English, and she knew enough Spanish to scrape by, so she became interested in Chinese. Further, she describes in Excerpt 8 how the language held what she thought to be a significant meaning for her at that point in her life.

K was entering a new school and was looking for a new language experience. Her short time in the Americas seemed to, perhaps ironically, fill her with a desire to explore more about East Asia. This reason, along with the view that Chinese would be a pragmatic language to learn, pushed K to spend her three years of high school studying Chinese.

Foreign language high schools in Korea are known both for their emphasis on language study as well as their overall competitive nature, and K was exposed to both right from the start. In fact, it was the competitiveness and the packed schedule that was the hardest thing to get accustomed to, which recounts in Excerpt 9. In Excerpt 10, she describes how Chinese study itself came with its own struggles, particularly because it had not been the case that the students were starting from the same point; in fact, many of her classmates already had learned a significant amount of Chinese.

This would have been a concern for K because of the nature of the grading system in Korean schools. Classes are graded on a curve, so K's scores would depend on how well the other students would do on tests and other assignments. Having been persuaded into learning Chinese by the fact that they taught from the very beginning level, K believed she would be able to do well enough; however, when she found out that many in her class were more advanced than she, starting from the beginning would not be as beneficial to her. Whatever motivation she would have had for studying Chinese was replaced by feelings like "pain" and "anger" in the learning environment. She also noticed how the newness of studying a language with a different writing system did not live up to

her expectations, as she ended up disliking the Chinese writing system and declaring that it did not “fit” her.

K’s high school experience also left her feeling as though her English was starting to fade [Excerpt 11]. The progress she had made during her three years in an international school in Paraguay felt like it was diminishing throughout her high school years. Overall, the high school she attended did not provide a supportive environment for further language learning. Her English was suffering and her experience with Chinese was not what she expected. In addition to the difficulty she had with the language, she also found the evaluations to be suspicious and unfair [Excerpt 12].

In general, K’s development into a multilingual subject took a step back in high school. Not only were the language-related classes not helpful, but the strict schedule was something that she found difficult to get used to, which compounded the language issue and weakened her motivation. In Paraguay, she was able to maintain her Korean due to it being the language of her family and the language she felt the most at home in, the opposite was not the case upon returning to Korea. School did not help her maintain her English nor did it help her develop much Chinese, although she does think that she knows enough Chinese “not to starve,” and that she did have a rewarding experience during a school trip to China, where she was forced to immerse herself in Chinese [Excerpt 13].

Aside from this one pleasant experience, K’s trial of Chinese was filled with stress and regret. One observation she made about Chinese was that, “After learning Chinese, what I changed my mind about was that Spanish was relatively easier than Chinese.” Still, she never mentioned enjoying learning or speaking Spanish; she simply was led to reconsider how easy it was compared to Chinese.

5.1.4. Lessons learned, and motivation found

Once high school was finished, one thing K was sure of was that her next step would not be related to languages: during counseling sessions with her homeroom teacher, she expressed how she did not know what she wanted to do later on in life, but that she did not want to go into any language-related discipline in college. Her homeroom teacher advised her to apply to a school that did not require a declaration of a major upon entering, which the majority of Korean universities do. K was accepted into Yonsei University.

Yonsei University has a liberal arts college within it, Underwood College, that operates primarily through English, so although K did not want to focus on language as a major, her knowledge of English did help in attending classes. Aside from English being the language of most of her classes, there was an additional one-semester language requirement; despite K's experience with Chinese, she took it again in college, stating that this time "it was easy...there wasn't much competition. I just took it as a form of 'healing'."

The term "healing" is borrowed from English and is used generally to describe a type of mental or emotional restoration after some sort of metaphorical trauma. While K currently has no plans to try learning Chinese again, she was able to take the opportunity given to her to make up for the terrible experiences she had in high school, and the experience provided her with a means of "healing." Although she was not motivated at all by the prospect of Chinese learning, the opportunity to "heal" was motivation enough to get her back in a Chinese class.

Similarly, her dislike of Spanish, while not quite as strong as that of Chinese, has not prevented her from exploring the possibility of taking the DELE (Diplomas de español como lengua extranjera) exam in order to secure a certificate in Spanish, which would help her employment prospects. Beyond that, though, and the possibility of holidaying in South America, K does not think Spanish will play a significant role in her life. In fact, reflecting on her experience with learning different languages, K explains in Excerpt 14 how she found a common thread: she learned languages due to the opportunities afforded her and not because of any special aptitude.

K struggled with Spanish in middle school and Chinese in high school, and knew other students who did not have the same difficulties. With English, she had had the support of her parents, who started her out by using home study materials and took frequent trips abroad, even staying in Paraguay for three years and giving their children the opportunity to learn other languages, and then coming home to Korea and enrolling in a high school specifically for language study. But these were opportunities given to her, and during our talks, she would mention how she felt as though she did not choose to learn languages, but that she was placed in situations where she would have to learn languages. What was lacking was the freedom of choice, which is something K had come to value, and what was driving her motivation when she decided to apply to law school; she explains this in Excerpt 15.

The lack of freedom had been the case with K's experiences with language learning: she had been unable to find any freedom in the languages or in how she was asked to learn them. The languages she had learned seemed to have either been thrust upon her, in the case of English and Spanish, or presented to her in an environment that had been deceptive and was not conducive to learning, in the case of Chinese. Freedom

of choice was a primary source of motivation for K in general, but it was not something that she felt she had ever had in relation to language. The first time K felt she really did have a choice was in applying to college, and at that point, she decided to take steps away from language learning and practice.

The competing feelings of duty versus freedom may have influenced her belief on whether she qualifies as a multilingual subject. While she states that, had she only lived in Korea, she might be willing to identify as bilingual, her time abroad has made her reluctant to take on a bilingual or multilingual label [Excerpt 16].

The belief that though she has ability in more than one language she is not a multilingual is based partly how she sees herself in comparisons with other, more definite examples, such as those born into families that use two or more languages. People like herself, who learn a language after “having a mother tongue set in place,” are borderline cases, and K feels that it would not be right to take on the multilingual label. After all, those other languages were never hers to begin with, an observation she discusses in Excerpt 17.

K believes that speaking multiple languages is not enough to be called a multilingual; there are other elements, such as the perceived influence of time (learning languages later does not seem to count), the lack of identity with others (she is not like those who have exposure to multiple languages from birth), and the lack of emotional understanding (not “getting the same electricity” as from Korean texts).

As K reflected, she came to think that throughout her schooling, she was asked to learn languages with little meaning for her and for which she did not have any real connection to, nor any wish to learn. Learning from these past experiences, K explains in Excerpt 18 how she has discovered a source of motivation that could be more influential

in her future endeavors in language learning. There, she discusses that rather than abstract utilitarian goals, for example being able to communicate with a large number of people, or duty and the idea that one *must* learn a language, the motivation to become multilingual would hinge on the premise of self-development or self-fulfillment: if a language is a tool that allows her to do engage in her hobbies, K would be sufficiently motivated to learn the language and add it to her repertoire; she believes Japanese could fulfill this role for her. Perhaps this would make it a language that she might consider hers, since the reason she would have for learning it would have been in line with her affinities and her choices; in other words, it would have meaning for her. It would not be a duty-bound language like the others she has come across. It would be a “luxury,” something extra that allows her to enjoy her life more freely.

5.1.5. Summary

For K, the most important form of motivation stems from freedom. The process of becoming a multilingual has been a duty thus far in her life, with K not having much say in it. She remains reluctant to proclaim herself either bilingual or multilingual due to not having achieved a proficiency she feels comfortable with, as well as it not stemming from her choices. She has placed limits on herself also, emphasizing the ages at which she learned her different languages and comparing her experiences to others that she has known who have begun their lives with languages at earlier stages in life.

The ideal language learning situation, and the ideal frame in which she could realize a sort of multilingual identity, would be rooted in her free choice. But rather than view her prior experiences as failed attempts at multilingualism, they can be viewed as experiences from which she has learned and discovered what did not work with her,

giving her a foundation for discovering what would be an effective and meaningful source of motivation.

K notes the prospect that if the language was something superfluous to the demands of daily life but nonetheless important to her self-fulfillment, that is, something she wanted rather than needed, and something that she freely chose to cultivate, she could find sufficient motivation to work towards developing that new language. She uses the term “사치,” which can be translated as luxury or extravagance, but not necessarily with a negative connotation. It is meant to indicate something that can be done without but can still make life pleasant if it is present. For K, learning languages becomes bearable, even desirable, if it is done in the service of enjoying or improving one’s life in a more general way, and not just for employment or academic purposes.

5.2. The case of P

P, a 24-year-old student majoring in English Education at Hanyang University in Seoul, South Korea, began her life with English at home under the influence of her parents, primarily her mother. P's mother had majored in English Literature and seemed to delight in having the language around her: P recounts that even now, her mother would turn on an English-language program on Netflix and just leave it playing in the background as she went about her day. Her mother possessed a teaching certificate for English, though most of her mother's teaching had been in the form of tutoring younger students in their homes. Using materials such as graded readers and cassette tapes, P started developing a love for English before she would begin learning it formally in school. She did not attend an English academy, and throughout elementary school she would instead rely primarily on home study under the tutelage of her mother.

5.2.1. *Learning to speak*

Her first exposure to English came while P was in second grade of elementary school, as her parents took advantage of an opportunity to go on a language study trip to the Philippines. For three months, the family lived there, attending a language school to further develop their English. P recounts in Excerpt 19 how she started with no English but began with one-on-one tutoring in the language school. Seven-year-old P began her development of English by being placed in a situation where she would have to communicate, an approach that could be likened to learning how to swim by being thrown in the ocean. Unable to use Korean to communicate, she relied on visual clues to get her message across. With this memory in tow, and with her mother's teaching supporting her at home, her love of the English language would grow to the point where

she decided, before entering middle school, that she wanted to attend a foreign language high school in order to have more opportunities to learn English.

P had her eyes set on attending a school that would allow her to understand the English language better and more deeply; Excerpt 20 describes how the prospect of becoming more familiar with the English language was a driving factor in P's determination to attend a foreign language high school (and later major in English education). She prized a more intricate knowledge of the language. P had received much of her English education from her mother and had possibly been influenced by her mother's demonstrated knowledge of English. Nevertheless, P came to value not only the ability to use a language but also the knowledge of how the language works. In Excerpt 21, P talks about how this value had led to a moment of disappointment. P was unhappy to find that her teacher did not have the same drive for knowledge that she had. She knew more than her teacher, and her teacher seemed fine with that proposition, and this bothered P. She had realized that the class she had enjoyed most no longer had anything left to teach her, and this left her feeling disillusioned.

5.2.2. High school and "I don't give a shit"

P had hope that her high school experience would not disappoint, and that she would be able to continue to learn about the language she loved. The school experience, however, did not make it easy for her to focus on developing her English. In high school, her relationship with English changed to where English was not just a language she enjoyed, but a language that provided a different and refreshing perspective.

In Excerpt 22, she discusses the effect of American dramas on her attitude towards life at the time. She mentions being "shocked" at the drama characters' carefree

attitude in comparison to her own situation. Although the drama gave a fictional account of American high school students, to P, these were still young people her age, and though they might have been in a similar situation, with peers, parents and teachers placing expectations on them, these students declared that they would not care about what others wanted or expected of them. Instead, they would just live their lives to their own satisfaction. For a Korean like her, it is a fact of life that others would always be interested in, or even interfere in, another's life. She values how, in another culture, interference was not as common, and even if it was, there was a way out of it, namely, by "not giving a shit." Upon hearing that phrase, P felt as though this was an attitude worth emulating. Still, there were things that she did "give a shit" about, particularly mastery of the English language. After all, it was through English that she was able to find a mantra that she thought could serve her interests well.

With respect to aspects of motivation at work in this story, although P's primary motivation in high school continued to be a joy of learning the English language, she also turned to English when she needed a release from the pressures of high school. She was driven to English-language media as a form of escape from stress, or as an enjoyable diversion from her duties as a student. However, the language was also a source of stress for her due to the nature of the school and the English learning environment it provided. There was a juggling act at play here between English as a language of communication and a source of enjoyment, and English the language she would need to master in ways that she was not used to in order to compete on assessments for the highest grades. While the former allowed her to secretly adopt an independent and self-assured attitude, the latter type of English posed a problem for her at the outset, as she states in Excerpt 23. In the excerpt, she mentions TEPS (Test of English Proficiency of Seoul National

University), which is one of the main standardized English tests in South Korea. Scores from the exam are used for college entrance, placement in college English classes, as a college graduation requirement, and for employment purposes. It is one of the many tests of English that a South Korean student may come across in their academic careers; as such, students may begin preparing for it while still in high school. However, language examinations do not always reflect the conversational forms of the language they test, and P was not used to the English that she would find on examinations. She found herself unprepared for the level and style of English that she would have to demonstrate in high school. Although she had valued expertise of the language, she experienced a period of discomfort when she discovered what kind of expertise that entailed.

Because P had little knowledge of serious language exams, she appreciated moments when language teachers would tell students about themselves and offer tips based on their own experiences, particularly related to English. In Excerpt 24, she describes how it seemed to make them more human in a student's eyes.

P appreciated the style of classes that she had in high school. She alludes to the variety of materials that teachers would use to educate the students, such as TED Talks and movies, as well as the variety of contents, even if she did not always understand why the teachers chose those specific materials, which she discusses in Excerpt 25.

P also mentions a number of other memorable topics, such as Freudian psychology, as well as the opportunities to study through literature, many of which were unique to English classes. Other classes were predominantly lecture-style classes, while teachers of non-Korean languages, especially English, prepared interesting and engaging classes for the students to participate in.

Through English, she was able to view things she might not have had the opportunity to view without having known the language. It was precisely for this type of education that P wanted to attend a foreign language high school, and the decision seemed to be just as beneficial as she had imagined. However, a significant source of stress was the style of English that P was expected to produce and work with on a daily basis. While the class content itself was enjoyable, that same content would be utilized on the exams, and she would be evaluated primarily on her knowledge of the language. Although she had once prized this type of knowledge, the idea of demonstrating it on a test was a lingering difficulty. This has led her to consider her study of English during her high school period as being somewhat different from other periods in her life [Excerpt 26].

Although she had ended up in a foreign language high school, where she had wanted to attend, she had less autonomy over her decision than in other periods of her life. English became a duty rather than a choice, while ironically also providing a periodic escape from that duty.

5.2.3. Russian? No, thank you.

While this was the case with English in high school, it was not the same with her other foreign language, Russian. Simply put, P did not enjoy learning Russian at all. She remarked that during the classes, she would zone out completely, not registering any of the lessons. She states how it was the difficulty of the language that drove her away from it: “The reason I gave up on Russian was that the grammar was too complicated. Every word had a feminine form, a masculine form, a neuter form, it was so confusing.” Another issue was a lack of interest.

As she discusses in Excerpt 27, P had neither interest nor motivation when it came to Russian. For P, the only allure of attending a foreign language high school was the opportunity to study English to a higher, more expert level. She had no interest in anything else and did not notice that chasing mastery of the English language entailed studying another language, much to her chagrin. In her mind, it did not make sense for students in the English stream to study another foreign language. English was the only language worth the effort.

P was blinded by her desire to learn English to the point that she did not notice that there would be other things she would have to endure. Studying a second foreign language was one of those things, as was the hectic schedule she would be subjected to. She was able to study with teachers that prepared classes for students like her to enjoy learning, but that also meant learning that there were variations of English, including one that was specific to exams and was not always reflective of the more natural, colloquial and communicative language that she had fallen in love with. These perturbances made it so that her high school experience did not provide her with the same enjoyment of studying English that she had previously had. There were a lot of positive experiences, but they were balanced against an environment that was a significant source of stress.

5.2.4. The end of an education

After high school, P entered Hanyang University, majoring in English education. With this decision, P felt as though she was back in control of her own English education. In college, there were no hidden requirements of other languages that would divert her attention from English. The schedule, though still admittedly hectic, allowed for greater

freedom than she had had during high school. She even had the opportunity to be an exchange student, heading to Australia for a semester.

Although she knew a lot about English, her semester abroad would help her realize aspects of the language that she had not previously considered much, such as the link between culture and language, as evidenced by the way that Korean and English each deal with politeness and hierarchy [Excerpt 28]. Her experience as an exchange student showed her that she had more to learn about the language. P had been taught that there was a relationship between language and culture but seeing it in person solidified that fact for her.

Another aspect that was new for P was dealing with people from other parts of Asia, all speaking English: it was one of the first times she had been exposed to such a wide variety of English accents, which “were difficult to understand at first but after about 1 or 2 weeks, I was able to understand them.” Though she was used to the position and importance of English within the Korean context, meeting people from several different countries allowed her to see for herself just how widespread English was and how useful it could be. During our first meeting, she states she considered English “a tool for communication,” which may seem to run counter to the motivation to master the language that she professed to having throughout her academic career, but this can be understood as a shift in perspective.

Going abroad meant learning that the proficiency she thought she had proved not to be enough, as she describes a particularly memorable exam where she misunderstood the phrasing of the assignment [Excerpt 29]. This experience seemed to make her feel as if her ability was still insufficient. She had been chasing a high level of expertise for so long, and regardless of the amount of positive experiences that she might have had, an

experience like this caused her to feel as though there was a wall she could never get over. She would compare herself to a native speaker of English and found that she would always be lacking.

While she was conscious of her position as a foreign exchange student, she recounts how the experience in Australia really made her feel like a foreigner. She describes how her mind “went blank” after her first encounter with racial discrimination, which happened when she was on a train and the person in charge of inspecting transportation passes appeared to be targeting only those who looked East Asian. Such an encounter only amplified the feeling of not belonging. Frustrated by her own miscues with the English language and by the circumstances that seemed to be pushing her to the outside, P was happy to return home.

After having spent five months being an outsider, the Korean language seemed to welcome her home. However, in Excerpt 30, she describes how, upon returning home, she found that her “mother tongue” had become less automatic. While this may appear natural in another language, in her native tongue it was strange and surprising.

She also recounts how returning to Korea had a “healing” or “restorative effect” on her. For five months, she operated primarily through English in a place that made her aware of her foreignness to it, and the experience had eroded her Koreanness. Her language ability had faded slightly, not by much but still noticeably. By coming home to Korea, she had left that “foreign” feeling behind, yet a piece of it remained in her language ability. The return home seemed to heal her both by embracing her as a Korean and by allowing her “mother tongue” to return. Although she loved English and had grown up with it in a way that perhaps robbed the language of its otherness, it was her trip abroad that “othered” the language to her, “othered” her to the environment, and

ultimately “othered” Korean to her as well. Despite the positive experiences she admitted to having, the shifting of her sense of self was a substantial effect of her experience as an exchange student.

5.2.5. Summary

Prior to going abroad, learning English seemed to be in the service of personal development for P, as she wanted to study it and master it because she found the language enjoyable. She acknowledged the necessity of the language in Korean society, but necessity was replaced with interest and pleasure in learning the language. The process of learning was the point, and she was disappointed at the times she felt as though there was nothing left to learn. There was a sense of urgency in her stories about her younger self: everything was oriented towards attending a foreign language high school, where she could get the kind of English education she wanted. While the influence of her mother is clear, it is mostly P’s desire for mastery of the language that motivated her to put in more hours than were necessary studying it throughout elementary and middle school, to have her sights set on entering a foreign language high school, and to continue on to major in English education in college. She wanted the language for herself and found meaning in the pursuit of the language.

However, the more time she spent with the language, the more complicated her relationship with it became. In high school, her pursuit of the language led to her accepting a difficult schedule, which included a second foreign language that held no meaning for her. The rigorous demands of the school placed a great burden on her, to the point where learning English lost some of its joy. She turned to English then out of a need for an escape and for an attitude that would help her manage the demands of school life.

English taught her not to “give a shit” and to live her life to her satisfaction. Instead of joy, English seemed to offer peace, although her attachment to the language is what generated her need to find this peace.

After high school, she found that she regained some of the joy she had lost, although her semester abroad served as a rude awakening: she had pursued the language for personal reasons and had grown attached to it, but there was something about the language that could never be hers. This realization led to a change in her perspective. She came to think of language, specifically English, as “a tool.” She discovered that no matter how much she learned, there would always be a boundary between what she was capable of and what a native speaker could do. While this did frustrate her, it also led her to develop satisfaction for the ability she did have. Having this experience also led her to sympathize with other Korean students who may not have had the same opportunities that P did, and she realized that there was less of a need for the kind of expertise that she had valued for so long [Excerpt 31].

Having reached a point where she could express her thoughts clearly, P believed she had reached the endpoint of English education and is currently motivated to maintain the English she has; in other words, she no longer sees it as a process of growth, but that of maintenance. She is satisfied enough to consider herself a bilingual, and although she stated that she would be interested in learning more languages, such an endeavor is not high on her list of priorities. Should she try to learn a further language, P states that it would be for her own personal development, but with her new perspective, it seems that the target will no longer be mastery in the way it was with English.

5.3. The case of Y

As a student of political science at Seoul National University, one of the top universities in South Korea, Y has found herself using all her languages for a variety of purposes on a regular basis. In school she uses both Korean and English by default, and her Russian remains an essential part of her extracurricular life. However, had you asked her years ago whether she could have seen multilingualism being an essential part of her life and her sense of self, she admits that she would have said no, she did not see this coming.

5.3.1. The Russian connection

At about 15 years old and towards the end of middle school, Y was looking for a high school to attend. While visiting one high school during an open house, she became intrigued at the prospect of studying Russian [Excerpt 32]. She describes being under the impression that speaking Russian would make her a good scientist, so she applied and was accepted into one of the few public high schools where Russian is offered as a second foreign language. Looking back, she realizes that the logic of her decision made little sense; her perception was based on an image of Russian as a language of science, and if scientists spoke Russian, then speaking Russian would make her a scientist. In her mind, it was an idiotic decision, yet it set a path that would define her high school career.

Russian was a difficult language for Y and for the others in her class. She discusses in Excerpt 33 how, among the student population, there were jokes about how each of the available languages had points that would prove difficult to overcome. She had decided upon Russian based on an image she had of the Russian speaker as an accomplished scientist. However, her image was that of an accomplished user of Russian,

she was a beginner, and beginners had to overcome several “mountains” on the way to reaching their goal. She mentions that many students gave up right from the beginning, with the alphabet itself being difficult to learn. Regardless of the difficulties that turned others away, Y maintained her motivation to learn the language, but it did not come without a lot of missteps; she states, “I’m not afraid anymore. I’ve been trained by pronouncing Russian wrong so many times. I was wrong in so many different ways.” These missteps she had taught her not to be afraid of challenges she might have, particularly in studying language.

The word she used in this comment, “훈련,” translates to “training”; she viewed her Russian learning in high school as a type of “training” or “drill,” and is often used with physical types of training such as in sports or the military, although it can be used to indicate mental or intellectual training. For Y, high school Russian was not just a mental or educational endeavor, but also a physical one. There were mountains to climb over, there was training to be done, and at the end of it all, she was no longer afraid. She said all this with a humorous tone; she was not angry at what had happened, but rather satisfied that she had gone through such an experience and was able to joke about it.

She mentions being afraid, and part of the fear that came with the language was due to how some of the “training” was done, which she describes in Excerpt 34. Training included being ready to produce at a moment’s notice. She considered the experience “frightening” and used the word “공포,” which can be translated as “scary” but is more commonly translated as “horror.” While she felt fear at the situation she was put in, fear at the possibility of having to stand in the middle of the classroom and correctly conjugate a verb after having been caught dozing off in class, repeated instances of this situation would teach her not to be afraid. She was “trained” to not be afraid of being

wrong, and this included a physical aspect, the sense of standing in the middle of the classroom while reciting a verb conjugation until she got it correct.

Although the process of learning the language included moments when she felt fear, she maintained her motivation to do so based on a general interest of hers, namely, that she enjoyed learning how things work, including languages [Excerpt 35]. Y's reflection reveals her overall predilections for learning how to do things, and language learning fits into this approach to her interests. She does not find anything compelling about using language to read books (although she does use all her languages for reading, even enjoying Russian literature on occasion) or communicate with others; for Y, the meaning and motivation for her language learning is in learning how languages work. She is interested in how rules would provide a framework within which variations could occur. This runs parallel to her approach to other aspects of her life. She enjoys learning how machines would work, how the physical solidity of the parts would guide the motion of the machine. What drives Y is figuring out for herself how things operated.

Russian seemed like a language guided by rules. Even when there were exceptions, Y had felt that somehow, even the exceptions made sense. The irregularities were regular, and the rules were strict when compared to other languages she had encountered (Korean and English). On the preliminary survey, she describes Russian as being mechanical (기계적이다), and she elaborates on this in Excerpt 36. Y perceives the Russian language to be organized, regular and rules-based despite the number of exceptions. Her image of Russian being a "scientific language" can be seen in this perception: there is a logic to the Russian language despite plenty of examples that run against that logic. She compares this to her native language of Korean, which she said, in the eyes of non-native speakers, may appear "broken": she gives the example of having

two sets of numbers, something a high school Russian teacher found difficult to understand, as Russian only has one set of numbers.

Learning the Russian language meant learning about rules, and this typified much of her experience with Russian in high school. At times when teachers would not explain the rules, Y felt frustration [Excerpt 37]. When odd rules were introduced but not explained, Y felt irritated. She wanted to know the rules behind why the language worked as it did, yet she was not given any clarification. Sounds would suddenly change and would not match up with what is written on the page, and she was simply told to memorize the changes. Sometimes, instead of being taught patterns and rules to help her master the language, she found that she had to rely on memorizing isolated examples. This did not fit in with her motivation to understand how things work.

Not all her experiences were as frustrating. One of her teachers did take the time to explain things clearly, sometimes even explaining far more than what might seem necessary, a method she describes in Excerpt 38. She asserts that although it was a difficult mode of “training,” especially for beginners, she enjoyed learning from a teacher who would explain everything all at once. She mentions that she might have forcibly memorized certain elements, but she equivocates on this, preferring instead to focus on how she enjoyed this method, a method that most beginners would find difficult to stick with.

In a subsequent meeting, she revisits this memory of her teacher and how it continued to affect her [Excerpt 39]. Despite her realization that the style of teaching she had received in high school was not an effective means of teaching language for most students, it had resonated with her to the point that she had mimicked the style in her own teaching of the language. She enjoyed learning about the rules and fundamentals

that would allow an object or a process to function. While other students might have found the constant explanations offered by her teacher to be tedious or overwhelming, Y found them to be interesting and valuable to her own language learning. Y's reasons for language learning stemmed from her desire to understand how things function, and her teacher provided her the explanations she needed to be satisfied. This desire to understand permeated other aspects of her academic career, particularly her interest in understanding how societies function [Excerpt 40].

For Y, the interest was in understanding why things are the way they are, what made them that way, and what effect they have. She did not like learning Russian because it would allow her to speak to other Russian speakers about their thoughts or to find out about their lives. The typical reasons for learning languages did not resonate with her; instead, she was attracted to the prospect of being able to understand how a language works and why it works that way. She had chosen Russian because it looked "unique," and it was that uniqueness she endeavored to comprehend. In several other areas of her life, she had a similar agenda. Drawing and designing meant understanding how images are organized to draw someone's attention; studying political science meant understanding how societies worked under different ideologies that emphasized different roles for institutions and individuals. She was able to meet a teacher who satisfied this desire for knowledge, and Y would take on that same style when she was tutoring her boyfriend. While her boyfriend struggled and would ask her to stick to what was vital, Y would respond that everything was vital, and that leaving out one piece of knowledge would not be teaching the material in the way she thought best.

Balanced with this intensely individual brand of motivation was an appreciation for the student group which she was a part of. As a student in the Russian stream, she

would take all her classes with the same group of students for three full years. They would share the same language classes, taking Russian and English together, as well as their other scheduled subjects. Together, they found enjoyable moments among the many difficult ones they would endure at school and were able to create their own “code” [Excerpt 41]. “Code” (코드) is used in Korean to denote a type of synergy between people. Those who have the same “code” typically like similar things, act similarly, and generally get along well. Students from the same class as Y, who spent the entirety of their three years in high school together, continue to have the same “code.” Their playing with the language by mixing Korean and Russian was one demonstration of this shared code. It would not be comprehensible to those outside the circle, but it was entertaining to those within it. This type of environment was a welcome one to Y, who was wary of the typically competitive nature of high school [Excerpt 42].

For Y, it was comfortable being able to study in a classroom environment where there was little competition among the students themselves; while the lessons themselves may have been challenging and the teachers put the students through difficult “training,” the sense that they were experiencing it together kept the students encouraged. She noticed that even the students who may not have done well in high school were still able to use their education to secure opportunities in Russia, either working or as exchange students. She recounted how one of her fellow students had worked part-time as a tour guide during one of the school breaks, taking Korean visitors to see tourist attractions in major Russian cities. She was able to see how the lack of competition in Russian classes led to the students developing a healthier relationship with the language, as even those who might not have had the best results had been able to turn their ability to use Russian into an opportunity.

There was also the fact that Russian is a “unique” language in Korea, despite the geographical proximity of the two nations. Since there are relatively few people who use it, it is possible to do well with limited proficiency. This would apply to purposes such as employment, where the threshold for Russian speakers may be lower than for Koreans who speak other languages: she mentioned that to be employed in a diplomatic position, the minimum requirement for French or Spanish is a B2, while for Russian it is a B1. The competition is not as intense because the expectations are lower; the lower competition allowed a “code” to emerge among the students who chose Russian as a further language. They formed a community of students of Russian, and the community’s presence seemed to provide support for the students within it.

5.3.2. English

Y’s experience with English differed greatly from that of Russian. Whereas Russian provided a respite from the typical level of competition that Korean high school students face, it was in English where that competition would inflect her approach to and relationship with the language.

English would eventually become a “default” language for Y due to its ubiquity in her life. Her current studies at college demand that she be able to use English to a high level, particularly in terms of reading comprehension and writing fluency. Her affinity for technology means that she would be dealing with software instructions that are not always available in Korean, but they are available in English. Moreover, having attended a foreign language high school in Korea entailed regular daily use of the language. English was an integral part of her academic life, though it was not a choice. It was, and is, a “default” language for her.

Being a “default” language for Y did not prevent it from carrying emotional weight; although she did not discuss English much during the first interview, she recounts in Excerpt 43 how her experience with it differed from Russian. In the excerpt, Y discusses how her perception of others influenced how she felt about the Russian and English languages, how she approached them, and how she perceived herself as a user of those languages. With Russian, since her classmates were starting from the same point, the sense of competition was not as strong, and she was “doing okay” with it when compared to the struggling students. Factoring in the relative scarcity of Russian learners and users, the difficulty of the language, and those around her who were having a difficult time, Y thought that just being able to follow along with the lessons meant that she had some ability.

For Russian, she considered those she was being compared against to be her peers but not her competitors, although there was inevitable competition due to the grading curve. She was learning Russian in an environment where she and her peers would share three years together, establishing a “code” or synergy amongst themselves, as well as share an experience of studying a language from the beginning. The shared experience allowed them to move together and provided a fertile ground for developing their Russian ability, perhaps at different paces but still together.

She did not fear being wrong in Russian as that had been “trained” out of her, yet in Excerpt 43 she admitted to feeling fear at being wrong in English, stating that “Being wrong is scary.” While in Russian class she might have had to stand at her desk in the middle of the classroom, recite verb conjugations, and risk being wrong, it did not affect her in the way that being wrong in English would. The competition in English was that much more palpable. She states that “There were a lot of kids at school who were good

at it,” implying that she was not just being judged against the peers she saw daily but also against other students in her grade. She thought herself better than average, but it was not good enough when compared to all those others. She was able to be confident in Russian in a way that she could not be in English due to the level of competition. The stakes were higher for English than they were for Russian, and this affected her approach to each language.

In Excerpt 44, Y elaborates on why she felt she was starting from behind in English. She recounts how she had not had any exposure to English outside of what was available in public education. She saw others who benefited from being able to live abroad or who had extra opportunities to learn English prior to entering high school, and compared to them, Y was starting out behind. Y did not have any similar opportunities before entering high school, so she felt as though she was starting behind many of the other students. Objectively, she was good enough at English to receive top marks on an official exam, yet even so, she felt as though it was not enough. This feeling that she was behind other students would not go away despite objective proof to the contrary. This had not been the case with Russian, which seemed to be a fairer, and more bearable, type of competition.

English came with a sense of not being good enough; for Y, English was a frightening language. The students who struggled in Russian would still be able to work in fields related to the language, but those who struggled with English might not; Russian, despite the difficulty of the language itself and the almost physical nature of the “training” students were put through, was a more forgiving language experience. Whereas in Russian, Y had received detailed instruction and explanation for many elements, satisfying her interest in learning how things work, she believed that her

knowledge of fundamental elements in English was lacking: she was not convinced that she knew enough about how English worked.

Y's motivation for Russian was based on her interest in learning something "unique" and was nourished by a supportive community: she had peers who were enjoyable to be around and teachers who would take the time to explain things. While there were "mountains" to climb over, it was not an impossible nor a lonely crossing. English, on the other hand, was an experience typified by fear, competition, and a lack of confidence. It was a challenge for Y to study English and use it amongst and with others whom she perceived to be more prepared or just plain better at the language than her. However, English was a necessity, and it was sometimes fun to learn, so she persisted in the face of resistance.

5.3.3. Looking back

In spite of what can be perceived as a negative environment for English learning in high school, Y benefited from her English classes, particularly those that focused on academic writing [Excerpt 45]. She was able to use what she learned in high school to help her cousin, and this allowed Y to recognize the value of the lessons she had learned. At the time of her learning, she just "glossed over" them, noticing that they existed as rules or conventions but not thinking much of them. It was not until later that she would be able to use them and consciously recognize their worth. She still had the class materials from these high school English classes, which could be taken as a sign that she regarded them as worth saving due to educational or sentimental value.

Still, while she did recognize the value of the English language, she did not always appreciate the way it was presented within Korean society, something she had firsthand

knowledge of. She was afraid of being wrong in English, a fear that has transformed into an evaluation of how English is judged as being “correct” or “proper” according to sometimes unreasonable standards. She elaborates this view in Excerpt 46, discussing how in Korea there is a perceived need to use English correctly, which denotes speaking like a native speaker, but as someone who had no experience abroad and little experience with native English, she feels it should be a non-issue in the Korean context. She laments the “cultural capital” given to certain varieties of English and believes that there must be “something special about Koreans” who speak English without feeling the need to mimic a “native” speaker. She does not expect people unfamiliar with Korean to speak exactly like a native Korean, and so she questions the tradition of evaluating a Korean’s English according to native standards. This tradition is reflected in the educational sector, as language apps and academies often promote “native” English while criticizing “Korean” English. While she appreciates the feeling that there is a correct way to say things and that there are people who want to say things correctly, she doubts the need to view “correct” as “native.” The use of “native” as a measuring stick would also have affected her high school experience of English, where “native” is used to signify “correct,” and students would be forced to learn what was “native” and what was not. Nevertheless, despite these feelings, and the lingering issue of confidence, English has become a “default” language, on par with her native Korean [Excerpt 47].

Y has developed different domains for her languages: Korean, as her mother tongue provides the base for most of her activities; English is the most familiar of the foreign languages, present in her school life and her hobbies; and Russian is the language of play, where she is able to engage in entertaining interests. While she admitted that she still struggles with her confidence in using English, the fact that it has lost its foreignness

allows her to engage in it regardless. Familiarity has lessened the impact it once had, although experience has left her with a lingering, but vague, sense of fear. Russian trained the fear out of her. With Korean, fear was never an issue to begin with.

5.3.4. *Summary*

Learning languages has become a “도피처” or a “refuge” for Y, a “healing” or restorative experience that would allow her to escape from other demands facing her. During the last two years of college, Korean students are typically preparing to apply for jobs, and part of the application process includes taking language exams to prove one’s proficiency. Rather than prepare for these exams, Y would prefer to take refuge in learning a new language. Y professes to being interested in ancient Greek and Latin to help with her reading of ancient political texts. She has also started to learn Chinese while in college and confesses to having some difficulties with the tonal nature of the language. Early on in our discussions, she mentions that her sibling had been studying Chinese, and she would joke with her sibling by playing with the language, but later she started to take it seriously and had started a course in it during the third year of college.

Although the nature of Y’s experiences with English and Russian in high school seem to run counter to one another, she states that learning English had helped her with Russian. The alphabets are different, but they are more similar than either is to Hangeul, the Korean script. Similarly, she mentions that studying Chinese helped her notice that she had forgotten plenty of Hanja, the Chinese characters used in classical Korean writing and which are identical or nearly identical to their Chinese counterparts. In these observations, she demonstrates how her languages interact with each other, working with each other and buttressing one another in learning. With motivation, a similar

complementary effect can be seen: her Russian experience taught her that she could learn a difficult language; it inured her to making mistakes, despite the “fear” of being wrong that lingered with English. It also provided a comparatively pleasant experience that was not later tainted with the pressures of competition both local (her peers) and distant (the “native” standard).

Y’s motivation to learn new things and how they function undergirds her language learning. It is an overall value for her that manifests in her multilingual development. In a sense, languages are both a target of her desire for new knowledge as well as a vehicle for new knowledge, as she utilizes the languages she has learned to engage in activities that continue to feed her desire to learn.

5.4. The case of J

A Russian literature major at Sungkyunkwan University in Seoul, J wondered whether she was “born to like languages,” as she recounts enjoying reading pamphlets in Korean while noticing the shape of the writing and being committed to learning how to spell words correctly. J has taken language learning to be a search for a variety of ways to express herself [Excerpt 48].

J’s main goal in learning languages does not align with goals such as communication or developing career skills. For her, the main goal has always been self-expression, and in searching for means to express herself, she has developed a repertoire of three languages: Korean, Russian, and English. Although Russian is the language she started most recently, she had already been working on it for seven years at the time of our meetings in 2020, and it has taken on a prominent position in her life.

5.4.1. Russian

When she started high school at age 16, J had a choice to study either Chinese, Japanese, French or Russian as a second foreign language. English was the default “foreign language,” but a second foreign language is compulsory in Korean secondary schools. J explains in Excerpt 49 that what attracted her to Russian was that it was unique.

Compared to the other options, Russian was not a popular choice among Korean students. However, for J, it was precisely this lack of popularity that motivated her to choose this language. Although Russia is a large country that spans two continents with a small but noteworthy population of ethnic Koreans, and although its easternmost regions are not geographically distant from Korea, the Russian language is not typically seen in

the same light as other world languages like English and French. J was enticed by the relative lack of speakers of Russian in Korea and chose to spend her high school years learning the language.

J was not disappointed by her choice. She became enamored with the language for the simple reason that, to her, it was a beautiful language, which she elaborates upon in Excerpt 50. J did not need any other reason to continue studying the language besides the language itself. Russian was beautiful to her; it was attractive by itself and not for what it could allow her to do. As she continued to learn it, she continued to discover more about it that made her enjoy the language even more. Languages can indeed open the way for communication with other populations or can provide transferable skills, but those were not priorities for J. She chose Russian in high school out of pure interest and because of its uniqueness among languages that could be learned in a Korean high school, and that motivation continued throughout high school up through her college applications. Rather than utilitarian motives, J appealed more to the aesthetic aspects of the language for her motivation.

She describes in Excerpt 51 that what was that was so attractive about the language was its sense of variation, something which she felt sets it apart from the other languages she already knew. It has qualities that neither Korean nor English seem to have: English has a limited case system, while Korean uses particles to indicate case rather than inflection. It has vocabulary that could be translated but not completely, leaving out important information that only the vehicle of language could provide. The uniqueness of the language formed the basis of the aesthetic appeal that led to J's continued learning of the language. Since languages were a mode of self-expression, Russian provided a unique means of self-expression for her.

Russian was, for J, a way to express herself differently from how her native language Korean would allow her to express herself. In Excerpt 52 she compares the two languages, noting that while speaking Korean, J has to appease her audience. She must ensure that whomever she is speaking to is properly respected by her words. Although she is speaking, she is somehow “passive” in the relationship between herself and her listener. The words are for the other’s sake, so that they can comprehend her. She must express herself in a way that would appease the listener. With Russian, however, she could move the focus to herself. It was an “active” language, one that allowed her to actively express herself in the way she saw fit. Elsewhere, she told of how after returning from a trip to Russia, she found that she was censoring herself because “내가 남들한테 어떻게 보여지는지를 신경써야되는게 생기니까 그게 불편했어요 [I had to worry about how I seem to other people, which made me uncomfortable].” The things she wanted to show about herself were limited by the nature of Korean language, but she was freed to express herself through Russian.

Still, she does not feel that her Russian is strong enough to show herself completely [Excerpt 53]: comparing the languages she uses to the clarity of images, J notes how although she feels that Russian allows her to be more herself, she is still limited by her knowledge of the language as compared to Korean and English. There is a tension illustrated here between how free the language makes her feel and how clearly she can make herself known. Korean opens more possibilities but is limited by the nature of the language, where the listener is prioritized and the speaker is subordinated; Russian allows for the freedom she needs to express herself, yet she cannot command it to show herself clearly to others. She finds frustration in both, but for different reasons.

She wants to be able to benefit from Russian's speaker-oriented nature, yet she is limited by her knowledge, leading to both a sense of urgency and frustration in not moving as fast as she would like. The story in Excerpt 54 illustrates how J's desire to be better at Russian is countered by "mountains" and "obstacles," which refers to the linguistic knowledge she feels she needed in order to express herself properly. She would have spells where she would feel as though she is speaking fluent Russian, but then be frustrated by a sudden blockage or "wall" that stopped the flow of words she would be producing. She credited this to her age: compared to English, which she started earlier, she was not able to speak Russian as she wanted. English had been with her longer, therefore she knew how to use English as she desired. English had given her proof that she could use a non-native language to express herself, yet now that she wanted to express herself in Russian, she would have frequent stoppages and sudden blocks that caused her to feel frustrated. She desired Russian and was motivated to learn it, yet she felt as though she was continuously facing obstacles that made attaining it that much more difficult.

She mentioned how if she was younger, she might be able to overcome these obstacles more easily. With English, which has its own obstacles, she had been able to achieve a high level of fluency and comfort; she was therefore familiar with the process of learning to deal with difficulties on the way to developing fluency in a language. Yet with Russian, she felt the process was moving slowly, fraught with challenges that continued to arise at times when she thought she had achieved a level she was satisfied with. Having already reached a high level of English meant that she knew she could do it, so not yet being able to do the same thing in Russian was a cause of frustration. Comparing it to her ability in English and what it took to get there, she would be

reminded of how far she still had to go in Russian. Still, it was a distance she is driven to travel.

5.4.2. English, the gateway language

J did not discuss her experiences with English much during our two meetings. She mentioned that she had been learning since she was very young, and that the language was quite comfortable for her to use. Compared to Russian, there were not as many impediments to her performance in English, which she discusses in Excerpt 55.

J constantly used her experience with English as a measuring stick for her Russian. In another interview, she states, “I don’t feel that I’m deficient in English, but I still haven’t reached the level I would like to reach in Russian.” For J, whose goal in language learning was to learn how to express herself in new and different ways, English was already a language in which she was satisfied in that she could show herself clearly enough. She reserved the desire she had for language learning for Russian, the language that she found attractive and that she still could not use as she liked.

J’s comfort level with English allowed her to codeswitch with her classmates from high school, a playful use of language she describes in Excerpt 56. The motif repeated here is the idea of best and most appropriate means of expression, a motif that begins with J’s desire to express herself in a variety of ways using multiple languages. She considered her codeswitching to be “half-joking,” but she recognized the legitimacy and the efficacy of the act: the words she would use when switching carried a specific meaning that reflected a particular context and a particular worldview, which she wanted to communicate. She would choose the best word for the given context, and sometimes the best word would be in English rather than Korean. This story illustrates J’s comfort with the English language, as she is able to weave the language into conversations that

are mostly in her native tongue; it also shows that J is a member of a community of speakers who speak like this regularly. Being around others like her, who use the same languages she does, allows her to switch and use the most appropriate words for the meaning she wishes to express, as she associates with others who will understand what she is saying when she switches.

Her comfort with and proficiency in English was illustrated in another memory she called her “strongest memory in terms of English language use,” discussed in Excerpt 57. In the memory of this event, J had been upset enough where what she wanted to say in English just came out. She was able to communicate without planning her speech beforehand, calling it a “superpower” that was due to the anger she felt in the moment: “At the time, it must have been a superpower, because I was so angry that that planning process was eliminated and I was able to speak.” In the moment, she knew she was right and that the airline had made a mistake; their refusal to concede their error irritated her enough that whatever blockages remained in her English were made insignificant compared to her motivation to correct the issue.

Aside from these moments, J did not mention English much except in conjunction with Russian. Having learned English from the 3rd year of elementary school, it has already become an integral part of her life. Although it had been a foreign language, it is less foreign to her than Russian. Still, her experiences with English seem to have provided her with a frame of comparison for her Russian learning. Russian, though, still needed more time to develop, leading to her frustration whenever she encountered difficulties in expressing herself.

5.4.3. *German diversion*

During college, J attempted to learn German. Our first meeting took place during the first week of her German class; only having had one class, she did not have much to say about it. However, during our second meeting, she discusses how her experience learning German made her rethink her other languages and whether she had reached a level of proficiency that she was satisfied with [Excerpt 58]. She already had issues with “confusion” where her non-native languages, English and Russian, would mix unintentionally, Russian intruding in on her English. She thought that adding German to an already tenuous situation would only exacerbate the confusion. To J, this lack of control was a sign that she lacked satisfactory proficiency: she could not always control when she switched when using English and Russian, so she must still need to work on her proficiency.

Starting German reminded her that she still had not reached a level of Russian that would allow her to fulfill her main goal of self-expression. In her mind, since she could not control when Russian would enter her English speech, she needed to work harder on it. Until she was satisfied and could use Russian as well as English, she did not want to spend any more time on a different language, regardless of how enjoyable it might be. It would be more meaningful to work on a language she already had, one that she had found unique and beautiful from the beginning, namely Russian. In short, her motivation to master Russian to a level that she was happy with overrode her motivation to start a new language.

Although she has a stated intention to get all her languages to a C2 level, she clarifies this in Excerpt 59, saying that while she does not need external validation for her desired proficiency, she still maintains high ambitions for her multilingual development.

She sees her multilingual self as one who can command her languages to a high enough level so that she can express herself, her thoughts, ideas, and opinions freely. She is already at that point with Korean and is almost there with English; her Russian still needs time and energy, and her motivation lies here rather than in attempting something new.

5.4.4. Summary

J's experience with English formed the bedrock for her Russian learning. She learned it from a young age and had reached a level of proficiency that she was content with. It allowed her to express herself to a satisfactory level, which was important because it was the goal that J had for languages. It was the frame for her motivation, and reaching it with English meant that it was possible with others. Upon first encountering Russian, she felt an interest, and as she continued to learn it, she found that it was an appealing, although difficult, language. Faced with both the challenge of learning it and the possibility that she could use it to express herself once she learned it, she was motivated to continue developing it and adding it to her repertoire. Later, when attempting to learn German, she found herself turning back to Russian: since she has not yet reached her goal, she felt her time should be spent on that rather than on starting with something new.

During our first meeting, J compares language learning to painting or coloring [Excerpt 60]. Using analogies of paint and opacity, J highlights how she uses languages in order to be seen as well as control how she is seen. Motivation seems to emerge when she finds herself in a context where she is being ignored or overlooked, such as in the airport in Spain: she was frustrated and angry at the situation, and English would be the only language that could solve that problem. In Korean, she might have been invisible,

but in English, she would be seen and heard. In Russian, she does not think that she is visible yet in most situations, so she continues to learn.

J found it difficult to find people like her, people who authentically liked the language they were studying and were motivated to improve [Excerpt 61]. She wants to learn languages because she likes learning language and wants to use them; her career goals include being able to use her languages to work. She wants to speak through them and have herself heard, and seen, by others. She wants to be able to portray herself in diverse manners, and that means learning a variety of languages to a level where she not only has the ability but also the comfort level to show all sides of herself; this includes using some languages (like Russian, an “active” language) to reveal sides of herself that she may not be able to reveal in other languages (like Korean, a “passive” language). However, she seems to find herself somewhat isolated by her motivation, as it is not shared by the majority of those she sees around herself.

5.5. The case of H

An English Literature major studying at Ewha Women's University in Seoul, H has had a long and complicated relationship with languages across the span of her life so far. While she had had some exposure to English, her first non-native language, early in her life due to the influence of her parents, it was a one-year long stay with her aunt in Alabama that would prove an early turning point to her linguistic development. Arriving in the middle of 4th grade of elementary school (nine years old) with very limited ability and being thrust into an English-speaking school with little support for English learners meant that she would have to adjust quickly. It was a difficult but fondly remembered moment of her past, one that influenced many of her views on languages and education, as well as the many decisions she made during her academic career.

5.5.1. Alabama and English immersion

H recounted being forced to learn English from the age of 3. In Excerpt 62, she recounts how her mother had been encouraged by kindergarten teachers to nurture H's ability in the language. Her mother's "passion for education" ("학구열" in Korean) served as the impetus for H's first encounters with English. Although the term can be used to describe one's own feeling towards learning, it is often used to denote the passion or fever that parents will have for ensuring that their children receive a good education.

At the age of 3, H did not have any say in what she would be learning; instead, her parents, especially her mother, decided that she would learn English. Their interest in her educational development led them to provide extra opportunities for H to engage in learning at home, and H responded to the availability of these opportunities at first. She enjoyed mimicking what she had heard and was even able to mimic the accent. The

parents' passion opened an opportunity, but when their passion became too intense to bear, H began to resist. She started to dislike the language and the fact that she had to learn it. Later, when reflecting on these memories, H would be appreciative of her parents' aggressive approach to her education, but at the time, she resisted learning the language because of that very approach.

One reason that she would eventually be grateful was an opportunity to stay with her aunt in Alabama for a full year, attending school and continuing to learn English, an experience she describes in Excerpt 63. There was pressure from her parents at home and pressure she would receive from her experience in elementary school, where she was expected to not only keep up with her studies but also participate in numerous academic competitions. She compared this feeling to “고 3 병,” or loosely translated, “high school senior disease,” a feeling of great stress and anxiety, sometimes manifesting in physical ways, due to the rigors of the classes taken during the final year of high school. The final year experience has a direct impact on college entrance, particularly since the KSAT is the focus for many of the classes taken during that year. Students cite the final year of high school as the most difficult in all their education, yet H, who had already been through her final year of high school at the telling of this memory, felt it was an adequate description of her experience in elementary school. During her one year living with her aunt and attending school in the US, she was allowed to have fun during the school day, and not be stressed about work. It allowed her to recuperate from the deleterious effect that her early education had had on her.

Although it had been an overall positive experience, H's sojourn in Alabama started out roughly due to the language barrier, as she explains in Excerpt 64. She further explains that while she benefited from the positive environment, being able to relax at

school and having a good friend to help her with her English, what drove her to get better at English was a desire to stand up for herself and to talk back to a classmate with whom she did not get along. She was motivated by a desire to speak for herself. At first, she could not speak well, and she had no way to defend herself against the classmate. The environment was an English-speaking one and answering back in Korean would not have any real effect. To speak back in an effective way, H would have to speak English. Her drive was rooted in anger and frustration over not having the ability to be understood by the audience she wished to reach.

Returning from Alabama, H noticed that her English had improved, but she had returned with more than linguistic knowledge of the language; though she was not aware at the time, she had also taken on an accent [Excerpt 65]. The recognition by one of her teachers, one familiar with accents from the US, that H returned from Alabama speaking with a southern accent was a surprising one. Even at that age, the idea that she spoke with an accent was unwelcome. She did not want to speak with a southern accent. She appreciated the generally positive experience she had while living in Alabama, but she did not appreciate that it had given her a style of speaking that she did not intend to take on. The accent was a sign that although H had learned English, it was somehow not the kind of English she thought she would learn: it was strange and identifiable; it sounded different from the way it was supposed to sound.

In Alabama, English was a demand, but it was not the same type of demand as it was in Korea. Although it was an academic necessity in Alabama as well, English was primarily necessary to live and thrive; in Korea, however, it was a vehicle for academic competition and stress. There were stakes involved in using English, and students were judged on how well and how correctly they could use it. Her southern accent was not a

“correct” or acceptable accent within the Korean context. It was a “shock” to hear that she used an accent, an unexpected development that came along with the overall improvement in her use of the English language.

Even now, H endeavors to avoid using any identifiable or non-standard accent in any language, even her native Korean [Excerpt 66], nor does she think she now speaks with one. She also mentioned that she corrects her sibling’s English, as her sibling has been studying in a high school in North Carolina and has taken another southern accent of American English. H’s shock at hearing that she used an accent, even at a young age, foreshadowed her later pursuit of the more “standard” versions of languages she uses.

Moreover, H’s goal of becoming an English teacher aligns with this pursuit, which she discusses in Excerpt 67. As a teacher preparing to enter the classroom, she monitors her own language use partly for the sake of the students she currently tutors and the students she imagines herself encountering in a classroom in the future. Monitoring her own English has been a recurring theme for her since her own time in elementary school, as the revelation that she returned from Alabama with an accent was a source of consternation. She had returned to an environment where her mastery of English, even at a young age, would be judged and where accents may not be received well. She had experienced this as a student and uses the experience to inform her own teaching.

The southern accent she had unknowingly adopted had the potential to not just mark her English as “strange” but also obscure her message when trying to communicate with a Korean audience. She had fought against this while in Alabama, driven by frustration and anger at not being able to stand up to her classmate. When she returned to Korea, the idea of her English being occluded by an accent, especially an accent that may not be common in Korea, meant that her message may not always be understood.

Although her teacher understood and was able to identify the accent, there was no guarantee that other Koreans would understand, or possibly that they would and would judge her English as strange; as she had already struggled with being misunderstood once, she did not welcome the notion of it happening again at home in Korea.

5.5.2. *Further encounters with English*

H did not always enjoy learning English, especially early on; it was essentially a duty and a responsibility that, coincidentally, she eventually grew to like [Excerpt 68]. English was originally something that she had to do. As a student in Korea, she did not feel as though it was something that she could just put aside. Being a student meant dealing with English, and fun and interest were secondary concerns. What mattered to H was that this was a duty for her, and she would fulfill it. The student's duty of English learning would be the primary reason for her continued study of English throughout her middle school career and through to high school.

The duty to study English led to her confronting an aspect of the language that would prove a challenge for H: grammar [Excerpt 69]. H used words like “trauma” and “fear” to describe her encounters with English grammar, stemming from a lack of understanding that stretched back to middle school, a time when she still disliked English, dutifully performing in class without comprehending what she was asked to do.

The Korean system functions by the maxim “*전 암기, 후 이해*,” which means “first you memorize, then you understand,” although H never reached the latter half of the process. To describe how it felt to have to deal with grammar, she uses the term “*울렁증*,” which can be translated as “nausea” or “nervousness,” but the feeling is similar in either case: the sensation that your stomach is turning or is tied in knots. She

discussed how she felt in both mental and physical terms, emphasizing the effect that encounters with the material had on her. This feeling was not limited to English grammar, however, as other language grammars she studied, including Korean, had a similar effect on her [Excerpt 70].

In Excerpt 70, she describes that she feared was not the subject matter itself but the way it was taught and later evaluated, as she would be tested on something that she did not quite understand. She wanted to know the meanings of the terms she was encountering, whatever language they were in, but no teacher was willing to explain them. The lack of explanations sapped any motivation she might have had and resulted in H developing a “fear” of the subject matter and experiencing episodes of “nausea” when having to work with grammar.

H’s issues with grammar were just one element in a constant string of stress H experienced in her school years. However, this element was just one aspect of a larger issue that H was grappling with, namely the competitive atmosphere in Korean education at large [Excerpt 71]. The fear and “trauma” she mentioned in regard to grammar were symptoms of forced competition. H had already fallen ill because of this once before, and she continued to struggle with it throughout school. She stated that she got used to it or adapted to it; she found herself unable to change the nature of the system in which she was, so she eventually submitted to it, though still suffering from the same stress that she had first encountered in early elementary school. Although she tacitly accepted it, it never fully disappeared.

5.5.3. *Trying to learn Japanese*

Middle school for H included continued study of English as well as an opportunity to learn Japanese, which she did in her second year. She chose to continue studying Japanese in high school, although it was not the only factor in the choice: her grades from middle school were also a factor in determining which language she would be streamed into upon entering high school.

H attended a high school that specialized in foreign language education, and while students entering this type of high school have a choice in which language they specialize in, their grades from middle school impact which language stream they end up in. Languages such as English and Chinese typically have a higher demand, so students who wish to study those languages may have to have higher grades from middle school. At H's high school, there was a lower demand for Japanese compared to other languages, and H's choice of studying Japanese had been due, in part, to her middle school grades.

Learning Japanese was not easy for H due to the feeling that it was not a good fit for her [Excerpt 72]. Feedback from her peers and teachers said that Japanese sounded awkward or strange when H spoke it. Although this feedback came from others, H herself also held the view that Japanese was not the right language for her, based on essentially aesthetic qualities, such as the style of Japanese speakers' reactions [Excerpt 73].

Rather than use the original voice tracks when watching Japanese media, H would prefer to listen to English voices performing the roles. The English voices felt more comfortable, more of a match, than their Japanese counterparts. H felt odd around the language, and those around her commented that she sounded awkward when speaking it, which led to a difficult relationship with the language and an arduous three-year period in which she obligated to study it.

H's study of Japanese was similar to her study of English in that she did not give it up despite it not resonating with her. She changed her expectations of what she would be able to accomplish, but she did not state that she completely tuned out the lessons she received in school. Again, she viewed her duty as a student was to try one's best in class, a duty which conflicted with her feelings about the content. It was not, however, that H disliked learning in general. Rather, it was that she disliked the way material was taught to her: without explanation, and with the demand that she just memorize what to do. H had a desire to know and understand what she was learning that was not satisfied with rote learning and memorization. With Japanese, the feeling that the language did not fit her only exacerbated her preexisting views of education as a whole.

5.5.4. The role of teachers

While H's experiences with languages and language learning, and learning in general, appear to have been mostly negative with occasional positive notes, it was towards the end of her secondary education when language would again provide the means to a type of "healing." In Excerpt 74, she explains how she came to value and depend on her English teachers during a pivotal moment in her life, the period when she was applying to colleges and trying to figure out what she wanted to study and later engage in as a career. She had had teaching as a career in mind for a while: she was dissatisfied with the nature of Korean education and wanted to do what she could to change it. Upon meeting the teachers in this story [Excerpt 74], she felt that it was specifically English that she wanted to teach.

In a way, these teachers helped H establish a healthier relationship with English; whereas previously she had used words like "trauma," "fear" and "nausea" to describe

encounters with the language, these teachers helped her understand elements of the language better while at the same time providing role models for her to follow. She also linked to them emotionally, stating that she relied on them during a stressful period of life, and in return for their support and to form a stronger connection with them, she worked harder at her English.

English had been a language with which she has had a long and complicated relationship, but it is familiar, and as someone who has experienced English in the way that she had, she feels that she could use her experience to help future students. She learned with teachers who did not take the time to explain things, as well as teachers, like those mentioned in Excerpt 74, who taught in a way that allowed H to understand what it was she was learning, which led to a greater appreciation for the material. She stated that she worked harder at English because of the teachers she met at this time; they became not only her role models but also factors that motivated her to work harder at her English. English had been a duty that she had begrudgingly undertaken for most of her education, but at this point, it became something she desired for her own self-fulfillment. Not only did she want it for herself but she imagined teaching it to other students, using her experience to shape the lessons she would plan in the hopes that through her teaching, she would be able to counteract what she saw as the negative aspects of Korean education [Excerpt 75].

The Korean education system, especially with language education, has a significant drawback in its reliance on testing and evaluation, which H had always found troublesome. In her teaching, H plans to make use of her experiences with English to help young students have more fruitful encounters with the language than they might have otherwise.

5.5.5. Return to Japanese

Although H did not give up on her Japanese studies in school, she did choose not to take the KSAT exam in Japanese, opting instead for another language with which she had only limited experience: Arabic. Discussing Arabic, H remarks that compared to Japanese, she thought that Arabic was a language that fit her better. She intended to continue learning it in college, but due to circumstances with how her college credits were allotted, she did not have that option. Instead, in Excerpt 76, she states how she decided to study Japanese again, mostly for pragmatic reasons (“it’s related to my grade”) but also due to the familiarity of the language, which has become “a welcome sight.” She enjoys being able to recognize and understand the Japanese she hears and sees around her. What had been an uncomfortable coexistence in high school has now become a comforting sight and a viable option for educational purposes as well.

In Excerpt 76, she also discusses how Japanese has provided H with a means for becoming part of a community of learners, a community that has continued to meet even after high school was over. Their shared experience of learning the language, regardless of the proficiency they ended up with, is a common memory that links them to one another. She also mentions elements of language play, as they had a common language known only to themselves: their “own Japanese.” It is a Japanese that has connotative meanings associated with the shared memories of the members of H’s high school class.

5.5.6. Summary

Much of H’s motivation depends on her relationships, both real and imagined, with others. In a sense, her experience with languages and her continued emergence as a

multilingual subject is related to the others around her. She started English because her parents demanded it; she worked on her English in Alabama because she wanted to be understood by those who helped her (her new friends) and those who troubled her (the antagonistic classmate); she continued to work on it as a “duty” assigned by teachers and administrators in the educational system; and now she works on it in order to better teach those students who will be under her tutelage in the future.

With Japanese, her current motivation stems from familiarity. It was the same source of motivation that led her to consider Japanese in high school, as she had first encountered the language in middle school. With Japanese, though, her choice has often been limited by academic matters, such as her school grades and college credit requirements. She is choosing Japanese, but it is a limited choice; had she a wider set of options, she would choose a language that is more aesthetically pleasing (French), one that she feels a more pressing need for (Chinese), or one that she has found to fit her better (Arabic). Her experience with Japanese, however, has served another purpose: it has helped her to see that there are other languages out there that might be more in line with her personal desires and opinions. Japanese has pushed her to find other languages that might fit her better, all the while providing a familiar language that may still serve her for some purposes.

H describes learning language as a way of “making another me,” and she noted that she feels and is perceived differently depending on which language she is using [Excerpt 77]. For H, her native tongue of Korean leads her to act as a bright, cheerful individual, while English brings out a more serious side. Japanese has been her “awkward” language, like a piece of clothing that does not quite fit but she makes do with it. The three sides do not represent different people but rather three different

aspects of the same individual. Learning languages for H is learning about sides of herself that she did not imagine to be there. These are sides that she presents to others as well as to herself. Moreover, the languages that each side corresponds to serve different purposes and fulfill different desires, whether they are a desire to perform a duty or to connect with and be understood by others. Becoming multilingual is a process of self-discovery and self-creation, which H's story tells us is not always a smooth, straightforward process.

5.6. The case of R

R is a Middle Eastern and European Languages and Culture major at Trinity College Dublin. This interdisciplinary course that combines a study of the histories, literatures, languages and politics of Europe and the Middle East. Although she had originally intended to go into law, R found the course listing during her sixth year of secondary school, and it made her reconsider her long laid plans of going into law [Excerpt 78].

Part of the reason for her change in mind was that this course of study would give her the opportunity to work with and learn languages. Starting from when she was very young, languages have formed an essential part of who R is and how she engages with the world around her, and her course of study reflects the importance she places on languages.

5.6.1. *Growing up bilingual*

R was born to a French mother and an Irish father, and up until the age when she would enter school, about 5 or 6, her parents loosely followed a “one parent, one language” model in their home [Excerpt 79]. They each attempted to speak only in their

“native” language with R, but they could still speak the language of the other. This facilitated communication in the household and supported the uptake of each language. Still, as a child, R could not always distinguish between the two languages [Excerpt 80].

She would eventually learn to distinguish the two languages, but it was a learned distinction. Within the home, it was difficult to distinguish because even though her parents strove to only use one language each with her, they both could speak English and French, so even were she to mix the language within one utterance, she would be understood.

R learned French exclusively in the home. Her mother was a lecturer of French and would assist in R’s development of the language. She uses the language to converse with her mother’s side of the family, but as she explains in Excerpt 81, she never had the opportunity to study it in a formal education setting. Without instruction in or through French in a formal setting, R relied instead on what she learned in the organic setting of the home. She learned not by studying in the traditional sense, but by speaking the language with her family. Her mother would correct her, but not always immediately: “sometimes my mum will pick me up on something and I didn’t know it was wrong because I had been saying it for years and years and years.” At home and amongst family, sometimes making a mistake would not be cause for immediate correction since the meaning was clearly communicated despite the occasional error.

Excerpt 81 illustrates R’s desire to learn French grammar more formally because she sometimes feels uncertain that what she is saying is grammatically correct, but she recognizes that her French proficiency is closer to “native” than what it would be had she learned it exclusively at school. She is a “native” speaker because she grew up with the

language, but she continues to express doubt about her actual ability in the language because of a lack of exposure and instruction.

There is a theme of R being self-conscious and insecure about her use of French running throughout our dialogues. In Excerpt 81, she states that there are times where she is “not 100% sure” of what she is saying when she speaks French. In Excerpt 82, she describes how she feels a “language barrier” between herself and others in her family. Despite her mother’s reassurances, R expresses “embarrassment” or feels “self-conscious” about her French, as if her proficiency as a French speaker is creating a wall or “barrier” between herself and the French-speaking side of her family. Although she feels that it is “dumb” or unwarranted, she “can’t really help it.” The awkward feeling she experiences is something that she believes she cannot control. She desires to speak well, and when she thinks that she has not spoken well, she feels embarrassment.

With French, there is a longing to retain a connection to her family that motivates R to work on it; this longing also adds to the self-consciousness she experiences when using French [Excerpt 83]. R’s concern about her French ability is directly tied to the closeness she feels to her French-speaking family; still, while she feels close to them, she fears that she cannot verbalize that closeness through the French language. She worries that she will not be able to say everything she has wanted to say to them because she “couldn’t get the words out.” She feels a blockage that prevents her from fully realizing the relationship she has with her French-speaking family, in this case her maternal grandparents. Although there is a physical and familial closeness, she worries that she lacks the ability to establish a linguistic closeness to them. She expresses a desire to not be separated from her family by this “language barrier” that she feels present, even though she has said that it is probably a result of “overthinking” or being “dumb.” In

short, she perceives this blockage even when she feels she has no good reason to believe it is there; the perception of its existence is enough to affect how she engages with the French language.

Her mother has supported her French usage and has even tried to allay her fears and worries about her proficiency in the language [Excerpt 84]. Understanding her mother's reasoning, R recognizes that her feeling a "barrier" in French was due to a lack of exposure to the language after reaching the age when she would begin elementary school. In Ireland, her schooling would be through Irish and English, and French would not be an option for a few years. This led to what she perceived as a slower rate of development, which her mother would explain as natural. The language that she feels is missing is not really missing because she never had it to begin with; she never learned the aspects of the French language that would help to make up for the "barrier" she feels.

Still, R cannot help the way she feels "stunted" in French, despite knowing that there are logical reasons for why her French is the way that it is, which she describes in Excerpt 85. Simply, compared to her English, R's French has not had the same path or rate of development. However, she cannot help but be frustrated because her actual ability is not where she envisions it should be. Even though she recognizes that there is a "short, simple answer" to her current proficiency, she feels as though her French should be better than it currently is.

In Excerpt 85, she mentions that she "has to get it out of [her] head" that her language ability is directly linked to her intelligence. She states that she feels "stupid" when she must look up a word in a language that should be hers. Yet it is not completely hers, as she cannot control it the way that she can English. French is in her home, it is familiar, but it is not something that she ever engaged with in a formal sense. She knows

that there are perfectly good reasons for why she cannot operate through or engage with French in the way that she would like, but in the face of those reasons, she feels self-conscious and stunted, she feels a longing for it, and she feels “very raw emotions” when thinking about her French ability and what it represents.

The schools that R attended for elementary and secondary education did not offer French, and though she expresses a desire to have had formal education in French, she explains that even had it been offered, her mother would have advised against it [Excerpt 86]. As a French lecturer, her mother doubted that R would receive an adequate education in French within the school. She had been the one to teach R French at home, and she did not believe that the French taught at school would have been helpful.

Consequently, despite the feelings R has for her French, she believes that what she learned in the home has been useful for her academic life [Excerpt 87]. When first encountering academic texts in French, R was surprised to find that she had little trouble understanding them. Academic language tends to be complicated, yet the texts that R used to gather information for her project did not require any extra effort to read. She admits to having to concentrate more when reading French than English, but she does not notice a marked increase in her concentration when reading academic texts in French as compared to when she would read other texts. This is due to the level and style of French that her family used on a regular basis, which was of a formal and academic tone and style. The French that she had learned from her mother had helped her to succeed academically even without the benefit of learning in school. So, while R feels “stunted” at times, and that there is a “language barrier” between herself and French-speaking members of her family, she has firsthand evidence that her French is not as weak as she

sometimes feels that it is. Despite this evidence to the contrary, R still experiences feelings of not having as much French as she thinks she should.

R's insecurity and self-consciousness when using French could be related to her relative position in the family [Excerpt 88]. Because she is the oldest of her generation when compared to her maternal family (she mentions one cousin on her father's side that is older), and because she is an only child, she would have been the only learner within a community of experts. She feels that she is "gentler" in French, but her feelings of not having enough French could also have roots in the social context into which she was initiated. She learned "to speak around adults and adults only," adults who knew the language better than her, and this was her main source of French knowledge. She was always an apprentice compared to the others she spoke to, and they were always her teachers.

5.6.2. Gaelscoil and reintroducing Irish

While French was present throughout her mother's side of the family, Irish was not present in her father's side of the family [Excerpt 89]. Her father had been born in the UK and spent the first four years of his life there before his family moved to Ireland. R's paternal grandmother had been raised in the UK herself, and R mentions that this grandmother would be "very English about a lot of things." Irish would be reintroduced to the family through R's education; spending the entirety of her compulsory educational career at a Gaelscoil led to Irish becoming a significant element in her life. A statement cited earlier said that R had "very raw emotions associated with French;" the rest of that statement were the words "and Irish."

Interestingly, it was her mother's idea for her to attend an Irish-medium school, which she explains in Excerpt 90. Consequently, R attended a Gaelscoil for her entire elementary and secondary education. This entailed taking all her subjects through Irish, with the exception of her English classes. The surrounding environment was Anglophone, but within the school premises she was expected to use Irish for most purposes. There was some leniency in early years while the students became accustomed to the exclusive use of Irish, but once she was about 7, she would be using Irish during school hours.

The frequent use of the language, though, did not immediately result in enjoyment of the language; she explains that she "wasn't really that big into it" until the 5th year of secondary school [Excerpt 91]. For the first 12 years of her education, R did not enjoy learning Irish. Although she had more exposure and used the language more daily than her peers at English-medium schools, she did not come to love Irish until she was nearly done with her compulsory education. What made her come to love the language was the help of a teacher who was able to explain how Irish works; learning how to "speak something properly" fostered a love for the language that had not been there previously. In learning a language, R wants to know the rules of the language "inside out," and it was not until late in her education that she had the opportunity to study with a teacher who could help her learn those rules of Irish.

The teacher was different from her previous teachers of Irish, particularly those she studied with during the first years of secondary school. Issues with teachers during the first two years of the Junior Certificate had made it so that, by the third year, when R's class was meant to be preparing to take the Junior Certificate exams, the class "had done nothing for Junior Cert, so [they] ended up having to cram the three-year course

into one year.” Fortunately, being in a Gaelscoil meant that even outside of dedicated Irish classes, R still learned Irish through her other classes [Excerpt 92].

The teacher she met in fifth year proved to be a significant and lasting influence in R’s relationship with the Irish language, providing her with the type of linguistic knowledge that allowed R to learn how to better express herself in the language. She was able to learn the grammar of the language, which would allow her to feel as though she knew the language better; she understood how the language worked, but learning it explicitly was pivotal in helping R feel more in control of the language. This was something that she felt she never had with French.

This teacher knew the language and knew how to teach the language, but she also clearly loved the language as well, an observation R makes in Excerpt 93. R mentions that this teacher would not have had the same type of Irish education that R was getting, and still the teacher loved the language to the point where she went beyond what was necessary in order to learn it. R saw the dedication and affection that her teacher had for the Irish language, and she responded to it. She also responded to the way in which her teacher instructed the class: she was a “stickler,” a perfectionist who made sure the students understood and used the language correctly; R valued this type of instruction since it made her feel as though she really knew the language. Her teacher’s attitude towards Irish, the love she had for the language and the way she insisted on performing the language correctly affected R and made her want to perform the language well. In effect, she was motivated to learn and use Irish well because of her teacher’s attitude towards Irish.

Of the Irish teachers that R studied with, it was this one who made her enjoy the language. Outside of Irish class, the use of Irish in other subjects had allowed her to

develop an understanding of the language. Although she did not enjoy using the language until she met this teacher, she still learned how to use it for academic purposes.

Furthermore, attending a Gaelscoil provided other opportunities for using Irish in extracurricular settings, which she discusses in Excerpt 94. She was embedded in a community of Irish speakers, peers who decided that they were “going to speak Irish really well,” that it was “cool to be good at Irish.” Further, R cites the prefect system as being pivotal in helping her Irish improve. There was positive reinforcement around the use of Irish, as they supported each other’s use of the language. In other words, there was a communal, sympathetic source of motivation to use the Irish language.

Attending an Irish-medium school entailed learning and using the Irish language, which in turn entailed learning about the sociolinguistic history of the Irish language, including how it was historically restricted and how it is now important to help it thrive. R was taught of the Irish language’s position in modern Ireland and how it got there, and recounts how Irish “was beaten out of the Irish”; it was violently removed from the country, which contributed to the “stunted” development of the language [Excerpt 95]. It was not allowed to be used, so it was not allowed to develop as languages might, by slowly changing and adopting elements from surrounding linguistic communities. It was instead preserved in a traditional state, keeping elements that are “unlike anything you’ll hear.” To make up for the lack of an organic path of development, Irish has supplemented terms with borrowings from the English language which seem less natural. There is a mix of “primitive” aspects with somewhat forced elements (“based on English with a spin on them”), and this amalgam is what R finds interesting about Irish.

R uses the word “stunted” to describe the growth of the Irish language; she used the same word to describe her own French development. In both cases, there was a lack

of opportunity to develop. Irish was forcibly restricted and, as a result, was preserved in a “primitive” or traditional sense. With R’s French, it was not forcibly restricted, but still, due to the lack of opportunities within the environment to develop the language when compared with her English, R felt a sort of restriction on her French. In short, R seems to sympathize with the Irish language. On a personal level, she herself feels certain aspects that she attributes to Irish, and so nurtures a sympathy with Irish on a personal level. Despite not having had a strong familial connection to the language, having been educated through and about Irish and learning that it too was “stunted” allowed her to develop a familiarity with it and a wish to connect to the historicity of the language.

Being educated through Irish and bringing it into her life as she did has meant that, unlike with French and English, which are inextricable parts of her family life, she has had to try harder to keep her Irish [Excerpt 96]. She speaks about how she still uses it with her friends, especially when travelling abroad so as not to be mistaken for English. Nevertheless, she feels a loss regarding her Irish. There is an inverse relationship between the feeling of time passing and this feeling of loss: it took her a long time to feel comfortable and in control using it, yet she feels it slip from her quickly when she does not have the opportunity to use it. Because it took her such a long time to reach a point of comfort, the feeling that it has left her is felt more acutely. French is familiar and never truly leaves her, and even if it does, her family is there to help her reclaim it; Irish, though, may not feel as easy to reclaim because it took so long to achieve a level of comfort with it in the first place.

5.6.3. *Waiting for it to “click” in German*

For her foreign language option in secondary school, R chose to study German. She had her first contact with the language in her final year of elementary school, having a weekly class for about an hour. Upon reaching secondary school, with the choice between Spanish and German, she chose German [Excerpt 97].

R considered several factors in making her decision about what to study for her foreign language option. She had a very limited choice, but she still had a decision to make. She had wanted to try something new; Spanish was another Romance language, so she decided against it. Another contributing factor was that her father had studied German; R had her mother's languages, and now looked to her father's choices for inspiration in making her own.

Studying German in a Gaelscoil meant that multiple languages were being used simultaneously in the classroom in a prime example of translanguaging, which she describes in Excerpt 98. R relied on flashcards that were half in Irish and half in German; her textbook for learning German included translations and explanations in English; and her teacher would teach German with explanations in Irish. Irish's case system, more intricate than English's, helped in developing a working understanding of the case system in German. Explanations offered in both English and Irish would have helped in reinforcing the linguistic and conceptual knowledge of German. All languages were used to support one another.

R's experience studying German in secondary school also illustrates how the classroom dynamic affected how she learned the language and how she evaluates her own knowledge and performance of the language. She evaluates her teacher as having been satisfactory, and as she continues to study German at college and encounters

material that is easy to understand, she realizes that her teacher “did actually teach [them] quite a bit” [Excerpt 99].

Still, R’s classmates made it difficult for students like her to get as much out of the class as she could have [Excerpt 100]. Although she had an interest in German and was motivated to improve it, R experienced clashes with her peers and their attitude towards the class that would affect her motivation. She felt self-conscious about standing out through her accent (she noticed that she had a French accent in speaking German) or her effort to do well in a class where most students had no interest in learning the language. She believes that if she had been less self-conscious and less interested in how her peers viewed her, her German would be better. In short, her peers had a tempering effect on her motivation.

The six years of instruction she received in secondary school provided a foundation of knowledge in German, although R admits that she could have learned more had she not been concerned with how she was viewed by her peers. Since she did not allow herself to speak out due to a wariness of her peers, she did not develop the confidence she would need to speak German. On the other hand, it would have been difficult for her to ignore her peers because the school community, especially the community of students taking German, was quite small, and there had already been conflicts between R and her classmates.

R continues with German at the college level, studying it as part of her course. While she has been studying, she has noticed how much she has retained from secondary school, both in terms of linguistic knowledge as well as the effects of her classroom memories [Excerpt 101]. Essentially, because her class in secondary school had a majority of students who did not care about learning German, the students who did care had an

easier time in the class. The overall standard of the class was low, so less effort was required to excel. It was easier to become motivated to speak in class in secondary school because she had the confidence that, as one of the few who tried, she would succeed when compared to the others. However, she was operating under the scrutiny of her peers, so while she did have confidence as compared to her less interested peers, that confidence had been tempered because of her peers. In other words, she had built up confidence in German, but there had been limits placed on that confidence due to her place in the classroom, her tenuous relationships with her peers, and the level of language the class would have been able to achieve. Therefore, her confidence had been, in a sense, “stunted.” Entering a different group, this time in college, R found it more challenging to speak; she believes that her experience in secondary school did not adequately prepare her for this new environment with a new community of learners. She suggests that this is partly the reason why she is reluctant to speak out in German.

There is another reason introduced in Excerpt 101, though, and it has to do with French. As a speaker of French, she sometimes finds it difficult when she has to listen to someone try to speak French and not speak it well; she knows that it is not a good reaction to have, so she tries not to wince, but there are times when it happens. She does not want to be on the other side of this reaction, causing someone to wince with her awkward use of German. In French, and consequently in Irish and English, anyone who is listening to R speak will not hear an awkward accent; in German, it will be clear that she is still learning the language.

With German, R envisions that she should be at a certain level or have a certain proficiency yet feels that she has not fulfilled that expectation [Excerpt 102]. After six years of studying the language, R feels as though she should be able to use it more freely

and properly, yet she is frustrated by the feeling that she cannot perform the language as her expectations lead her to believe she should. She does not have this issue with her other languages: in English, French, and Irish, because of the amount of time she has spent with the languages, she does not experience the same level of frustration. German is the one language in her repertoire from which she feels a significant extent of alienation or distance. It is the one language she cannot quite possess yet, a sentiment she describes in Excerpt 103.

R has continued to study German in college precisely because it is a language that she wants, at some point, to have. She desires to be able to say that she can speak German. She wants to be able to justify the time she has already spent learning it by reaching the point where she feels comfort and freedom in using it [Excerpt 104]. While she had the opportunity to take French instead of German, she decided to continue German out of concern that, should she not continue to work on developing her German, she would lose it. Unlike her other languages, German has no outlet or source of support other than school, so she uses school (college in this case) to help her keep from losing the language. She is still waiting and working towards the moment when it will “click,” knowing that it may take more effort than her other languages.

5.6.4. Summary

As part of her studies in college, R has the chance to study another language in addition to German. Between Arabic, Hebrew and Turkish, she has decided to study Arabic. Our meetings occurred during and after her first year of college, by which point she had not yet had a class in Arabic, yet she did share her reasons why she chose the language [Excerpt 105], specifically the ubiquity of Arabic and its newness. The presence

of Arabic within the Middle East and North Africa makes it “one of those languages to have,” a language that has a gravitational pull because of the number of places where it can be used. Additionally, as was stated in the very first excerpt concerning R, Arabic is “a bit different,” it has “a bit of an edge”; while its use in Europe has increased, it is not considered a typically European language, and it is not common to Ireland. It is a link to somewhere distant and different.

Regarding languages already within her repertoire, French and Irish are sources of “very raw emotions” for R. With both languages, she has been motivated by a desire to establish, or reestablish, a sense of connection and continuity. French allows her to speak to her family and establish strong connections to them; the worry that there is a “barrier,” or that there will be one, is what keeps the language at the forefront of her mind. Irish is a language that establishes a connection to the country of Ireland and her Irish ancestors. She finds the language itself interesting as well, due to its combination of antique elements and modern borrowings. Keeping French alive in her life is a matter of personal concern and is to foster close familial bonds; keeping Irish alive is also a matter of personal concern but is based on broader social and historical issues. Both languages act as a conduit through which R shows that she is an integral part of in the social relationships that occupy her life, and her use of the languages is to continue to participate in those relationships. With German, her most recently learned language, her motivation is slightly different, in that she wants the language to “click” or fall into place; it is her experience with her other languages, however, that has proven to her that she can eventually forge a closer relationship with German.

5.7. The case of D

D was a second year student of law and political science at Trinity College Dublin when we first spoke, although she is originally from Málaga, a city in Andalucía, Spain. She decided to attend college in Ireland because of a lack of career prospects at home; tourism is the major industry, but she was not especially enthusiastic about entertaining it as a viable option. Rather than put herself in line to work in an industry she had no interest in, she decided to attend Trinity.

She was raised in Málaga by her mother, but she has an Irish father with whom she did not remember having a particularly strong relationship while growing up, except for periodic phone calls and twice-yearly visits. Still, she had family in Ireland, which provided an added impetus for her decision to attend Trinity. However, she would come to find that language issues would arise as a prominent refrain in her time as a college student in Ireland.

5.7.1. Early education

Although born to a Spanish mother and an Irish father, D's upbringing was primarily in Spain, and it would be Spanish that would eventually take hold as her primary language. Neither parent could tell her which was her actual first language, and up until the age of four D assumes that, because her family was constantly moving between Spain and Ireland, it was a case of "everything just being thrown at me, like different languages and different contexts." At the age of 4, D's father would return to Ireland while she would remain in Spain with her mother.

D's mother enrolled her in a bilingual school early in her education for pragmatic reasons: eager to make sure that D would not lose her English and still be able to speak to her father, D's mother decided to send her to a bilingual Spanish-English school until approximately the age of 8 [Excerpt 106]. However, upon reaching the age when she could matriculate into elementary education, D would be enrolled in a public school and educated completely through Spanish, with English being taught for only about three hours per week.

Because she was "advanced" by the standards for primary school English, D found the content easy early on, an experience she describes in Excerpt 107. While in her bilingual school, "some of the full Spanish kids had better English than me," in public school she found that her English was more advanced than what the curriculum, and teachers, were expected to handle. Her English ability led to an unpleasant occurrence, as she was asked to model pronunciation for the class; she would also mention that teachers would ask her whether certain things were correct or not. She did not enjoy being used as a model, which isolated her from her peers by marking her as different.

In Excerpt 108, D discusses how other teachers would sometimes say things awkwardly or incorrectly, and instead of telling the teacher, she would keep her mouth shut. She was concerned about speaking out because it would have been seen as a challenge or a "threat to their ego;" despite knowing that what the teacher was said was wrong, D did not want to be thought of as questioning the teacher, possibly making it more difficult for the teacher to teach. This reluctance to speak out was also out of self-preservation, as challenging the teacher's authority may not be received well by the teacher. Furthermore, as she elaborates in Excerpt 109, D did not want to give her classmates reason to believe she was "showing off," thereby making her believe she

needed to reassure her friends, and herself, that she was a Spanish-speaker first by adopting “an extra bit of Spanish accent” when using English. She did not want to be seen as special; she wanted to sound “like everyone else.”

5.7.2. *The Andalusian way of speaking*

Growing up primarily in Spain with only limited contact with her father and the Irish part of her family means that D identifies mainly with Spanish culture. However, more than a generic “Spanish” culture, D expresses herself as Andalusian, a member of a region that is already markedly different from what might be considered mainstream Spanish culture.

While in her memory of elementary school she loathed being marked as different, when it comes to her Andalusian self, she celebrates being different, as she notes in Excerpt 110; however, in her identification with Andalucía she is grouping herself together with a population and not isolating herself from them. She welcomes difference when it is a unifying factor, and in the case of her Andalusian sense of self, it unifies her with a locale and a population that celebrate distinct cultural heritages (flamenco, food) and a valued personal characteristic (sense of humor).

This identification with Andalucía extends into language, namely the accent she bears [Excerpt 111]. For D, it is not simply Spanish but rather the Andalusian way of speaking that she values. She is aware of how other regions may perpetuate harmful stereotypes about the way Andalusians speak, and that this devaluing of the accent may reflect onto the speaker; her friend exemplifies this, as his Andalusian accent is not taken seriously by others (“there’s no value to my words”), which in turn makes him question its value. However, D does not have this problem, as Andalusian Spanish is an object of

affection. Andalusian Spanish is “magical” and “special,” unlike the Spanish found in other parts of the country. It is the Spanish she most closely identifies with and the group she feels closest to: when discussing the merits of Andalusian Spanish, she uses “we” to indicate that it is not just her, nor is it the language itself, that contains “magical” qualities, but the collective of people who use it and give it that magic.

5.7.3. English accent of an unknown source

Most of D’s education throughout elementary and secondary school was exclusively through Spanish, although she did have several English classes per week throughout. She did not like to “show off” her English, preferring instead to mask it under an “extra thick Spanish accent.” She did this to preserve her relationships with classmates and teachers: rather than stick out and be marked different from her peers or even be seen as threatening to a teacher, she felt it was better to lay low and maintain her position in the collective group.

Because she had attended a bilingual school and had periodic contact with her English-speaking family, she already had more exposure to English than others her age, yet as a student in the public school system, she still had to study English in the same way that her peers did. She knew the language better than her peers, and in secondary school, there were times when teachers would treat her differently, such as being allowed to do schoolwork that was more of a priority to her at the time rather than engage in what for her was easy English learning [Excerpt 112]. Her English language education at school was unremarkable. She was unimpressed with English language education in Spain, observing that it did not really help students learn to use English without them “taking it [upon] themselves” to learn it.

However, it was around this time when she noticed a change in her English shocked her: she found that, without any apparent reason, her English improved and she developed an accent closer to the county Clare accent that her father and the other members of her Irish family use [Excerpt 113]. She did not remember any changes in her communication patterns with the Irish side of her family, yet she noticed that she became more fluent in her English speech as she got older, as well as the development of an accent that she did not feel was really hers. Compared to her Andalusian way of speaking, which was not only welcome but also loved, the Clare accent that her English speech adopted was an odd development with which she was not entirely comfortable.

She had recounted how she adopted an extra thick Spanish accent during her English classes to avoid being known as different from her classmates, but she also recalled already having a Spanish accent when speaking English; the “extra thick” accent provided no linguistic benefit but was instead used as social adhesive. However, the gradual neutralization and transformation of her accent when speaking English to that of County Clare, and her Irish family, was an unexpected development that, while it may have served to unite her and identify her more closely with that side of her family, was unintentional. The Irish accent with which she speaks English seemed to appear as if from nowhere and for no special reason.

D feels that there was some inauthenticity to this Irish-accented English based on views she holds regarding the close link between language and identity, which she discusses in Excerpt 114. D's strong attachment to her Andalusian-accented Spanish runs parallel with her surprise and reservation towards her Irish-accented English. She declares that she would never hide her Andalusian accent, but she attempted to hide the accent with which she spoke English because she did not feel as though it was an

accurate representation of who she was. When she used English and it came out with an Irish accent, it was “inauthentic.” She felt as though she was an “imposter” even though she was not trying to pretend or hide who she was. The accent would come on naturally, sometimes after spending a few days with her Irish family, but she would not feel as though it was genuinely her voice. She was not ready to accept this accent as hers because, for D, accents represent not only a way of speaking but also an identification with a region and a population, and the region whose accent this belonged to still felt foreign to her.

5.7.4. Trying unsuccessfully to learn French in school

Besides English language classes that were too easy for her and Spanish syntax classes that she did not enjoy, D took French classes in secondary school for 5 years, an experience that she did not remember positively [Excerpt 115]. The experience was filled with inconsistency and redundancy in how the classes were conducted. Her teachers would “disappear” frequently, and when she did have a consistent teacher, she felt as if she were repeating the content and not learning anything new. She noticed very little, if any, progress in her learning of French, to the point that she felt she had not “acquired any knowledge of French.” This is despite her noticing that she can comprehend written material. There is an apparent conflict in her self-appraisal, since she would “be able to survive” although she would also not “really bother saying [she] can speak any French.” She did not regard her knowledge of the language as being legitimate partly due to how the classes never seemed to progress beyond a certain level. Since there was no visible progression, D felt as though she was not learning anything at all.

Students in school become accustomed to visible progression, but this was not the experience D had in French class. Her progression in year of school was not matched with

a progression in the difficulty or complexity of French despite spending five years studying it. Inconsistency in the teacher's position and redundancy in the appeared as a lack of concern for the subject being taught on the part of the school. If the school deemed it acceptable to have a class provided in such a way, it would be difficult to convince an adolescent like D to exert effort in an apparently valueless endeavor. Furthermore, the prominence of repetition made it seem as though she were not learning anything at all.

However, despite the mostly negative experience that she had, D has come to reassess the efficacy of the class, stating that she "can't believe how much" she remembers [Excerpt 116]. Although at first the lack of progression and the unstable class environment made her feel as though she had not learned anything in French, she came to think that the constant repetition of basic material "ingrained a particular level" of French in her. She had, in fact, not learned nothing; she may not have felt as though she could remember much of what she had learned, but it had not left her. She was able to remember enough to motivate her to continue learning French. The fact that she was not back at "point zero" and that she had retained more than what she believed had spurred her on to reconsider learning French.

5.7.5. Conflicts in Dublin

After secondary school was finished, D moved to Ireland to begin her college studies in Dublin. Moving from a primarily Spanish-speaking environment to one where English was the main language was a challenge, especially because of the weight that D tends to put on language, identity, and comfort in being herself.

In Excerpt 117, she discusses the effect of moving to a place where Spanish is not always immediately available. D feels that it is important to continue speaking Spanish because it is her most comfortable language, but the lack of opportunities to use it at college means that she has to keep that part of herself silent. There is no outlet for her to use the language she feels most comfortable in. The presence of other people from Spain does not help the situation, as she cannot identify with them due to differences in socioeconomic and regional factors: they were from a different class and from a different part of Spain, which made it difficult to form connections with them outside of language. A shared language was not enough, since D felt she would not have anything in common with them otherwise. Although she would eventually meet another Spanish student with whom she is able to connect, she realizes that, had they met in Spain, it is unlikely that they would have become friends.

D finds few opportunities to speak Spanish, and in speaking English, she never feels quite herself and has trouble accepting the English voice, with its County Clare accent, as her own. Further, English in general does not represent her to others in the most authentic way, which she elaborates upon in Excerpt 118. In D's own words, English is like "being put in a box"; she feels "constrained" or restricted by what English allows her to do and what it allows her to say. It permits her to reveal herself only in a limited way: her half-sister, with whom she had only ever spoken English, had only seen one side of her until she began to speak Spanish, a language which revealed much more. D can express herself and emote more in Spanish than she can in English. Spanish is the language she feels most comfortable with, yet she is restricted from speaking it by her current circumstances. Instead, she has to rely on the language that constrains her.

Furthermore, she is betrayed by her Irish-accented English, which presents her as Irish and as someone who should be able to express themselves fully in English. She sounds “native” but has not accepted that accent or that part of herself as being a proper representation of who she is. This has led to significant conflicts with peers and affects her motivation to use English [Excerpt 119]. D's Irish-accented English makes it seem to others as though she was misrepresenting herself and lying about her background. To them, it indicated that she was not from Spain but from Ireland, and though there is some truth to this in that her father is Irish, it is not the actual truth about her. She still has not accepted the accent as part of her self and yet there were people around her who had already decided that it was her accent and that she is Irish.

The reaction of those around her to her English-speaking accent adds further complication to an already delicate situation, as it essentially forces her to assimilate into a culture that she still knows little about, at a time when she is still learning to relate to her Irish family after having lived in different places for so long. D's view of language was that there has to be some “cohesiveness” between language, culture, and identity, and that this cohesiveness is built in an organic way; in this situation, however, it was her language, as heard and understood by those around her, that was forcing a culture and an identity upon her. She responded with resistance and “rejection” of Irish culture, whereas she had been eager to explore her “Irish side” prior to receiving such a reaction to her accent.

English was like “being put in a box,” and this has two different meanings for D. Firstly, speaking English restricts what she can say and what she can show about herself. Secondly, her English voice, with its accent from County Clare, causes others to put her into a box: they try to define her by how she sounds, not taking into consideration what it

is that she wants nor how she feels about being defined in such a way. Others decide that she is Irish despite her not feeling Irish; this in turn leads to the possibility that D would forsake learning more about her “Irish side.” In short, the premature Irish-ization D underwent as a result of others’ perception of her, based on her accent, impinges on D’s desire to learn more about her family and herself. Furthermore, in questioning her Spanish-ness, they took away her ability to identify as Spanish, something she feels strongly about, and cast her as a member of a community that she did not consider herself a part of.

In follow-up interviews, D discusses how these memories and feelings linger and continue to influence her personally. In our second meeting she mentions how she is trying to stop thinking about how others perceive her [Excerpt 121]. By our third meeting, she is still attempting to determine how she should proceed in reconciling her “Irish side” to her sense of self, a struggle she describes in Excerpt 122. D is still in the process of deciding how to incorporate her “Irish side” into her sense of self. It is still external to her, lying at a distance, because she is “actively rejecting” it. She has separated her languages, deciding that English is for “studying, me furthering my career, me achieving things,” while Spanish is the language she associates with “Spain, Andalucia, home, family, just means down time, breaks, relaxing, partying, and all of that”; she did not mention English for family, however distant they may be, nor for home. Ireland is still a foreign place for her, with people she does not yet feel as close to as those from Spain, and despite being Irish in the eyes of others, she cannot and will not identify herself as Irish. Her English is not worthless, but it is linked to a problematic issue for her that makes her resist it. Nevertheless, she expresses a desire to overcome the feeling that she is rejecting her Irish side because she wants to connect with her Irish side.

She has come to think that for her to feel closer to English and to the Irish part of herself, she would have to learn to ignore others' perceptions and preconceived notions of her; she calls it "stupid" for her to avoid learning more about herself because of how other people reacted to her presence. Moreover, she expresses both implicitly and explicitly a desire to learn more about herself and to add to her sense of self, adding her "Irish side" to her preexisting primarily Spanish self; this desire has been infringed upon, but it remains, and D recognizes that she will have to act to fulfill that desire. She asserts that, contrary to how others tried to replace her Spanish-ness with an Irish-ness, she would instead prefer to integrate them: for D, it "shouldn't be a zero sum game," where one side has to lose so that the other can win; instead, she would prefer to illustrate that "being a bit more Irish doesn't make [her] less Spanish."

5.7.6. Summary

Looking forward, D's primary motivation, in terms of her development into a multilingual subject, is in reconciling the conflicting worlds that her English-speaking self and her Spanish-speaking self each represent. Her Spanish self is conceptually strong and stable since she has spent most of her life in a Spanish-speaking environment. She maintains strong roots in Andalucía and is linguistically tied to that region through her accent when speaking Spanish. It is the language that most allows her to be herself; it reveals who she really is, sometimes even surprising those who are only accustomed to speaking with her in English. She is free in Spanish in a way that she cannot yet be in English.

English is a language that holds value for her in terms of its provision of access to education and employment that she could not get at home in Spain. Because she had

English, she felt somewhat comfortable in her decision to apply to attend college in English-majority Ireland, despite the personal concerns she had regarding her “Irish side.” She was not, and still is not, ready to accept her “Irish side,” actively resisting it due to how she is perceived by others who only know her through her voice: an Irish-accented English-speaking voice that marks her as Irish. Although she wants to know more about her Irish side, the possible source of her accented voice, the reaction from those around her leads her to shrink back from learning about her Irish-accented English self.

D continues to struggle with integrating these two selves, primarily because she perceives authenticity in language to form in conjunction with association with the culture and, ultimately, identifying with the collective, but she still does not feel that she has accomplished these last two. On both small (familial) and large (regional/national) scales, she has not been able to identify with Ireland, being unfamiliar with the land, its culture, and its people. Identity with a collective is a strong factor in D’s view of language: she identifies with Andalucía and Andalusian Spanish due in part to their “magical” way of speaking, existing in and experiencing the world. D’s voice in English has not achieved the well-rounded “cohesiveness” that her Spanish has, and it has been prevented from doing so due to how she is perceived by others

Although not a priority, D is open to expanding her repertoire by learning additional languages [Excerpt 122]. D used the extended time at home during the COVID-19 pandemic to refresh her knowledge of French, and to her surprise, she had recalled more than she thought she knew. She has entertained the idea of trying to learn French again, despite her experiences in secondary school, which had left her feeling as though she had not learned anything after five years of inconsistent instruction. Still, she wonders whether her feelings about the completeness of language, including aspects of

culture and identity, would prevent her from achieving a level of French that she would feel comfortable with. D questions whether a lower proficiency in language would result in relationships that are distant and less authentic than those she could form through languages she already uses. Authenticity is a major factor in D's views on language and relationships and seems to be a determining factor in whether she can call a language hers.

5.8. The case of A

A is a student of French and Spanish at Trinity College Dublin, with the aim of becoming a secondary school teacher of those languages. Teaching has been a goal of hers from a young age, and even as she continues her studies, she has been teaching grinds (private tutoring sessions) to current secondary school students in subjects they are likely to encounter on their Leaving Certificate exams, including languages such as French, Spanish, and Irish. Because she must be able to explain the fine points of the languages to her students, A needs to make sure she keeps up with her languages. She has an immense interest in and curiosity about languages, as well as a perfectionist attitude towards them, which have led to her constantly trying to improve her knowledge and performance of her languages.

5.8.1. Spanish and English in the home

A was born in Asturias, Spain, during a holiday her mother took specifically to ensure she would be born in Spain. Her mother is Spanish and her father is Irish, and both spoke English and Spanish at home (“my dad’s Spanish isn’t amazing but he can speak it...my mom studied English in college...she’s like completely fluent”), which meant that A grew up in a bilingual household. She felt that such a household provided a fertile environment for the learning of other languages, even though there might have been some early confusion about how to differentiate the two languages [Excerpt 123]. It was not a strict “one parent, one language” household, but rather one where mixing was allowed. Both parents were able to use and understand both English and Spanish, and the children learned the language of the house, which featured elements from both.

What helped A to eventually learn to distinguish between when each language should be used and how each language was spoken on its own was an increased awareness of the social context, which she describes in Excerpt 124. She learned to differentiate based on how those around her were using the language: she would mime what she heard, learning how to speak by following the examples set around her. The amount of time she spent in both Spain and Ireland, where she would be able to hear each language distinctly and not integrated with the other, assisted in teaching her how each language would sound on its own. The combination she might hear at home was unique in comparison to the generally monolingual delivery of both Spanish and English in regions where they would be the majority language, so A would hear how the majority communicated and how she would have to communicate outside of her family. While she spent part of her early life using the languages interchangeably due to not realizing they were different languages, she later learned their difference by noticing their exclusive use in specific regional contexts. In short, she had to learn difference.

In Excerpt 125, A discusses how she has a perfectionist disposition that affects how she approaches languages. Along with beginning to notice the divisions between languages, A worked within her perfectionism to learn how to use her languages with precision and accuracy according to the standards of the language. She did not just want to be understood or to participate in communicative exchanges; she wanted to do so with language that was deemed “correct.” She noticed mistakes in textbooks and used those mistakes to reflexively interrogate her own language knowledge: she questioned the teacher about whether the textbook was wrong to confirm that she knew the correct version of the mistaken text.

Perfectionism was present even within her familial relations, as she would sometimes question her mother's use of Spanish [Excerpt 126]. Although A's mother is a "native" speaker of Spanish, she is not always "correct" in her usage, and A will indicate to her mother when she has used language that is "not technically correct" according to the standard version that A had incorporated. She would question her mother's expertise as both a "native" speaker and a Spanish teacher when she would point out mistakes in how her mother speaks Spanish. A's mother was still able to answer grammatical questions based on her expertise, but she might still be wrong when speaking casually, and A's questioning would invoke a negative reaction. However, this can still be seen as A testing her knowledge of the standard version of the language she was working with, in this case Spanish, in accord with her perfectionist approach.

A wanted to know her languages correctly, precisely, and accurately, and this meant learning both how to differentiate and divide the languages she had learned together as a young child and learning how to use each one to a particular standard. When she noticed an authoritative source, such as a book or a "native" speaker, presenting an "incorrect" example, she would point it out, but it was done to confirm her knowledge of the "correct" version.

She took a similar approach towards her use of a minority language she learned from her mother and grew up speaking alongside Spanish. A had been born in Asturias, where her mother was from. While Asturias does not have an officially recognized language like Cataluña or the Basque Country, they do have their own minority language called Bable, which is used interspersed with Spanish [Excerpt 127].

Although she does use this language occasionally, A has gradually moved away from it and towards the standard version of Castilian Spanish, represented by how they

speak in Madrid [Excerpt 128]. Using a standardized version of Spanish, the one that makes her “sound like [she’s] from Madrid,” can appear as pretentious, even to herself. Yet she strives to learn and use standardized Castilian Spanish in most contexts. She has not eliminated the Asturian language completely, but she has tried to limit herself from using it or mixing it with her Spanish.

Limiting herself is due in part to her approach to language learning, where learning a language correctly was important because “if it's incorrect you're going to learn it incorrectly and then you're going to use it incorrectly.” This approach to learning further languages was present in her trying to “correct” her own Spanish usage, where she gravitated towards a more standardized version. While she codeswitches with family or close friends, in other contexts she prefers to use the more “correct” version. This is reflective of her appreciation for others around her who might not be as familiar with her idiolect (the mix of Spanish and Bable), as she elaborates in Excerpt 129.

In her college classes (A did not study Spanish formally until college, instead having learned at home, supported by her family, especially her mother, a Spanish teacher), A is careful about how she speaks and what languages she uses: A had grown up used to mixing English and Spanish, and mixing in Bable with her Spanish, but in her classes she has to accommodate the others by using only the standardized version of Spanish being taught. Things that are “correct” in Bable are “incorrect” according to the norms of standardized Spanish, and if she were to introduce “incorrect” language, she felt that she would be jeopardizing the learning progress being made by others who are unfamiliar with the language [Excerpt 130].

Among the members of her class, she is viewed as an authority because she is a “native” speaker of Spanish. She uses an idiolect, a mix of Bable and Spanish, but she is

careful to limit herself in using that idiolect because she is wary of misleading those who are learning the Spanish language into thinking that what she says is an acceptable variant of standardized Spanish. She worries that her peers might reproduce the language on an assignment, which would hurt their grade, and A does not want to be the reason why a classmate would learn incorrectly or perform poorly on an assignment. She believes that she is able to identify “what people can and can’t understand,” and that by introducing language that is outside of the bounds of standardized Spanish, she would be introducing language that she thinks others may not understand. A here shows concern for classmates, many of whom have not had Spanish in their lives as long as she has, and that first need to understand the standardized version before learning the variations [Excerpt 131].

A states in Excerpt 132 that she has a similar approach in English, as she tries to use the standardized version of the Irish English that she had grown up with and studied in school. Her attention to accuracy and her appreciation of “correct”-ness also applies to situations where she may need to mix languages [Excerpt 133].

A mentions in Excerpts 128 and 133 feeling as though she were being “pretentious” by using “correct” language and “correct” pronunciation. She illustrates how she is aware of the perceptions of certain varieties of languages, and that the more “correct” versions of certain words or structures may be perceived as “pretentious,” as if she is showing off or parading her language ability to others. Still, although she feels pretentious at times, she justifies her adoption of standardized or “correct” versions by reasoning that others may be confused if she were to perform her languages in different ways. She is also a perfectionist, and perfectionism is to be performed to a certain accepted standard, which for A would be the standardized versions of her languages. She

thinks it is important to learn the standard first before learning variations, and as a perceived authority of a language for a community of learners, she takes it upon herself to present a version of the standard.

There is a contradiction in her perceived “pretentious”-ness: she admits to feeling pretentious by using standardized or more valued versions of languages (Madrid Spanish, “proper” English), yet she still strives to perform them for the sake of others. Regarding the standardized Spanish that she has emphasized while limiting her dialect, she adopts it in order to accommodate the learners around her who have less knowledge of the Spanish language and the sociocultural context it operates within. She uses a standardized version of English for reasons such as assignments, in which she needs to perform for a teacher; she addresses the possibility that as an English-user, she may have been perceived as being a “goody two-shoes” in school [Excerpt 134].

In Excerpt 134, A mentions that she did not have as much exposure to Spanish in an educational context as she did with English. Had she gone to school in Spain, for example, she would have learned Spanish grammar and syntax, studied literature, and perhaps have had “a more extensive vocabulary.” She admits to feeling an imbalance in her knowledge of the languages due to the different experiences she has had with them: English has been the language of her education in addition to being one of the languages of her home, while Spanish has been a familial language without the same amount of educational support. Another contradiction arises as she thinks that she might present as “less intelligent” in a language that she still sometimes feels “pretentious” in when she uses a standardized version.

Furthermore, despite her attempts to restrict her idiolect, it still surfaces from time to time, which she explains in Excerpt 135. She describes her idiolect, which includes

Bable and Spanish, as a “habit,” something that she has tried to control but that still resides within her to an extent. Maintaining the standardized version of Spanish takes effort, and when she has exhausted herself, she returns to the idiolect. A “habit” often refers to an action that one does often without thinking; it is an action that occurs naturally and without much effort. Moving away from her idiolect takes effort, and A finds value in exerting that effort in a number of contexts, particularly outside of her family.

5.8.2. Learning French, with the support of teachers

A was first introduced to French in her fourth year of elementary school, and it was a rocky introduction, as she explains in Excerpt 136. Although there were elements that she did not find enjoyable or beneficial, A still “knew that [she] wanted to continue” with French. She did not enjoy how it sounded nor how it was taught, and the classroom environment was not conducive to learning it, with her peers lacking enthusiasm for the class. Nevertheless, A felt that there was something about the language that made her want to continue to learn it “if the circumstances were different.”

A wanted to learn the language but recalled feeling as though the situation was not going to allow her to learn it. Even at that young age, she seemed to be able to evaluate the learning situation and determine whether she would be able to have some success in learning the language in the given context. She judged that the context she found herself in during fourth class (fourth year of elementary school) was not going to allow her to learn the language in the way that she wanted. In other words, she understood that she could learn when the situation allowed it; she was motivated to

learn but did not think that the circumstances she described would allow her to fulfill that motivation.

A was able to find a more beneficial set of circumstances in secondary school. She found the teachers there to be more adept at teaching languages, and she showed an understanding that “because they [the teachers] had studied French in college, they were more able to teach it in a structured manner, instead of teaching us random words and stuff.”

In contrast to her teacher in elementary school, whose teaching method she did not agree with, the teachers she met in secondary school provided a firmer foundation [Excerpt 137]. The way that her secondary school teachers taught French was “more comforting” and “more reassuring” than what she had experienced in elementary school. They appeared to know how to teach and what methods were effective; A responded to these experiences better than she had to her elementary school French experience. She felt as though she was learning the “correct” language in the “correct” way, a feeling that was missing from her earlier experience. Although the students around her “just wanted to...do well in [their] Leaving Cert,” which was only a small improvement to the “oh I don’t want to do this” attitude she mentioned her peers having in elementary school, the vast difference she perceived in the teachers’ knowledge and methods made A feel that the circumstances had been more favorable for learning the language.

One teacher in particular stood out in her memory, her main teacher of French with whom she studied for three years, who organized extra practice for the students during transition year [Excerpt 138]. Without the intervention of her teacher, A believes that she would have forgotten her language learning from the first three years of secondary school. Because transition year sits outside of the Junior and Senior cycles, it is

possible to experience a break in the continuity of language learning, and this teacher did not want to see this happen to her students; A appreciated her teacher's forethought. For A, this was an example of the "comforting" and "reassuring" teaching style she valued in her secondary school language teachers [Excerpt 139].

A mentioned that other students were more focused on performing well on their secondary school exams and less on learning the language for its own sake, and so perhaps anything beyond what they would need to know for the exams would not have been relevant for the class as a whole. However, A felt that the way her teacher taught the French language matched with her own drive for perfectionism, particularly in learning the "accurate" and "correct" way to use the language. Her teacher helped adapt the context and make it more conducive to the students learning the language, as well as demonstrating a love for the language [Excerpt 140].

A still has some lingering doubts about her own French ability, despite knowing that her teachers would consider her an advanced learner [Excerpt 141]. She observes that her grades in French are often slightly higher than her grades in Spanish, even though she had grown up speaking Spanish and would have had more overall exposure to the language in general. She did not receive formal education through Spanish until college, but since she grew up speaking Spanish alongside English, it feels closer to her. French, however, is a language she first encountered in school, and she has been studying the language for over seven years, now majoring in it (along with Spanish) in college. Even though she has spent a relatively substantial amount of time learning French and would be rated as having a high proficiency in the language, she still thinks of herself as an intermediate learner of the language. She admits that it is "closer than I feel it," but

since it is a later learned language, she still perceives distance between French and herself.

5.8.3. Independence in learning Irish

A's experience with French in secondary school was a generally positive one, as she was able to meet a teacher who helped provide a context that would allow her to realize her motivation for learning French. Irish, however, provided a starkly different experience, as she discusses in Excerpt 142. A notes how, as opposed to French, in which she observed a concerted effort to teach the language, Irish was taught in order to pass the exams. There was less of a focus on teaching the rules of the language; instead, she was directed to "memorize essays" that she would be able to rewrite on the exam. She admitted that rules are more difficult to teach in Irish, a language that is "not as methodical as other languages," but instead of finding a way to teach the language in a way specific to Irish, the teachers would teach to the test and deprioritize the teaching of the language.

A was not satisfied with this, as she wanted to know more about the language. She had been interested in learning more French and had been fortunate enough to encounter a teacher whose style she found agreeable; with Irish, she had to find her own ways to learn about the language. She had to "learn the language through the literature" while at the same time participating in a class that was interested in the literature simply for the sake of the exam [Excerpt 143].

A had to take it upon herself to supplement the Irish teaching she received at school. Using the texts provided to get the students prepared for their exams, A would analyze the words and apply the rules she did know to them, trying to figure out how

they worked. This went beyond what the teachers expected and what most other students would have done, but A had an interest in languages and wanted to know them as completely and correctly as possible. Because she was curious about the language and wanted to confirm what she was teaching herself, she “would always have questions” to ask her teachers; her teachers had not taken the time to explain them, and would not do so, because it was beyond what was needed for the exams. Such things were “too complicated to explain,” a response that A was not satisfied with.

As a French and Spanish major in college, A continues to work on her use of both of those languages. Spanish is also a native and family language, and so it occupies a dominant position in her life. However, not having Irish as present in her life as it was in secondary school has led her to feel as though her proficiency has waned [Excerpt 144]. She realizes that it will take effort to keep her Irish since she no longer studies it as a subject. She had already spent a lot of effort in going beyond what was taught in secondary school to achieve a more perfect knowledge of Irish, yet its absence in her current daily schedule means that she has not been able to use it on a regular basis after entering college. The lack of use has led her to feel as though she has “lost” her Irish, which she notes as being “sad.” She is motivated to maintain the Irish she has because she does not want to lose it any more than she already has.

5.8.4. Summary

A has “always wanted to be a teacher” [Excerpt 145], and relationships with teachers have been involved in her upbringing and have influenced her language development from early on. Both of her parents are teachers: her father lectures in business and her mother is a secondary school Spanish teacher. She also mentions

several others in her extended family who teach. Moreover, it was a secondary school French teacher who made up for an unimpressive introduction to the language by providing opportunities for students to further their French studies. Although she did not mention any teachers of Irish being similarly memorable, it was due partly to a lack of explanation on their part that encouraged her to try to learn the Irish language more perfectly than she could during school hours. Still, outside of the specific subject matter of languages, A found her teachers to be supportive, a quality that she finds “admirable” and worthy of adopting [Excerpt 146].

When conceived of in light of A’s ambition to become a teacher, her language learning journey takes on a clear meaning, and both her perfectionism and her concern about sounding “pretentious” or “less intelligent” fall into place. She envisions teaching as a job where explaining things is crucial, and to be able to explain things clearly, she must know them clearly. Explanations were valued by A while growing up and attending school, and when she could not get explanations, she would actively inquire after them. She did this both to confirm her knowledge as well as to be able to know the topic as correctly and accurately as possible so that, when her turn came, she would be able to explain the subject matter clearly, correctly and accurately. She adopted and actively practiced the standardized versions of her native languages envisioning that, as a teacher, she would have to perform her languages in a standardized fashion.

On English exams, she would scrutinize her word choice to make sure that she was communicating clearly. With Spanish, her other native language, she is confident and comfortable, despite the comment that she feels she could be perceived as “less intelligent” due to the comparative lack of exposure she has had; to counteract this, she made the decision to learn more about her native language, learning to use the

standardized version and endeavoring to use it in most contexts. With French, she enjoyed learning about specific rules and took advantage of several opportunities provided by her teacher to improve her own performance of the language beyond the demands of the school curriculum. She did the same for Irish and knows that she will need to continue to exert that effort so as not to lose it.

5.9. The case of N

N is a student of computer science and linguistics at the University of Lyon in France but was doing his Erasmus year in Ireland at the time of our meetings. He is originally from Morocco, growing up and completing his compulsory education there before pursuing higher education in France. He was educated through both Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and French, with Moroccan Arabic being the spoken vernacular used in his immediate environment; English would be introduced at a later stage, but N also took classes at a language center to help him with the language. From the beginning, N was raised in and into a heteroglossic and multilingual atmosphere, something which he conceived of as being natural and mundane. However, the banality he observed hid within itself a measure of complexity and contradiction that played out in his language experiences.

5.9.1. *French in Morocco*

Morocco won its independence from France and Spain in 1956, though by then the French language had already become an integral part of the Moroccan nation. After independence, French remained as a language of administration, whereas Spanish did not, resulting in a reduced presence for Spanish. Although Arabic and Berber, an indigenous language (or group of dialects), are the official languages of the country, French is still a language commonly used in media and for educational and administrative purposes. Despite attempts at Arabization, which would see the French language's importance reduced in favor of Arabic, French is, and has been, a compulsory language in Moroccan schools.

N was raised in a mainly French-speaking household, as his family had been educated and communicated primarily in French [Excerpt 147]. His grandmother spoke French and Arabic, but because she had been educated through French, had found herself to be more fluent in French. He later mentions how she would sometimes use Berber to converse with members of her family, such as her daughter, N's mother.

Through his grandmother, N sees a model of multilingualism, using a variety of languages for a variety of purposes. He is also able to observe directly, through this personal connection, the history of Morocco and how French became a language ingrained within the Moroccan society via colonization; instead of rejecting French as a language of the occupier, however, he accepts it as part of his Moroccan identity, indeed a core part of his identity as he identifies his family as "Francophone." His grandmother spoke French but is no less Moroccan. His teachers in school were Moroccan French-speakers, so his models were those who spoke French as one of their languages and not as a language that was forced upon them. Speaking French did not make them less Moroccan in his eyes.

5.9.2. *Which Arabic should we use?*

His multilingual upbringing "was just natural...nothing special." Not only did he have a household where different languages would be used by the members of his family, his education also provided examples of multilingualism and heteroglossia at work.

N had classes for both French and Arabic from the beginning of his schooling. He describes his experience with Arabic in school as "crazy" due to the heteroglossic nature of the classes: explanations would be done in Moroccan Arabic, the vernacular of the people, while notes had to be taken in MSA [Excerpt 148]. Users of Arabic often have to

deal with situations where the spoken variety of Arabic does not always match up with the taught written variety, which is typically MSA. The “crazy” nature of the classes was still “normal” for N, with the “crazy” aspect arising from explaining this arrangement to someone who would not be familiar with it. N, who had firsthand experience with diglossia, found it to be mundane. It was simply a feature of the Arabic languages that speakers had to become accustomed to.

N considers Moroccan Arabic to be his native language along with French. Moroccan Arabic is known for its diversity, as it has adopted features from French, Spanish, English, and the Berber languages; so different is it from other versions of Arabic, particularly MSA, that some speakers consider it a different language altogether. N is of this opinion, stating that Moroccan Arabic speakers, indeed all Arabic speakers, are “not native in standard Arabic”; he discusses MSA as if it is a foreign language, the first foreign language that Moroccans like N encounter in their education [Excerpt 149].

N did not particularly enjoy his first “foreign” language [Excerpt 150]. MSA did not resonate with N, who preferred using his “home” language of French for most purposes; when he spoke Arabic, it would be the Moroccan variety. Standard Arabic did not fit him the way French or Moroccan Arabic did. The languages that N saw and heard used in his household were more immediate for him, and he developed an attachment to them that he could not do with MSA. N sees Moroccan Arabic as the Arabic that could best represent him. Moreover, N recognizes the potentially troubling history of French in Morocco, and in the face of that history, still feels that French is a more appropriate and relevant language for him.

5.9.3. *Conflicts with teachers*

N resisted MSA in school, once having an argument with his teacher over whether it should be considered his “mother language” [Excerpt 151]. N saw irony and hypocrisy in the “crazy” nature of his Arabic classes, at least on the part of his teacher. While it could be accepted that the spoken and written varieties of Arabic are different, what N could not accept was that he was being told that it was the primarily written variety that should be considered his “mother language” instead of the version that he had actually been raised to speak. Moroccan Arabic was closer to N’s heart and his sense of self, yet his teacher chastised him for being “ashamed” to speak MSA.

He felt that the language, this “foreign” language in which no Arabic speaker is native, was being imposed on him, attempting to replace what he knew to be one of his true native tongues. N claims that he put effort into his work in the class, making the criticism seem unfair. Despite his personal feelings about the language, he did what was asked of him, he learned the language and did his best, yet the teacher found his attitude towards the language to be shameful because he would not claim it as his own.

Arabic was not the only language where N would receive criticism from a teacher. In Excerpt 152, N recounts how one teacher he met in secondary school criticized his preference for a British dialect. N got a head start on English, as he had begun to attend a language center towards the end of elementary school; English is typically introduced at the beginning of secondary school in Morocco. At the center, N was exposed to a variety of English dialects. Based on subjective aesthetic evaluations, N had decided he would adopt British English as his preferred English variety. It was “more sophisticated” to him, and it would be the type of English that he wanted to be able to use. He had had a relatively early start in English, so his experience of English in secondary school was

redundant: it offered him nothing that he did not already know because of his education at the language center. What it did give him, however, was a teacher who had his own ideas of what was a better English to learn. His teacher preferred standardized American English and would openly mock N's adoption of standardized British English.

To N, this mockery seemed out of place, since language varieties were ultimately a choice of the speaker. He comments on how spelling conventions are "a choice," and N's choice was to adopt the style of English that had features closer to French, a language more visibly present in Morocco, than standardized American English. He notes how his teacher spoke about the spelling of color, with "u" being unnecessary, yet the standardized British spelling is "colour," closer to the French "couleur." The word "realization" was no less logical being spelled "realisation," especially when French would prefer the latter as well, and there would be no significant difference in pronunciation. N suggests that he did not care that, according to the teacher, American English was "easier" or "more natural"; if it did not align with N's choices, then in fact it would not be "easier." From another perspective, this teacher, either intentionally or unintentionally, may have been trying to distance the students from the version of English that was more European and closer to French, but N resisted this distancing and chose to adopt the more European version of English due to his identification with French and its place in his life.

In both Excerpts 151 and 152, we see an individual, a young student, who has been raised in a heteroglossic and multilingual environment, who has made certain choices regarding his language use, being mocked for those choices. N is faced with two proponents of specific language ideologies that promote one version of a language over another, and in each case, N is at odds with the representative of each ideology. In his

own words, N's mother tongues are French and Moroccan Arabic, yet he is shamed for not having MSA be the Arabic he adopts as his own; N has chosen British English as the standard version he would like to learn, a subjective choice based on experience, yet he is challenged by similarly subjective judgements, such as American English being "easier." He proves that despite his preferences he can successfully use the versions of languages his teachers promote, and still he is criticized for the types of languages he chose to use. It is not enough for them that he can use the other versions; what troubles his teachers and leads to their criticisms is that he chooses to do, and be, other than what they demand of him.

5.9.4. Flexibility in language

N values flexibility, and these teachers presented an image of inflexibility. He was flexible enough to acquiesce to some of their demands by performing well in classes, although evaluations did not matter much personally to N, at least insofar as he did not work for a grade for himself [Excerpt 153]. The grades mattered more "for the people around you, even for your teachers."

The grades were not an end but rather they were evidence that he had a talent for language learning. His purpose in performing well in classes was to prove to teachers, especially teachers who may have believed that he was not putting in effort because he disliked the language (which he pointedly states was "your language" and not his), that he was "good at languages" and that he was able to learn a variety of languages well. The goal was not for an arbitrary grade but rather to prove to himself and to others that he could achieve a certain proficiency in the languages he was asked to study, even if he did not have a vested interest in the language.

N's image of languages is connected to general mental flexibility and to being able to use languages in an adaptable manner, which contradicted his teachers' seemingly rigid views of language propriety. He notes that one reason he likes Moroccan Arabic is its flexibility: "... Moroccan Arabic ... I said that before, it's not standardized, so what I like about it, it's not necessarily a bad thing because it makes it flexible." However, he could not find flexibility in his teachers' opinions about language varieties. To his MSA teacher, who ironically still used Moroccan Arabic when teaching, he was saying that he could still master "your Arabic" even if he showed no interest in naming it his mother tongue; to his English teacher, he would show that he could understand and perform American English even without adopting it as his own English.

In addition, N observed rigidity among French speakers' attitudes towards varieties of French [Excerpt 154]. N admits to at one time having been pedantic himself in regard to the "good use of French" but implies that he has changed to where he is more cognizant and accepting of differences within and across languages. However, even though he himself has changed, he is surrounded by people who "are really keen about the good use of French." He describes how friends from Paris might argue about elements specific to Lyonnaise French and whether they are characteristic of a "good use of French."

In Excerpt 155, he discusses how such attitudes were present in society at large back home in Morocco. Coming from the region that might be considered to speak the most neutral form of Moroccan Arabic meant that N had the "privilege" to speak without a strong accent, yet he witnessed others being belittled because their Arabic, though native, was not of the right accent. With French, he saw the same, and he blames "the French way of dealing with" languages and language learning for this problematic

sociolinguistic aspect. This specific attitude came from abroad and was left as a “heritage” from the colonial period.

The heritage he refers to here is explained in Excerpt 156, where he talks about the French pride in their language and how it results in their lack of success when it comes to language learning. N believes that the reason the French have difficulties with language varieties, language learning, and overall language policy is their overwhelming pride in their language, and this attitude has been left in Morocco as a colonial legacy. To N, the French are blinded by their love for their own language, which transfers over to love for certain dialects and accents, as exemplified by N’s Parisian friends arguing about the acceptability of Lyonnaise French. This pride leads to a devaluing of other languages (“it’s the language to speak or nothing”) and challenges when attempting to learn other languages that are not as beautiful as “the most beautiful” French. Such pride is an attitude of inflexibility that contradicts N’s valuing of flexibility in language.

The French attitude towards language that N perceives runs counter to what he calls “the Moroccan pride” of speaking as many languages as possible [Excerpt 157]. The French pride is in the language but the Moroccan pride is in a person’s ability to use a variety of languages. In other words, N sees the French pride in an externally objectified system, but the Moroccan pride lies within the person themselves. Still, even within the Moroccan pride, he sees vestiges of French colonial influence that, unlike the language he has claimed as a mother tongue, he finds dissonant. Although he admitted to having had a similar attitude towards “good French” at one point, he has kept the language but left the attitude behind.

The lasting influence of the French way of dealing with language in Moroccan society appears contradictory, which N recognizes: “I’m aware that in my speech there

are contradictions because I come from a country of contradictions. This is no secret for anyone.” It is inconsistent to value linguistic purity and hegemony, as his teachers did and as he witnessed in France, in a country where the value is multilingual ability. It is not unheard of, but N sees it as a contradictory relationship. His resistance to his teachers’ rigid ideologies stems from his personal solution to this apparent contradiction, which is to choose to place more emphasis on the value of multilingual ability.

Solving the contradiction in this way illustrates how his motivation to learn and use languages, as well as the manner in which he uses them, emerges partly from an antagonistic relationship with others around him, particularly those who espouse strict ideologies while he chooses flexibility. He desires to show them that flexibility does not mean deficiency, as he can perform languages and language varieties that he does not include within his immediate personal repertoire.

5.9.5. Trying German and Irish

As part of his college course, N is required to take two languages, and his choice of German led him to a teacher that would demand more of him than he could deliver, expecting him to perform at a B2 level after just one year of instruction [Excerpt 158]. These unreasonable expectations led to N disliking the experience. It was the first time he was able to choose a language to learn (French and Moroccan Arabic were his native languages, MSA was a compulsory variety learned for school, and he considered English a compulsory academic language that he happened to become attached to), and it led to a less than pleasurable experience.

As a result of his first elective language providing an experience where he did not achieve the proficiency he set out to (“I don’t want to talk about the internal points in

Germany when I still cannot have a normal conversation in German”), N turned his attention to Spanish, which seemed more immediate and more agreeable to him. It “sounded good,” and it had personal and practical benefits (being able to use it for traveling), but more than that, he desired it: “I want to speak this language.” This was different from German, which he stated he chose because he “had some basics” to begin with.

N admits to choosing languages based not on “material interest” but on “feeling,” such as how he feels about the language [Excerpt 159]. He chose British English because it seemed better for him, a subjective assessment; he aligned with Moroccan Arabic because he felt more strongly about it than MSA. With both his native languages and his later learned languages, N professed to basing his choices on feeling rather than material and pragmatic reasons, a self-defined standard for choices and actions that he has been exercising since his time in compulsory education. Even when forced to learn certain varieties of languages, he would still choose to use the varieties he felt better about in his daily life.

N took his Erasmus year in Dublin, Ireland, and during his time he started to learn the Irish language. His interest and his motivation stemmed from being in an area where he could not understand everything that was written on the signs he would see all around [Excerpt 160]. N used the term “frustrating” to describe how his motivation to learn Irish began. Being in a place where he could not understand everything written caused him to experience frustration. He was used to understanding all the languages that he would see on signs, whether in Morocco or in France, but Ireland was his first experience where the words were a complete “mystery.” With each class, more of the mystery was revealed, and he experienced happiness as a result. What added to this happiness in unraveling the

mystery presented by Irish was that, upon learning more about it, he realized that he was not completely mystified by the language; in fact, it shared features with a language with which he already knew. The almost complete strangeness of the Irish language slowly became a vague familiarity, and this slow change led to a satisfactory language learning experience.

5.9.6. Summary

N admits that his multilingualism was due in part to the privilege of his personal situation, namely having the opportunity to go to good schools [Excerpt 161]. He attended a school that was able to assist him on his way to being bilingual and later multilingual. His French upbringing was also a noticeable factor, but it was in school where he developed his bilingual ability in French and Arabic. However, he realizes that his situation was a fortunate one, as not everyone had the same fortune he did [Excerpt 162]. N was privileged enough to have been a recipient of the “luck of multilingualism,” whereby he was a successful case of bilingualism developed within an educational system rife with inequality. The “Moroccan pride” is hypothetically present and attainable within the system, but it is not always a guarantee, as it depends primarily on socioeconomic status. N sees his multilingualism as fortune and a privilege; even though it was earned due to his effort, it was also made possible due to the environment in which he was raised. Without the specific context in which he was embedded, he would have not had the opportunities to develop into a multilingual subject as he did.

Despite his relative fortune, he still encountered challenges to his emerging multilingualism, like in how he was questioned about his preferences for and prioritization of certain language varieties (e.g., Moroccan Arabic, British English).

Navigating antagonistic attitudes and relationships was a source of meaning and motivation for N, as he sought to justify and defend his choices and beliefs about languages and language learning. He defended his choices because he had been able to make a choice to begin with. Within compulsory languages like Arabic and English, he had made decisions regarding which varieties he prized; in other words, within a limited choice, he had still made a choice, and that action of choosing was meaningful for N as he was carving out his multilinguality.

5.10. The case of S

When we met, S was a second-year law and business major at Trinity College Dublin. There are no language requirements for her major: although Irish is present in the legal system, it is not a compulsory subject in the course. However, like any student who has been through the Irish educational system, she did have to study Irish and a foreign language (French) during her secondary school career, and her experiences learning through the system have influenced how she currently engages with those languages in addition to the two other languages she speaks, English and Polish.

5.10.1. From Polish to English

Polish was S's first language (chronologically) and is also her native language. However, it was not the only language that she had been exposed to early on, as her mother had arranged for her to learn some English in anticipation of entering an English-medium school system [Excerpt 163]. Still, because she had arrived from a country where English was not a majority language and still needed help with the English language, S was placed in learning support for one and a half years. This took the place of elementary school Irish classes. Language support in S's school was intended to assist any student who needed support, which was not limited to students arriving from non-English speaking countries but also included students with learning difficulties.

It was through this experience that English started to become the main language of education, and the primary language, for S. She still speaks Polish at home with her parents (she mentions that both her parents speak English and some Russian, and her mother speaks some German) but outside of the house, S uses English far more. In addition to being the language of education, it would also be the language through which

she would relate to her classmates, teachers, and friends. She speaks mostly in English with her younger siblings who have less of a connection to Polish since they would have arrived at earlier ages (they were 2 and 3 years old, respectively, at the time of the move to Ireland). With the move to Ireland, her life had begun its shift to English.

This shift, though, was neither sudden nor violent; it took time for S to adopt the more inscrutable mannerisms of those who would have been born in Ireland [Excerpt 164]. Her learning of English began at the age of five, with her mother preparing for the move; at the age of six, she entered school in Ireland and English started to become her primary language, yet it was not until she was about 15 that she found herself adopting “the mannerisms of native English speakers” in Ireland. In the interim of approximately ten years, there was still something about her English that was noticeably different from that of the “native speakers” she would have seen around her. Even if no one else noticed it, she did.

There were times, though, when someone else would notice her English and how it did not always conform to what would be said by “native” speakers in Ireland. In Excerpt 165 she describes the memories of choosing a Polish word where she should use English or mispronouncing “Canada” and how these memories “linger”; the impact of the event may have lessened, but it has not fully disappeared from her memory, teaching her to be careful about her language. She plans out her speech and pauses to “evaluate” what she is going to say so that she does not face the same type of reaction. Even though she has grown more comfortable and more confident in her English, she still tends to consider her words carefully [Excerpt 166].

5.10.2. Polish in the background

Polish was technically S's "native" language, but it is not currently her primary language; English is her primary language even though it is not her "native" language. Her education is what provided the grounds for this distinction. Having been educated primarily through English also meant that she learned it as other Irish students did. In other words, while it was technically a foreign language, S did not learn it as a foreign language once she was out of language support. After the first year and a half, she would take classes with the other students, studying English and Irish like any other Irish student.

Forming a closer relationship with English in this way ran parallel with limited opportunities to develop Polish outside of its use in the home and with family. She had a chance to study with Polish teachers during secondary school, an experience she recalls in Excerpt 167. Outside of this, S does not mention any other chances to study Polish in a formal way, nor does she feel the need to. As she states in Excerpt 168, she is fluent enough for her purposes, and she did not think that the learning of literature or other cultural material for the test was necessary.

For S, Polish occupies a middle ground: it is a native language and is present in the home, but it is not a "first" language in the sense that she does not have the knowledge that she is expected to have because she left Poland at a young age. Most of her experience with educational and cultural material have come through English. There is a sense of irony in how she believes that her knowledge of Polish, while not enough to take the Polish exam, would have been enough to facilitate learning Russian in order to take the Leaving Certificate exam in that language.

S notices that she has room to develop her Polish, such as in her writing, but she does not have a strong motivation to learn more about the language. She is secure that her knowledge of Polish is enough for what she needs to use it for [Excerpt 169]. She has had less practice with her Polish, but she does not feel that she is currently in need of practice. Within the context she finds herself, despite feeling “discomfort” at sometimes not being able to say something, her command of Polish is enough. She does not really miss Polish; she does not consider it a lack, but rather a result of limited practice and limited reasons for speaking Polish, which she delineates in Excerpt 170.

S’s rather utilitarian view of language use came from a concerted effort to disconnect from issues related to identity and, to a certain extent, language [Excerpt 171]. This “conscious disconnect” from identity issues and identity politics goes together with S’s decision to change her name from a visibly Polish one to a name that is not immediately linked to being Polish, which she describes in Excerpt 172.

Her original name’s spelling and pronunciation would give others pause when they would first encounter it; the name marked S as different and foreign, and though she had been in Ireland from an early age and had fluent English, the name would signal to others that they had to accommodate S as a non-native speaker. S’s original name was troublesome for others, but it was also troublesome for S. She would have awkward moments with people she would meet; even though these meetings were only for a few minutes, repeated meetings that progressed in a similar way would be enough for S to consider changing her name, and finally going through with it.

For S, it was a mindful choice to relieve herself of the burden of having to deal with others and their unconscious bias. It also relieved the burden of having to repeat or amend formal documentation that may have been processed incorrectly due to a

discrepancy in how her name was displayed. While her name perhaps was challenging for others, it caused S difficulties, and she decided to “disconnect” from her Polish name for her own comfort [Excerpt 173].

There is a practical and utilitarian strand running through S’s engagement with Polish and English, but it is not because she was never concerned with the issues that are contemplated and examined by others who may have had similar experiences. Rather, she has made the conscious choice to “disconnect” from visceral and intense issues, such as questions of identity and bias. She recognized that, in many cases, “it’s not malicious, they’re trying to be helpful.” Therefore, rather than relate to these experiences in a negative or harmful way, she decided to cooperate with them and simultaneously relieve herself of some of the burdens that come with difference [Excerpt 174].

5.10.3. Learning Irish and “filling in gaps”

After leaving language support classes in elementary school, S entered the mainstream classes and started her study of Irish alongside the other students who had been studying since they began attending school. Still, learning Irish at an English-medium school does not demand that students demonstrate high levels of proficiency or motivation, particularly in elementary school, and the method of instruction reflects the expectations placed on the students.

During our first meeting, S refers to the terms “filling in a frame” and “filling in gaps” when discussing her Irish language learning. It implies a sense of discontinuity or incompleteness, as if things had been left missing at several stages along the path to learning Irish. In elementary school and throughout S’s Junior Certificate experience, the expectations were low, and only a few concepts were considered in evaluations, like

spelling. For her Junior Certificate, S “did okay, but mainly through rote learning, because you could get away with it at that stage.” The rote learning entailed learning lists of phrases and building sentences with them, replacing certain words or phrases with another from the list. To S, this felt “like a bit of a jigsaw puzzle, just building on things constantly.”

Irish felt at times like a jigsaw puzzle, yet there were “gaps” to be filled. There were pieces missing from the puzzle, left out because they may be considered too difficult to grasp, something which became more apparent in secondary school [Excerpt 175]. In secondary school, the expectations placed on students like S who had attended an English-medium school was that they would have a certain level of Irish, but the reality was that there were significant “gaps” in what they knew. The gaps were there through no fault of their own; it was that the students were never taught that it was a gap to begin with.

In Excerpt 175, S compares her experience with that of her friends who studied German, another language with a case system. While those friends were taught cases early on, students learning Irish would not learn about certain cases until later: S’s experience was that she did not learn about the genitive case until her final year of school. The genitive in Irish is often considered as one of the most difficult aspects of the language and is taught as such. For some students, however, it is a “gap” that is never filled.

Upon reaching secondary school, S was placed in a higher-level Irish class, an experience she recounts in Excerpt 176. Compared to her classmates, S had had less Irish instruction prior to entering secondary school. Her motivation to study Irish at this point was due to the competitive nature of students her age: she was driven by the need to

catch up with and eventually overtake the other students in her class, many of whom were starting out with a significant advantage. Within the course of 6 years, she had first had to catch up with the students at her English-medium school by taking language support classes to improve her English to a level where she would be able to participate in basic education; then, she had to catch up again with students who had been able to learn more Irish since they attended an Irish-medium Gaelscoil.

Along with the competition came the tediousness of learning Irish [Excerpt 177]. Although S enjoyed learning Irish in general and felt she was progressing with every class, it still “felt like a chore,” something you do because you must, not necessarily because you want to. It was a responsibility to learn Irish, a non-negotiable part of her daily routine. She would learn Irish every day of school, in a class with several students who, for some time, were more advanced than she was, and she had to keep up with them. She had gaps to fill in her knowledge of the language, and while the process of filling those gaps was enjoyable, it was still a duty and a “chore.”

The tediousness stemmed in part from the lack of explanation. Students were expected to learn and remember but were not helped to understand the purpose nor the procedure of what they were learning. They did not learn about the genitive case, only that “some words change for different reasons” and were expected to reproduce that knowledge without an understanding of why they change in the first place. Students were rote learning; S may have responded to the newness of the material, but the pace and method of the class was what she found to be tedious.

Although it was tedious, S managed to learn Irish with the help of fortunate circumstances. The classroom of students from a Gaelscoil provided competition that helped S discover motivation to learn, but she was also lucky in terms of teachers,

especially an Irish teacher she had in her sixth year who taught through Irish and had “very different teaching methods” from other teachers at the school [Excerpt 178].

S felt that she had fairly good Irish and had learned it successfully through the school system, although it was partly a result of “luck”; her experience was not the typical experience. She had teachers whom she felt were supportive of Irish and taught the language differently from other teachers in her school; the difference in their methods is what S felt contributed to her Irish proficiency. The teacher she describes did not simply ask students to memorize, but rather attempted to help them understand and “fill in gaps” in their knowledge of Irish. He would query them about why the language behaved as it did, a “methodical” approach that, through repetition, led to greater comprehension. He was teaching “grammatical construction,” asking the students to build their knowledge of the language. Further, he used Irish to teach Irish, providing a model of the language for the students to learn from. He would encourage them to gossip in Irish after they were done practicing for their oral exams.

S considered herself lucky to have come across teachers like this, whose style and approach she found to be valuable and effective at teaching language. By attributing it to luck, she suggests that it is not the normal course of events for Irish students in English-medium schools; her experience was unique. The circumstances contributed to her learning, and within the context of those circumstances, she was able to not only learn Irish but find joy in doing so. Her motivation to learn Irish in secondary school cannot be easily ascribed to one element, as it was not only the teachers whom she was lucky to meet. It was also that she was placed in a higher-level class with students who, through competition, would motivate her to study the language. It was also the fortune of having

the experience of learning another language, as she had already learned English. Irish was just another language, and she had already learned one before [Excerpt 179].

For S, learning Irish was a matter of having the right circumstances in which to learn Irish. She had people to support and challenge her, and she had her own experience to rely on. Attributing her Irish learning to luck may seem to remove a sense of autonomy from her learning; however, S still had to choose to engage in learning in order to take advantage of the circumstances that she happened to find herself in.

5.10.4. "French is ... a closed chapter"

As a student in the Irish school system, S had to take a foreign language, for which she chose French. Compared to her experience with Irish, though, her French learning was and not as beneficial or enjoyable [Excerpt 180]. With Irish, S felt as though she had learned elements of language that she could use to construct meaningful utterances; although she describes Irish as having been "tedious" as well, she still managed to learn a variety of phrasing and discuss a variety of topics. She felt that her French learning did not help her achieve the same knowledge or comfort with the language. It was mechanical and memorized, and unlike Irish, it never progressed beyond that; the heavily structured oral exam meant that she could predict and prepare for it in a way that was different from Irish.

The tediousness of French learning was matched by evaluations that she felt did not accurately measure her knowledge of the French language [Excerpt 181]. She received the same grade in both her Irish and French exams, yet she feels that the Irish exam was a better indicator of her actual level and progress. She was asked to do different things for each language, and she was expected to know more of Irish language

and culture; receiving the same grade for each language made it seem as though French needed less effort. She was able to “get away” with reduced effort on her part and still receive the same mark, which was “ridiculous.” Having come up through the Irish system, S was aware of the history of the Irish language and its importance in Ireland, and yet she still perceived that the expectations for each language, as delineated by the grades, were uneven, which she explains in Excerpt 182.

Since there seemed to be lower expectations with French, and since her relationships did not call for the use of French, S did not find any motivation to continue studying it after secondary school. Without “particularly good instruction,” there was less of an impetus to continue trying to learn. Learning the language was never comfortable for S, and S values comfort; it is a contributing factor in her decision-making process. It is the main reason she changed her name. During one of our meetings, she notes, “... I really don't want to go back to learning French,” while in another, she states, “French is kind of a closed chapter for me, I'd say, at this stage.”

5.10.5. Summary

A prominent theme that emerged in S's story of becoming multilingual was that of “filling in the gaps.” The idea of gaps or of filling things in can be interpreted to mean not only is there something missing, but there is an awareness of the missing thing; in other words, there is something that is not whole, and there is recognition of the thing that is needed in order to feel complete or whole. In short, S becoming multilingual was a process of completion.

This idea comes out primarily when S speaks of her Irish learning. She felt a gap between herself and the other students coming in from a Gaelscoil, and part of her

learning was to fill in or bridge that gap. At least in part, S undertook Irish language learning to achieve to a sense of completion. With English, there had been a gap early on, which led to having to attend language support classes. This gap took a while to fill, as it was not until towards the end of secondary school that S started to mirror the verbal mannerisms of native English speakers in Ireland.

However, gaps do not exist in relation to all of S's languages and what they represent. S does not feel any gap in Polish because she has enough Polish for her purposes. While she admits a lack of practice, she does not feel that anything is missing from her. Additionally, there was no competition to help motivate her in learning more Polish. Instead, she has moved away from Polish, at least in the public sphere, changing her name so that she would not have to experience some of the discomfort that she had experienced early on due to being Polish. This has not created a void; she has not stopped being Polish, but she has tried to remove undue burdens and expectations that others place on her because of their limited understanding of what it means to be Polish in Ireland.

In terms of French, her learning seems to be satisfactory enough for her to not pursue it anymore. There is no gap because there is nothing beyond the gap. She has "closed the door" on French. It has not left her, but she does not have a meaningful purpose.

From another perspective, aside from "filling in gaps," the idea of construction or building features prominently in what S says about her language learning experiences. She compares speaking Irish to construction, which itself is a reflection of how she construed her experience learning Irish. She learned to build a sentence by adding clauses and modifying phrases, as this was how she learned Irish. She considers the rules

governing the genitive case, judged to be the most difficult to learn, to be “kind of mathematical” as you add together elements to construct it.

This sense of building or construction provided by Irish, especially when she studied with the teacher she described at length, was a source of joy: she enjoyed the learning process because she would learn something new every day, and she found that what she had learned allowed her to construct something new. Learning the rules of construction allowed S to learn to be more creative with her language use and not fear the possibility that any performance of language would “go off rails,” or introduce something that was unanticipated.

She communicates this knowledge, and tries to communicate the joy, to her brothers, whom she tutors in Irish. She goes beyond the bare minimum in tutoring them, often using some of the techniques her teachers used in trying to get her brothers to actively construct using the language and not simply read off memorized phrases. Irish has become a community language for her family unit, even if it is only for the purposes of school. Like the Polish and English she shares with her parents, Irish is a language that, alongside English, she shares with her siblings, within certain limits: it provides a context for a shared experience, namely, the learning of Irish through the Irish school system.

5.11. General summary

Each of these narrative accounts revealed prominent themes and key issues related to language learning and multilingual development. They focused primarily on participants' memories of secondary school language learning and co-created interpretations of those memories. Where relevant, I referenced relevant moments outside of the secondary school period in order to provide a better and deeper understanding of that period of language instruction and how it affected the overall development of the participants.

The nature of most contemporary language teaching means that languages are taught as isolated units in the classroom, yet it is clear that experiences with languages interact with each other across educational and linguistic divides. These individuals used their experiences with some languages to predict or interpret their experiences with others; this extends to home languages or other languages learned outside of formal education. Multilingualism cannot be defined in a "multiple monolingual" manner, and experiences with languages are no exception. People carry their languages with them, and any experience with one language may result in a review of or reckoning with another language that one may know.

While this chapter provided an individualized view of language learning and multilingual development, there were a number of common elements expressed across the narrative accounts. The next chapter will provide an overview of common themes drawn from the individual stories and discuss the significance of those themes.

6. Discussion

6.1. Introduction

The following is a summary and analysis of the superordinate themes drawn from the participant accounts. These themes are found running throughout most, if not all, of the narratives, and represent significant aspects of each individual's experience with the motivation to learn multiple languages on their path towards becoming a multilingual subject. Examples drawn from individual accounts will be juxtaposed with each other, not for the purposes of comparison but rather to illustrate how a similar phenomenon may be experienced differently by an individual in a different context.

The five themes that are presented in this section are the following: relationships with others and motivation; affect plays a vital role in motivation; desire for knowledge and expertise; the role of time in motivation; and the effects of obligation and choice. Each theme is explicated through the presentation of sub-themes that cut across several accounts and offer examples taken from participant narratives. Although each theme is presented separately and in its own section, there are several areas of overlap among the themes, and when relevant, I will note the relationships between themes and how these relationships are relevant to motivation.

6.2. Theme 1 – Relationships with others

The most significant and impactful theme represented in the participants' accounts is the presence of others within their individual language learning and development trajectories. As the individual attempts to navigate the relationships they have with the multitude of others in their context, their motivation experiences dynamic

changes that affect how they engage with the learning of the target language of the classroom and how they incorporate that language into their own self.

6.2.1. Family

Nearly all of the participants explicitly discuss how their relationships with family members and their place in the family affected their motivation to learn and use their languages. This falls in line with previous research that highlighted the familial influence on language learning both inside the classroom (e.g., Kyriacou & Zhu, 2008) and in home or heritage language situations (e.g., Armstrong, 2013; MacIntyre et al., 2017), both of which were represented in participants' accounts.

Relationships with older relatives were especially heavily represented. R, for example, laments the feeling that a "language barrier" was starting to form between herself and her French-speaking family members, particularly her maternal grandparents. N looked to his grandmother as a model of multilingualism, a woman who spoke French, Moroccan Arabic and Berber. S's mother was "a bit of a tiger mom" whose involvement in her daughter's education paved the way for S learning not only English but also Irish. H had also been encouraged, or rather pushed, by her parents early on, stating that they had gotten "greedy" with her early aptitude for the language.

In the accounts presented in this study, the role of older relatives in language development is less about the child learning a language from their parent or older relative (although it holds true for all the participants) and more about how motivation to speak or learn a language emerged from the participant's relationship with their older relative. While this may be interpreted as the ought-so self within the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2009b), it was not necessarily a perceived obligation but may be

interpreted as a wish to build, maintain, or explore a familial relationship that spurred motivation. With R, it is the desire to be able to speak with her grandparents (and other family members) that drives her to keep practicing her French. In a case like H's, motivation emerged out of a begrudging submission to her parents' wishes for her to learn English. P admits to having been inspired by her mother to learn English to a high level; although she later reconsidered that goal, the motivation she experienced when looking at her mother's study of English still resulted in her desire to learn the language. In short, in addition to learning a language from one's parent or other older relative, an individual may experience being motivated to learn or perform a language or languages as an effect of the relationship they have with their older relatives.

Familial situations may also have an impact upon language learning situations and the development of motivation (Keller et al., 2015). For S and K, the migration of the family entailed the learning of a new language. Although K's family was only moving to Paraguay for three years, she would have to spend those three years developing her English and Spanish to be able to receive basic education. S's family's move was more permanent: she left Poland at age 6 and has been living in Ireland ever since, having developed her English and incorporated Irish after having received her entire education in Ireland. Still, in both cases, the choices of the parents affected the children by asking them to understand their place in a new context, one which required becoming comfortable with using new languages outside of the home.

Relationships with siblings, cousins, or other family members within the same generation can be interpreted along the same lines as those with older relatives. Several of the participants in the current study mention how their relationships with their siblings affect their approach to languages, and some mention how meeting or communicating

with cousins is also a context within which language plays a crucial role. R, for example, discusses being an only child and the oldest of her cousins on her mother's side of her family; when she meets her cousins, there is some question over which language she should speak:

... and then obviously in France, well I don't know, like I, like they're more just interested, you know and especially because I speak English and English is like the language they all want to learn, they kind of want to know and want to practice and I'm like, no, not now, my turn, they're really good and like, and I'm just so jealous of them as well, like their English, like my little cousins at like 7, 8, were speaking really good English, and I'm like I didn't even start doing second language until secondary school, like mental.

Here, it is apparent that R's motivation is directly related to how she perceives her younger cousins and their language ability. She sees them as linguistic role models; interestingly, they see her in much the same way.

Other participants' stories also feature family members of the same generation. For example, D recounts how she felt odd speaking in Spanish to a sister with whom she had only ever spoke English with; she drew inspiration from this sister, who decided to move to Spain on a whim to learn Spanish. In studying Chinese, Y studies with her sister, but also compares her progress with her sister's: her sister is far more advanced, having spent longer with the language. She utilizes her relationship with her sister to learn and practice the language; they can establish and develop their relationship through a shared interest in the language, whether it is in learning the language together, speaking the language, or speaking about the language. S, for her part, shares her Irish learning experience with her brothers, again building and maintaining a relationship where the language is a core element, even if it is not the means of communication.

In the accounts presented here, the family-related aspect of motivation tends to be sympathetic, and its strength varies. Individuals do not only learn language from family members, but they also receive encouragement along their path to becoming multilingual. This encouragement manifests itself in several ways, such as a desire to resemble a family member in how they use language or a desire to communicate with a family member through or about a language. It may not always be direct, nor is it always conceived of as a positive force: for example, H disliked learning English early on partly due to the pressure her parents put on her, but she later grew to enjoy English and appreciate what they did. The relationship she had with them caused her to reappraise her English learning. She, like several other participants, was driven to action as a function of the dynamics of the relationship she had with her family members. This is what I mean by a sympathetic or collaborative type of motivation: motivation that emerges out of a desire to exist in accord with others and foster a specific type of relationship.

Furthermore, the strength of the motivation is related to the nature of the relationship: we see this with D, whose connection to Spanish is stronger due to having been raised primarily by her Spanish mother; her motivation to engage in English is weaker in part because of the continued sense of distance she feels from her English-speaking family. Essentially, motivation fluctuates in relation to the perceived closeness or strength of the relationship.

6.2.2. Peers

Another significant group whose relationship with the individual seemed to affect motivation was the group of peers with which the individual would have regular contact.

This most specifically refers to classmates taking the same class, although it also includes those with whom the individual would come into regular contact.

There were examples of peer-related sympathetic motivation found among the individual accounts. For instance, Y's relationship with her peer group resulted in the more supportive, sympathetic type of motivation, as the members of the group of Russian learners supported each other and tried not to compete outside of the competition demanded by the school. Another example of sympathetic motivation was in S's story of how students would continue to practice speaking Irish after they had all finished the mandatory work. In these examples, individual motivation was a function of the group's motivation, and the group's motivation was directed towards supporting the individual members of the group, either in specifically linguistic endeavors (the learning of the language) or in helping members feel included in the group regardless of their progress or proficiency with the language(s) being learned. These accounts further show how peers may help promote prosocial behavior in academic contexts (Güroglu et al., 2014; Wentzel, 2017; Wentzel et al., 2017) and confirms studies that have shown peer influence in language choice, attitudes, and motivation (Bartram, 2006; Wesely, 2010).

Some participants discuss how their relationships with their peers would lead to them realizing a decreased motivation, however. R, for example, notes how her motivation to engage with her languages in school was affected by how she related to her classmates in both positive (sympathetic) and negative ways. With Irish, the group encouraged each other, thinking that speaking Irish was "cool" and trying their best to speak it as often as possible; with German, however, many of the students in her immediate classroom did not seem to care about learning the language, so those who did care, such as R herself, did not want to show that they were exerting a substantial

amount of effort in class. This could be interpreted as a form of shame (Teimouri, 2017), but toward the group and not in regard to the language.

This second type of motivation seemed to be of an antagonistic nature, whereby the antagonistic relationship between R and her peers led to a muted motivation on her part: she still was motivated to learn, but not to the level she would have been within a more supportive environment. In other words, the dynamics of the group limited the level of motivation she was able to experience. This was partly due to her relationship with her classmates, but it was also due to the level of the class that the teacher would have to teach to: with few students showing effort, the teacher could not teach to as high a level as she could have with a more motivated group of learners; such an effect was similarly reported in Teravainen-Goff (2022).

A further example of antagonistic motivation can be found in D's account. Encountering people in Ireland that doubted her Spanish-ness due to her County Clare accent led to her questioning her desire to speak English better or become better acquainted with the Irish side of her family. Although she is willing to continue, her motivation has been softened, or even become outright resistance. It is important to note that the effect is not permanent, as she sometimes still expresses a desire to explore her Irish side. Instead, her motivation fluctuates between engagement and resistance, depending on numerous contextually dependent factors.

Peer relationships also factored heavily in situations where competition was a dominant presence; with competition, the peer relationship can be seen as a consequence of the nature of the educational system to put students in competition with each other. Some of the participants from Korea discuss the effect that competition had on their comfort with the language and their motivation to learn it. For instance, Y

recalled English being a context for competition, in contrast to Russian, which “isn’t very competitive so it’s good to study.” With her Russian-stream class, the mood was more collaborative than competitive, particularly since the entire class was starting from the beginning. Consequently, her motivation for Russian was stronger than that of English. She did not give up on English, as it was still a requirement, but she was more interested in improving her Russian.

In the Irish context, S describes how her Irish classes were competitive, but this competition seemed to emerge among the students rather than the students having been made to compete with one another. Having been placed in a higher-level Irish class, S competed with her classmates, many of whom had come in to secondary school from a Gaelscoil. She believes that competition with peers occurred because the students were of the age when it was natural to compete with each other. This type of competition had the effect of strengthening S’s motivation.

6.2.3. Teachers

This study further confirms the influence teachers have on the language learning context, and consequently on motivation (e.g., Dewaele & Dewaele, 2020; Kyriacou & Zhu, 2008; Moskowitz et al., 2022; Taylor, 2013). As was the case with family and peers, the individual’s relationship with their teachers can lead to the emergence of motivation and motivated learning; the nature and strength of the emergent motivation depends on the nature of the relationship with the teacher.

In many cases, participants had positive experiences with teachers. H, for example, was motivated to proceed to a higher level of English mastery because of how she “wanted to appeal” to two of her teachers from just before she entered college. A as

well experienced motivation as a consequence of studying with a French teacher whom she thought was “very good at teaching the more advanced students” and whose style she agreed with.

Relationships with teachers also allowed antagonistic motivation to emerge, sometimes muting the participant’s motivation or, conversely, amplifying motivation. A’s experience with Irish was different from that of French in that she felt her teachers did not teach what she wanted to know; this meant that she had to find it out for herself, asking teachers questions after class had ended. She experienced motivation to learn because her teachers did not provide the type of instruction she could benefit from.

As another example, S did not have any positive experiences with French teachers, contributing to her now considering French a “closed chapter” in her life. N experienced an increase in his motivation as he was ridiculed by his English teacher for his choice of British English. He was also questioned by his Arabic teacher for refusing to take on MSA as his Arabic or to name it his mother tongue. In both cases, N was more motivated to continue developing and using both British English and Moroccan Arabic instead of the alternatives championed by his teachers.

6.2.4. Summary

Models of motivation that mention integrative motivation (R. C. Gardner, 1959; R. C. Gardner & Lambert, 1972) often focus on the group that speaks the learner’s target language, but they do not typically mention other groups that the learner may desire to be a part of. Aside from an integrative sense of motivation, it has been suggested that individuals learn languages in order to become a part of the international community or to foster a global identity (Yashima, 2009).

However, the participants in this study were less concerned with those types of motivation and were more interested in learning to function within relationships and groups they may already be a part of, such as their family or their immediate peers. These groups are typical in studies on education at large (e.g., Wentzel, 1998; Wentzel et al., 2016, 2017) and have been reflected in the L2 learning experience within Dörnyei's (2009b, 2019) L2 Self-System, but often with academic or linguistic goals in mind. With the participants of the current study, however, language learning and multilingual development were not necessarily the primary goal but were rather a consequence of how the individual sought to participate in the relationship, how they interpreted the relationship, and how they attempted to navigate the relationship. This seems to be more in line with ecological views of language development and language socialization (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984, 2008), although, unlike those perspectives, the concentration here is less on the language and more on the group, a group where language happens to be one of several elements. Participants studying or using multiple languages were experiencing processes of socialization into multiple groups, sometimes with overlapping or competing concerns. Socialization, though, was not always guaranteed, with participants sometimes refusing socialization by not participating in language learning and use (e.g., D with English).

The motivation to learn or improve languages was a function of the motivation to fully realize the relationships participants had with those around them, and the strength of their motivation was affected by the nature of those relationships. Sympathetic motivation, the supportive type of motivation that arose out of the members of the group working together, tended to amplify the desire to learn a language, whereas antagonistic motivation had more unpredictable effects, sometimes amplifying the

individual's motivation to learn a language (e.g., N learning specific dialects of Arabic and English in the face of criticism coming from his teachers) while at other times muting the individual's motivation (e.g., R not wanting to show noticeably more effort in German class so as to not give her classmates another reason to pick on her). Although antagonistic motivation can be thought of as similar to the anti-ought-to self (Lanvers, 2017; Thompson, 2017), it should be understood as an emergent sense of motivation dependent on the person-in-context construct and not as a personal refusal to follow an external expectation. The same is true of sympathetic motivation: it should not be considered in the same way as the ought-to self (Dörnyei, 2009b), as it is not only composed of expectations or attitudes, but rather as an emergent type of motivation distinct to the situation and relationship of the individuals and their families, peers, and teachers.

An individual may have experienced both these types of motivation, sometimes in regard to the very same language. H, for example, was motivated to learn the English language early on due to the antagonistic relationship she had with a classmate in elementary school while studying in Alabama; she later had a more supportive relationship with her teachers that changed her motivation to master English from that of one rooted in anger and stress to one that was more positively formed out of interest and the desire to emulate her teachers. With sympathetic and antagonistic motivation, there is room to explore cross-linguistic effects of motivation as well (e.g., Zheng et al., 2019), which is less feasible with language-specific models of motivation. The experience R had in secondary school with Irish (sympathetic) and German (antagonistic) learning is an example of this.

Just as learning is dependent on relationships, motivation, as an immanent presence within a classroom or other learning environment, emerges out of relationships. This is in line with sociocultural theories of motivation (e.g., Hickey & Granade, 2004), which look at the dynamic interaction of relationships between individual and the group, as well as group motivational processes. This also echoes theories of motivation that are based on dialogical models, like Harvey's (2017), wherein each party to the relationship is involved in, and resides within, the others; echoing Bakhtin, motivation is always "half someone else's" (1981). However, such views have typically been less present in contemporary studies on motivation. The participant accounts in this study suggest a deeper look is called for.

6.3. Theme 2 – Affect plays a vital role in motivation

As mentioned in Chapter 2, affective responses, such as emotions, have been undervalued in discussions of language learning motivation (Swain, 2013). However, the participants in this study expressed emotion in a variety of manners beyond the oft-cited enjoyment and anxiety (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014), as well as reacted more viscerally to languages and language learning contexts, implying that more attention should be given to this aspect of language learning and development (Shao et al., 2019).

6.3.1. *Frustration and urgency*

Discussions with participants revealed the significant presence of frustration, which comes from the anxiety and anger at having certain expectations and not being able to fulfill those expectations. As Participant S put it, "frustration in Ireland in language learning, frustration and language learning go together here;" however, frustration was

present not only among participants recruited from the Irish context but also among the participants from Korea. The emotion of frustration runs parallel with the sense of urgency that many participants experienced in their attempts at language learning.

Most, if not all, participants experienced frustration in some way, either in relation to the language they were learning or to the situation in which they were learning. Participants A and R experienced frustration with Irish and German, respectively: A was frustrated by the lack of explanation offered by her Irish teachers, to which she reacted by seeking out her teachers for further explanation; R continues to be frustrated with her German learning, stating that “after six years, [she] should be better at it by now.”

P experienced frustration when she traveled to Australia as an exchange student. There she learned that her English ability, which she thought to be sufficient at home in Korea, was not enough to allow her to succeed as she had desired. She was not prepared to handle the situations she found herself in; she would compare herself to the native speakers she encountered, which led to her being frustrated: “No matter how many words I try to learn, there’s no comparing the amount of words I know how to use with the amount that a native speaker can use”; this frustration, based on a native-speaker ideal, reflects the damage of the native speaker bias (Ortega, 2019) and echoes arguments in Wang and Zheng (2021).

J experienced frustration in Russian, a language she was emotionally attached to (Pavelescu, 2019; Pavelescu & Petrić, 2018); she found the language to be beautiful, and she wanted to be able to use it well, but she would constantly find herself “blocked” when using it. The idea of being blocked is found in R’s account as well, who sometimes finds it difficult to “get the words out.” This evokes the sensation of being blocked or

stopped. The words are there, but they do not come out; the individual is frustrated in their attempt to speak.

This sensation goes together with a sense of urgency. Not only did participants feel frustrated in their learning or use of certain languages, but they experienced a sense of urgency, as if they felt as if they needed to or should be able to use the language. This tended to emerge with languages that participants had spent longer learning.

As mentioned above, R had been frustrated in her learning of German; she felt as if she should be able to use it well after having studied it for six years. The feeling that she should be able to speak by now is where urgency can be found. There is pressure to speak coming from inside the individual; the fact that they cannot speak is where the emotion of frustration is found. Another participant, J, experienced this phenomenon with Russian: she had the urge to speak (urgency) but could not get the words out (frustration).

Frustration and urgency could also explain the sense of fear and insecurity some participants expressed about the possibility of losing a language. D provides an insight into how fear and insecurity play a part in motivation to maintain a language:

It's like we're very insecure about it, I guess, or something. We're very, I guess it's something you're very afraid of losing as well because of how we see from other people how hard it is to learn a language so it's definitely something you don't want to have to redo again ...

Motivation to learn languages can be interpreted here as the motivation to conquer the sensations of frustration and, to some extent, fear and insecurity. Again, this tended to happen with languages that the participants had been studying for several

years; the longer they had been studying, the more frustration they felt, and the stronger the desire to overcome that frustration.

6.3.2. *“Healing” and restoration*

A second type of emotion or set of emotions was the feeling of restoration, completion, or “healing” that some participants said they experienced. It can be described as a feeling of calmness or satisfaction that follows a period of distress or emotional upheaval.

Participants from Korea expressed this feeling more frequently, as a number of them found the learning or practice of certain languages to be a “healing” process. They were motivated to participate in language learning and practice in order to make up for negative past experiences or as a hobby to take their mind off of more stressful matters at hand. “Healing” may be interpreted as a kind of personal fulfillment, which has been linked to positive growth in motivation (Li et al., 2018; Nakata, 2009; Zhang & Tsung, 2021).

For example, Y states that learning languages is a type of “healing” for her, as it allows her to concentrate on something that she is more open to and calmer when performing. She calls it a “refuge” and goes back to it when trying to escape demands and burdens. H calls her experience in Alabama a “healing” one as it helped her recover from the stress she had accumulated as a young elementary school student in Korea.

In college, both K and H went back to languages they had studied in secondary school. These languages (Chinese for K, Japanese for H) had themselves become a sort of refuge for the participants, a familiar entity that could be easily accessed and through which they were able to recover from the negative experiences they had previously had

with learning those languages. They were able to reappraise their previous learning in light of a new learning situation. Although it has been suggested that positive experiences can engender motivation (Mayumi & Zheng, 2021), in this case it was a positive reappraisal of a negative experience that eventually reinitiated motivation (akin to Chaffee et al., 2014). Even if they had not achieved a proficiency they were satisfied with, they had been able to benefit from their knowledge of the language. They both felt “healed” after they went back to the languages, a combination of satisfaction, calmness, and happiness, emotions they did not feel after their first trial of the languages.

With participants from the Irish context, this set of emotions was less visible, but could still be found to a certain extent. Although she does not mention the word “healing” or anything similar, S’s learning of Irish in her final year of secondary school was a sort of “healing” process. She was “filling in gaps,” namely gaps that she noticed in her knowledge of Irish, and this notion is similar to a restorative process. She had an incomplete experience of Irish learning, and her circumstances in her final year of secondary school allowed her to complete her learning.

R’s experience with Irish could be conceived of in a similar fashion: she learned Irish and continues to use Irish partly because she is helping to reestablish her family’s ties to Ireland. She mentions being the first of her family in 200 years to be born in Ireland, and she is motivated to reclaim Irish for her family. She does this with French as well, but in a different sense, as she strives to not lose it: she does not want to be in a position where “healing” will be necessary. She is motivated to maintain a feeling of completeness in French and in Irish.

6.3.3. *Resonance*

An affective response that was apparent in several participant accounts was a sort of affinity for or resonance with certain languages within one's repertoire. While in most cases it was the native language or languages that felt closer to the individual, some participants also expressed an affinity for later learned languages and seemed to prioritize them over others. It is similar to the love of a language mentioned by Pavelescu and Petrić (2018) and Pavelescu (2019), in that participants experienced an affinity for the language that went beyond enjoyment (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, 2016).

H, for instance, felt that "Japanese and I don't match, it was an awkward fit," and decided to study Arabic on her own when preparing for the KSAT. While studying, she came to feel that Arabic "fit" her better than Japanese and had originally intended on learning more of it in college. She was motivated to learn Arabic because she resonated with it more at the time. Later, she found that Japanese felt familiar, and she returned to it: over time, it became "a welcome sight." N feels that the study of niche languages resonates more closely with his views of language learning than the study of more popular languages.

J chose Russian because it was a beautiful language, stating, "the more I learned about the language, the more attractive it became, and the better I wanted to speak it." It was unique among her options, and uniqueness and originality are values she maintains for herself. She resonated with Russian in this way, a reaction that that gave rise to and sustained the motivation to learn it.

The idea of resonance or affinity can be described as the feeling that the language was "a good fit," due either to the language itself and its qualities, or due to the temporal context in which the language the was learned. The participants in this study experienced

motivation to learn certain languages in their repertoires due to an affinity for the language and not for pragmatic reasons such as communication or the building of career skills. They simply liked the languages (Pavelescu, 2019; Pavelescu & Petrić, 2018), which allowed motivation to emerge. It should be noted that the feeling of resonance was not always immediately felt and would sometimes take time to develop, such as H's study of Japanese, which she disliked and felt awkward with at first but came to appreciate it later.

6.3.4. Summary

Emotion seems to play a significant role in how motivation to learn languages emerges. Researchers have commented on the integral role of emotions in language learning (Oxford, 2018; Pavlenko, 2005b; Swain, 2013), and participants in this study commented on how different emotions influenced their motivation. The prevalence of affective responses beyond the most cited anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989) within these experiences of language education also suggests that greater attention should be given to emotions in education, especially epistemic (e.g., frustration) and social emotions (Linnenbrink, 2007; Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2014). It also suggests that educators and researchers could benefit from greater attention to emotions in the classroom (Moskowitz et al., 2022), even when their source is not the classroom itself (Kantaridou & Psaltou-Joycey, 2021).

While there may have been other affective responses present in individual accounts, those cited above appeared to be the most influential in terms of their effect on motivation and how the participants viewed the languages they had learned or attempted to learn. The frequency and intensity with which the negative emotion of

frustration was mentioned as compared to the more positive emotions is in line with results from Saito et al. (2018) and Kantaridou and Psaltou-Joycey (2021); however, that frustration sometimes led to motivation being generated shows that negative emotions are capable of creating positive changes in motivation (Méndez López, 2011; Méndez López & Aguilar, 2013).

6.4. Theme 3 – Desire for knowledge and expertise

A third theme that was prominent among the participants' accounts had to do with specific aspects of language that they experienced the motivation to learn. Several participants were concerned with learning languages to a high level; they did not just want to know the language casually but wanted to know it well. They were curious to know how the language functioned and how they could work with the language. They desired to know linguistic elements such as grammar and syntax, and they wanted to explore how languages differed from each other. Some were also interested in furthering their knowledge of pragmatic and sociolinguistic issues in language. Although this may be credited to their role as a student and the student's responsibility of doing well on graded assessments, none of the participants voiced this perspective. Instead, they saw their multilingual development in more humanistic terms, learning multiple languages as a type of self-fulfillment (Clarke & Hennig, 2013; Harvey, 2017; Li et al., 2018; Zhang & Tsung, 2021). Although this may seem similar to intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000), or perhaps the effect of the ideal L2 self (Dörnyei, 2009b), such an effect should not be seen in isolation from the other factors of motivation identified in this study.

6.4.1. *Wanting to know the rules*

Several participants were interested in learning the rules of the languages they were studying, specifically grammar and syntax. They experienced motivation to learn how they could compose sentences and vary sentence structure. When they were not given any explanations and were told to memorize patterns, they would seek out the rules behind the patterns, either by following up with their teachers or by investigating themselves. The participants were specific about what they wanted to learn.

Y is a prime example of being motivated to learn the language thoroughly. She expressed a general interest in finding out “how things function” and this was carried over into her language learning. She had had a Russian teacher who provided copious amounts of explanations, often repeating previously taught items, and Y responded positively to this style of teaching. The more information about language she was able to learn, the more satisfied she was.

Another example of this is A, who expressed satisfaction at learning standardized Spanish and how it differs from the idiolect she spoke (a mix of Bable and Spanish): learning the rules of Spanish went hand in hand with her decision to speak the standardized version more often. Rules were also prevalent in A’s learning of Irish. She was unsatisfied when she had to memorize patterns in Irish and, in order to become satisfied with her learning, would ask her teachers questions, asking them to supply the explanations that they had previously omitted. Similarly, S was also more satisfied with her Irish learning once she met a teacher who did not just ask students to rote learn patterns but actually took the time to explain grammar rules.

Knowing the rules seemed to make the participants feel as though they were actually learning the language. Rote learning did not fill them with the same sense of

accomplishment; “you could get away with rote learning,” states S, but authentic learning of the language entails learning how to use the language yourself, without the help of memorized phrases. By knowing the rules, the individual can create their own phrases in the language. While someone who grew up using the language might know the rules instinctively, someone who has learned the language later will have to learn the rules explicitly; in order to fulfill their motivation to learn the language, they will have to learn the rules of the language. In short, the motivation to learn a language entails the motivation to learn the rules of the language.

6.4.2. Wanting to learn something different

Motivation also emerged when participants discussed ideas related to difference. “Difference” was relevant in three main ways: some participants were interested to learn the differences between languages or expressed a desire to understand how languages differ from each other; some participants were motivated to learn a language because it was different from the languages they had already learned or tried to learn; otherwise, some participants had been motivated to learn the differences between languages or dialects for specific reasons, such as the extent of their desire to sound different or unique from mainstream or stereotypical users of the language. These three ways were not always revealed in isolation and could be seen working within the same participant. The idea of difference and the prospect of language learning as a differentiating experience has been previously explored by Coffey and Street (2008) and elaborated by Kramsch (2009).

J, for example, experiences motivation to learn different languages to realize her desire to make herself understood through the different means available in each

language. She is interested to find out how different languages each have distinctive manners of expression and is keen on learning how each language allows her to express herself uniquely. She would codeswitch into English when speaking Korean because she had come to understand the connotation of the English words or phrases she chose to use and how it differed from expressing the idea in Korean. Furthermore, her choice of Russian as a language to pursue also came out of a sense of difference: simply, it seemed different from other languages she had encountered.

N discusses how he was aware of the differences between dialects and how he would perform certain dialects for his teachers, who were insistent that he adopt a specific dialect. Rather than do as his teachers asked, he would demonstrate proficiency in the teacher's desired dialect while preserving his own preference. He was also interested to learn languages that were different from mainstream languages, such as his desire to learn Irish.

Participants A and H are both motivated by a similar desire: H is motivated to speak standardized American English and A is motivated to speak standardized Castilian Spanish partly because of their view that certain dialects or idiolects may not always be understood by those with whom they are speaking. They each at one point in the past used a dialect (H with Southern American English) or an idiolect (A with Bable and Castilian Spanish) but decided to pursue the standardized version of the language; they understood that the version they used was not always acceptable or comprehensible and chose to use the version that would be understood more clearly. In other words, they understood that though it was the same language, there was a difference in how the varieties of the language would be perceived.

R experienced strong motivation rooted in difference as she chose her languages based on how different they were from languages she already knew. She decided against Spanish in secondary school because of its similarity to French; German was different in this case. Upon entering college, she expressed a desire to study Arabic because it was different and “had an edge.”

Not all participants expressed an interest in differences or even acknowledged differences, however. K mentions that she never considered variation in English, nor did she ever consider dialects in her native Korean. The idea of difference was not within the realm of her interests. However, she did at one point reject difference and embrace similarity by choosing to study Chinese in secondary school. She had wanted to study an East Asian language after having been exposed to Western languages, English and Spanish, for a significant period of time. Chinese was different in the sense that it was unlike anything she had been asked to learn before, but it was similar to Korean in that it came from a geographically closer location; many Korean words also have roots in Chinese.

6.4.3. Summary

The curiosity and desire for expertise participants experienced in relation to the languages they studied typically led to an amplification in their motivation to learn. When that curiosity was not satisfied, the strength of motivation seemed to decrease; still there were examples of an individual seeking out knowledge to satisfy their curiosity. Nearly all participants were motivated through their curiosity to learn their languages in a deeper and more thorough manner.

This curiosity extended to the rules of language, namely grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. Participants were interested in discovering why languages behaved as they did; their interest came from a desire to be able to follow those rules in using the language for themselves. Participants were also curious about how languages differed from each other, as well as observant about how different languages are received or valued. These observations of difference often influenced motivation to pursue a language.

6.5. Theme 4 – Role of time in motivation

Previous research has noted the fluctuations in learner motivation over time (e.g., Coffey, 2010; Csizér & Kálmán, 2019; Lamb, 2011; Shoaib & Dörnyei, 2005; Siridetkoon & Dewaele, 2018), and this study confirms and expands upon those observations by adding the perception of the passage of time as a factor affecting motivation. Several elements that influenced motivation seemed to change over time: the participants' feelings about their languages and language abilities; their relationships with those around them and the impact of those relationships on motivation; the extent to which they used their different languages; and the reasons they had for using and developing their languages. Time was also a factor in whether participants decided to learn additional languages and influenced their expectations and effort in learning additional languages.

6.5.1. *It's too late to learn*

Some participants believed that the age at which they learn a language would affect their expected proficiency. They seemed to believe that later learned languages could not be learned as well as those they had learned earlier in their lives. The belief had

the effect of tempering participants' expectations and defining the space in which motivation was allowed to emerge. In other words, the participants' motivation was limited by their belief that their age had an effect on how well they could learn a language.

This idea is prominent in K's account when she discusses her difficulties with learning Spanish, citing her age (approximately 11 years old at the time) as a factor. She also compares her learning of Spanish to her sibling's and notes how, with just a two-year difference in their age, her younger sibling was able to become more proficient in both Spanish and Guaraní. For K, age is a determining factor in how proficient she can become in a language; it modifies her motivation by influencing her perception of the highest proficiency she would be able to achieve.

Participant A also mentions time, as she wonders if she will be able to learn Italian well although starting at a later age than her other languages:

So I think with Italian, I started learning when I was 14 but at that stage I was, in the back of my head I was like, I'm quite old already so I'm not going to get to the same level as I am with French or, so that definitely affected my motivation because I can't remember the last time I studied Italian actively, so.

J discusses age indirectly as she mentions that because she has spent less time with Russian, she is not able to make herself understood as clearly as she would like. Her age influences how she feels about Russian and her perceived ability, as she comments that it feels like "your brain is all used up" when you start at a later age, as if she is trying to stuff an already full receptacle. Other participants described this feeling similarly: K, for example, states that she had started to learn additional languages after Korean had "already established itself as my mother tongue." These other languages, then, felt as if

they were being learned on top of an existing structure, and so could not be learned as well as if they had been learned before that process had been settled. While this is not evidence of a critical period (Lennenberg, 1967), it is evidence that belief in a critical period may influence expectations, and possibly motivation, for further language learning. It also suggests the strength of the monolingual bias in tempering learner expectations and the perception of one's own ability (Dewaele, 2015; Grosjean, 1997; Ortega, 2019).

6.5.2. How long have we been at this?

Time was also represented by the length of time that participants spent studying their various languages and the effect that had on motivation. Participants appeared to experience greater motivation to maintain or further develop languages they had spent longer with than those which they had spent less time with. Although learning new languages remained a viable option for some, the participants in this study tended to focus on languages they had previously learned.

J, for instance, tried German during college only to be drawn back to Russian, as she was not yet satisfied with her ability; she had not spent enough time with the language. Another participant, R, was excited at the prospect of studying Arabic, a new language, but continued to learn German alongside it due to having already studied it in secondary school; she "had been learning German for six years and [she] didn't want to ... stop."

D, who was unimpressed with her French learning in Spain, expressed surprised at the fact that she had retained some knowledge of the language, and that the time she had spent learning it had not been in vain. Her perception that she had remembered

French, something she doubted the first time we met, led to her wanting to keep learning French. She too was motivated by the familiarity of the language, a familiarity that arose due to the amount of time she had spent trying to learn it.

Some participants noted how, after studying a language for so long, it had become familiar or “default.” Y states this in regard to English, as does N who describes a moment when English came very naturally:

I had a tenuous conversation with a lady a few weeks ago which was Moroccan, trilingual as me, I had some feelings I needed to tell her, and somehow I was, I was leading the whole conversation in English, not in French, not in Moroccan Arabic, my native languages, my most natural, as I said before my languages of emotion and of expressing myself in all the ways I could, but this because it was some complicated conversation to have, I couldn't think in any other language than English.

In addition to English's familiarity, the lack of emotional weight allowed N to discuss a “complicated” issue without becoming emotional (Pavlenko (2002a) has written about the emotional detachment of certain languages within one's repertoire). Another participant, J, had described a similar moment when she had to make a complaint at an airport, yet in that example, she allowed English to be a language of emotion as she let her anger known. The familiarity with the language, developed over time, had allowed it to become a language of emotion for her.

On the other hand, the feeling of a lack of progress even after a number of years studying a language was observed by some participants. D and R, for example, felt that their years studying French and German, respectively, had not yet resulted in a semblance of fluency in those languages.

6.5.3. Sensation of stagnation and loss

Some participants noted how the lapse of time led to their feeling that one or more of their languages had stagnated in its development or had been subject to attrition. The feeling that one has lost some of their language, or the fear that one was going to lose a language (also discussed above in the section on Frustration), appeared in several accounts.

N mentions that taking English in college did not seem to have any effect on his English ability, as he states that “My level did not evolve in this class, not at all.” K echoes this sentiment when recalling her experience in secondary school with English. In both cases, the continuous instruction they received did not lead to any noticeable improvement. Time did not have the effect of allowing them space to improve; instead, it seemed to demonstrate that they could no longer improve at the rate at which they had been accustomed to, if at all.

The feeling of stagnation and loss was present in P’s account as well, as she recounts how she returned from a semester abroad to find that her native Korean did not feel as automatic as it should. Moreover, A notes how she does not feel as though Irish comes as easily to her as it had before she left secondary school.

The sensation of stagnation and loss was typically felt over time, especially when the individual was not challenged for a period of time, as was the case with N and K, or when there was a period of time of reduced usage of the language, such as with A and P. Although it cannot be said definitively that this sensation has an effect on motivation, some participants did attempt to reengage with a language they thought they were losing or in danger of losing, such as R’s decision to continue studying German.

Those who felt as though they lost a language or were afraid of losing a language often felt this upon leaving secondary school and entering college; this was the case with R (German, Irish) and A (Irish). They had dedicated years of their lives to learn a language and felt the loss of the language when moving into a context where the language was no longer a requirement; even if they enjoyed learning and using the language, the reduced need for it was sometimes an unwelcome development, as they actively sought opportunities to continue using one or several of their languages.

6.5.4. Summary

The passage of time, and the perception of time passing, was more often felt in a negative way regarding language, which seems to align with Saito et al. (2018)'s conclusion that negative perceptions and emotions tended to build up over time, although in this case it was not related to classroom experience itself but rather to one's command of a language. Participants tended to focus on how their language ability atrophied or stagnated and did not comment on their improvement as frequently. They were more likely to discuss what they could not do or did not have the ability to do. Although dynamic views of language and multilingualism allow for attrition in one or more languages within an individual repertoire (Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Jessner, 2008), the perception of a lack of progress or regression may still influence motivation; this runs parallel with research on how negative emotions can still generate motivation (Méndez López, 2011; Méndez López & Aguilar, 2013), however in this case it is not necessarily emotion but a negative perception of the effect of time on one's ability.

Participants also tended to view themselves more pessimistically than those around them: R, for example, worried about her French even when her mother told her

she had no reason to worry; A did not believe herself to be an advanced learner of French even though her teachers thought she was; P had been shocked to learn that she passed an exam she thought she would fail because she thought she misunderstood the task. Participants tended to focus on how much further they had to go rather than how far they had come. This is in addition to the feelings of loss and stagnation; there seemed to be a focus on what still needed to be done. This seems to align with Grosjean's (1997) and Dewaele's (2015) observations that multilingual individuals tend to rate themselves as less proficient in some of their languages, particularly those they have learned later.

Participants recalling negative change more frequently than positive change may indicate that feelings of loss, stagnation, and frustration are more memorable and are felt more acutely than feelings of growth or progress. It may also suggest that these moments are more relevant to the life narrative that participants seem to be constructing (Bruner, 2004; McLean, 2005a; McLean & Pratt, 2006). It seems that participants tended to believe that they would make progress and remembered more vividly when they did not. McLean and Pratt (2006) found that events where achievement is expected feature less prominently in an individual's life story and requires less meaning-making; this may help explain the recalling of negative change in that, since the participants expected progress, they did not have to make sense of progress, but instead had to try to understand when progress did not occur. Weiner (2010) posits that while success at a task may not lead to any further thought about that task, failure at an important task leads to an inquiry into the cause of that failure; this lends further credence to the suggestion that negative experiences attract more consideration than positive ones.

6.6. Theme 5 – The effect of obligation and choice on motivation

A final theme that was prevalent among the participant accounts was the tension between the freedom of choice and the sense of obligation or duty. Participants discussed how they had learned certain languages without a choice in the matter, while other languages were of their own choosing. While the effect of obligation to learn a language on motivation is questionable, the effect of choice on motivation seemed clear, yet inconsistent.

6.6.1. Compulsory languages

Some of the languages within participant repertoires had been learned and incorporated not by choice but by the demands of the circumstances surrounding the participants. This is true, of course, of the compulsory languages taught in the schools which the participants attended (mother tongues are not considered in this section). English was typically compulsory as the first “foreign” language (i.e., with participants educated in Korea and Spain). Within the Irish context, Irish was an obligatory language. For N’s experience, both French and MSA were compulsory in addition to English.

Previous research has reported on the aspect of choice, or lack thereof, on learner motivation (e.g., Chen et al., 2021; Csizér & Lukács, 2010; Zheng et al., 2019), often with lower reported motivation on obligatorily learned languages, especially in the shadow of English. However, in the current study, the obligation to learn certain languages did not have a predictable influence on motivation among the participants. Participants responded to the obligation to learn a language in different ways, and this response may have changed as the context changed.

The three participants who studied Irish in secondary school, S, A and R, all experienced motivation to learn the language at some point in their education, often due to, or in spite of, how they perceived of their teachers, which echoes previous research on the impact of teachers and teaching style on motivation (Cuéllar & Oxford, 2018; Kyriacou & Zhu, 2008; Moskowitz et al., 2022; Taylor, 2013). S admits to enjoying her Irish learning in general because “There was constant learning and development going on I felt like every class did actually bring something new to the table.” There was always motivation there, but it would strengthen during her final year under the influence of a supportive teacher. R had a similar experience, as she states that she did not really love Irish until her 5th year of secondary school. A as well was not satisfied with her Irish learning until she was able to extract explanations from teachers who preferred to rely on rote-learning.

For these three participants, the obligatory nature of Irish study did not seem to strongly influence their motivation to learn the language; instead, their motivation was dependent on other factors, particularly the type of instruction they received. It seems that even if the taught language is a language that must be learned, the participants preferred to learn it correctly and in a way that made them feel confident about their application of the language outside of the immediate demands of the classroom.

Where English was a compulsory second or foreign language, the obligation to learn it also did not seem to affect motivation in a predictable way. For instance, H admits to starting out hating English, a language pushed on her by her parents and later the school system; she would eventually major in English language and literature at college. Motivation was non-existent at the start, or perhaps it existed in a negative sense, but it later emerged in a positive direction.

In P's case, although English was a mandatory language, she had been interested in learning it from elementary school. P found the English language interesting despite it being a language she would have to learn for her academic career. The idea that it was an obligation was never a major consideration; she had experienced motivation to learn the language from elementary school.

English learning seems to be an accepted fact of education and as part of the experience of growing up as an individual in non-English majority contexts. Discounting the sense of obligation, there were other factors involved in the level of engagement of participants who studied English out of necessity; such factors may have been relationships with others (e.g., H and her classmate, H and her high school English teachers) or pure enjoyment of the language (e.g., P directing her academic choices towards learning more English). Often it was these factors that motivated students to go beyond the bare minimum in English learning.

The question of motivation to learn a required language seems to apply more to the type or depth of linguistic knowledge the individual seeks, rather than to learning the language in general. Learning situations that seemed inconsistent or unsupportive of learners' goals were not valued as highly by participants as situations that allowed the individual to reach a higher level of knowledge, proficiency, or comfort with the language being studied. Whether this is applicable to multilinguals or multilingual educational environments in general is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but it seems that individuals who are asked to learn a language would prefer to learn it well, reminiscent of theories of investment in language learning and identity (Norton Peirce, 1995).

6.6.2. *Elective languages*

Alongside compulsory languages were languages that participants chose to learn. While choices for all participants were limited by the offerings available at the schools the participants attended, there was still a choice to be made in each case. Participants varied in how they described their experiences with their elective languages. The effect of the act of choosing was present in motivation, although it was inconsistent in how it influenced motivation.

When first choosing a language to study, even among limited choices, participants seemed to prefer choosing a different language than what they already knew. K, for example, chose Chinese in high school because it was different from other languages she had learned before. R chose German in part because it differed more greatly from French than her other option, Spanish, did. J and Y were attracted to the uniqueness of Russian. N is also motivated to learn languages that are not the typical “pragmatic languages” but are instead different from the typical choices.

Some participants experienced strong motivation to continue learning a language they chose during secondary school after entering college. This was true of participants Y (Russian), J (Russian), R (German), and A (French). Conversely, participants K (Chinese), P (Russian), H (Japanese), S (French), and D (French) discontinued active study of the language once secondary school was over. Of these, K, H and D considered restarting the language or took steps to reengage with the language. N did not have an additional language to study during secondary school, but did have a choice upon entering college, for which he chose German.

Of the participants who decided to continue studying after finishing secondary school, Y, J and A saw the language as contributing to their future career plans. Both Y

and J had been considering entering international politics or foreign affairs, with J having the added drive of pure enjoyment of the language; A is planning to become a teacher of Spanish and French. R continued studying German in part because she had been waiting for something to “click,” meaning she was waiting for German to become a language she could call her own. She saw German contributing to her life in a more general sense; it was not out of career aspirations, but rather to have German be an integral part of her repertoire and her self. For these participants, their choices during secondary school had an impact of how they saw their lives unfolding.

For the participants who discontinued their study, part of the decision to stop came from generally negative experiences in secondary school, which have been shown to be influential in learner motivation and identity construction (e.g., Flowerdew & Miller, 2008; Moodie, 2016; Ng, 2021; Tashma Baum, 2014). H received feedback saying that Japanese did not fit her well. Both K and P found their respective languages to be too difficult for them and did not enjoy studying them in school. D and S also did not have particularly good experiences in school: D lamented the lack of progress in secondary school French, and S noted that she felt she never received proper instruction. Similar to the type of motivation associated with obligatory languages, the motivation to continue studying an optional language relies partly on the perceived quality of instruction.

6.6.3. Summary

In developing their multilingual repertoires, the participants encountered languages that they were obligated to learn as well as languages that they were able to exercise choice in learning. There did not seem to be a consistent relationship between the aspect of choice and the emergence of motivation, although the aspect of choice was

still present at times within the individual's motivation to begin or continue studying a language.

The notion of compulsory and elective languages meshes well with the theory of dominant language constellations (Aronin, 2006, 2016), in that participants recognized the priority of languages as deemed by their social and educational context and decided for themselves how they should approach them. Participants were actively involved in positioning languages within their own constellations and using those positions to help determine how much effort they should put into learning. Motivation, therefore, could have emerged in relation to the value and position that the languages each had. This interpretation lends additional support to studies that have shown domain-specific intentions, expectations, and motivations for different languages (Nakamura, 2015, 2019; Noprival et al., 2021).

With languages that participants were obliged to learn, motivation seemed to be a factor in the depth of their learning. Because languages such as English or Irish were requirements, the question of motivation in language education seems to be directed less towards a general sense of learning the language and more towards the manner in which, and to what extent, the individual wants to learn the language. Since, for example, participants from Korea must learn English, refining the question of whether they are motivated learners of English to an interrogation of the extent to which they want to learn English may lead to a better understanding of their motivation in the classroom. In other words, rather than asking, "Is the learner motivated?" it would be more effective to ask, "How does the learner want to learn English?"

Regarding elective languages, uniqueness seems to be an influencing factor. However, choosing and setting a course in a language in secondary school does not

always guarantee that the individual will continue learning the language. Some participants cited the quality of instruction as a contributing influence in their motivation to continue with the language after secondary school is finished. Finding ways to improve the secondary school experience, such as greater investment in teachers and resources, and stronger communities of practice (Wenger, 1998), may help encourage individuals to continue learning languages after they have left the stage where language education is mandatory.

Finally, although some participants discontinued their study of a particular language, they still had a desire to learn some other language. Previous research has shown that learners use their previous positive experiences as motivation to begin the study of a new language (Mayumi & Zheng, 2021), but in this study, some participants used previous negative experiences as an excuse to try something new. H, for example, admitted to having a strong desire to study Arabic. Her negative experience with Japanese did not cause reluctance to study another language, but rather it pushed her to look elsewhere for a satisfactory language learning experience. Her language learning motivation was not specific to one language but could be interpreted as the fledgling emergence of a multilingual self (Henry, 2017), where she envisioned being multilingual but was searching for the languages to include in that conception. It can be argued that K's choice of Chinese was of a similar nature: she had struggled with Spanish but felt that another language might be helpful to learn, particularly one that was closer to Korean. Unfortunately, she had another negative experience, but she did not give up looking.

6.7. Summary – Motivation and multilingual language development as processes of individual growth and meaning-making

The five superordinate themes that I describe in this discussion are based on my analysis of the individual participant accounts. Each theme represents an aspect or perspective of motivation related to becoming a multilingual and language learning for multilingualism, several of which have been noted in previous research, but when put together they provide a clearer picture of the individual learner. The themes are also related broadly to meaning-making within an individual's life (Bruner, 1990; McAdams, 2019; McLean, 2005a; McLean & Pratt, 2006; Zittoun & Brinkmann, 2012): the themes represent what the individual is contending with as they as they construct meaning and learn to be in the world with multilingualism as a factor in their life.

Although this study began with recruitment from two distinct nations, Ireland and Korea, the participation of individuals who did not hail from either of those countries made it difficult to make interpretations based on cultural factors. However, it may also be argued that applying a cultural lens may undermine the person-in-context approach (Ushioda, 2009) and the individualized nature of motivation suggested in this study. Still, while there were no significant cultural aspects explored, what was interesting was that certain themes were commonly experienced across any potential cultural bounds. This may be related to the similar nature of education in the nations represented, and how these systems are experienced by the individual participants may be an indication of an issue with the type of system itself. Education systems in both Ireland and Korea encourage the use of rote learning, for example; multilingualism through education in Morocco requires luck; and language teaching in Spain "is not very good." These observations may indicate that language education is perceived as inadequate in each

context, and this perceived inadequacy is what the participants are each managing in their own ways.

Interestingly, participants who came from a bilingual or multilingual household had similar experiences to those who came from a monolingual household; although they had different backgrounds and starting points in their becoming multilingual, many of the challenges with learning a language in school that participants described were experienced regardless of prior language ability. Henry (2017) has previously commented on the possibility that being/becoming multilingual may be experienced similarly by students from multilingual households and those from monolingual backgrounds learning multiple languages at school. The experience of frustration and the management of multiple types and levels of relationships, all through different types of affect and different times, locations, and languages seemed to be common elements. Nevertheless, despite the commonality of experience, there were still differences in how the participants experienced becoming multilingual and what they did with their experience.

While each of the themes may be explained via various other perspectives already present within the field, the accounts here reveal that viewing these common themes, and others that were present in individual accounts, alongside each other in a holistic way may deliver further insight into how motivation emerges and how it influences individual behavior when engaged in further language learning and multilingual development. Rather than viewing the factors separately, viewing them together and observing their interaction shows a more complicated picture than can be understood through preexisting theories and is more reflective of how educators may approach their students.

Henry's (2017) model of multilingual identities, based on the L2 self-system (Dörnyei, 2009b), illustrates how motivation when learning multiple languages may be viewed on a higher level as a singular multilingual motivational self-system. The narratives presented in this study illustrate a variety of "multilingual selves" that fall in line with the representations in Henry's model. Based on the accounts, I suggest a further extension of the multilingual self-system, or rather a nesting of the system within the broader system of an individual's life, on the basis that for the participants of this study, being or becoming multilingual was meaningful for its role in how the individuals envisioned their life unfolding and how they are learning to exist in the world (Clarke & Hennig, 2013; Harvey, 2017).

7. Conclusions, Limitations, Further Study

7.1. Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate how adolescents and young adults remembered their language learning and the impact of those memories on current and further language learning. The narratives here revealed how seemingly distinct motivational factors, such as family demands, peer group dynamics, emotional responses and contextual concerns, are sometimes present at the same time, and their effects work in combination with each other to influence motivation as a whole. Rather than dividing the elements from each other, looking at how they are intertwined with each other may lead to a fuller understanding of motivation, and consequently, the individual. Although this approach has precedence (e.g., Lamb, 2011; Shoaib & Dörnyei, 2005), what is novel here is the interpretation provided by fitting language learning and multilingualism into the greater arc of an individual life by referring to the meaning-making process and life narratives as an organizing principle.

The participants in the study were asked to discuss their language learning experiences from secondary school, which overlaps with the period of adolescence. During adolescence, individuals are starting to reckon with who they are and what they want to become. They create meaning both through their actions and how they later explain, interpret, and incorporate those actions into their identity. They are creating a narrative for themselves, and the narrative holds a certain truth and displays a certain logic. With language learning, although it is compulsory in secondary schools in many nations, the decision to engage in it in with motivation is still dependent on the individual student; students who are motivated to learn language in school are doing so because they see the experience as meaningful (cf. Nakata, 2009). They see language learning,

and potential proficiency as a multilingual subject, as becoming a meaningful part of their life.

The themes generated in this study are relevant to the question of multilingual development within certain formal educational contexts. Schools are generally where languages are formally taught; this is especially true of secondary schools, where most learning of further or foreign languages takes place. Becoming a multilingual in the contemporary world, particularly in nations where there is just one national language, often entails the learning of languages beyond those spoken in the home. Even in contexts where more than one language is spoken in the home or society at large, schools tend to teach a foreign language. There is a push for multilingual language ability, and schools are being used as the site for further language learning. Adolescents are thus being asked to consider multilingualism, and it is their experiences in school with language that will play a role in that decision. However, as these accounts demonstrate, language learning and the motivation to engage in it was not always facilitated or encouraged by the participants' specific context and their place within it. This research exposes the need for educators within the research contexts to question whether they are attending to the facilitating factors of education as well as their subject content, the former of which tends to be what students remember. Further, participants were not always cognizant of, or even desiring of, multilingual ability or identity, which implies the lack of realistic views of multilingualism in these research contexts.

Shoaib and Dörnyei (2005) discuss how research that focuses on life stories and meaning-making can contribute to the field, noting that "learning histories can shed new light on the L2 motivational complex by presenting the various motives that are normally considered in isolation in a contextualized and interrelated manner" (p. 36), especially as

they tend to consist of events that participants choose to discuss. Furthermore, Ushioda (2020) recommends a reevaluation of qualitative research in studies of motivation, suggesting that the best way to understand an individual's motivation is to just speak with them; these individual stories can serve to uncover previously unseen elements. I believe my presentation and interpretation of the stories of these ten individuals may contribute to a greater understanding of the motivational complex within the context of not only an individual's language learning, but of the growth of an individual who sees multilingualism as an integral part of their story.

While I have provided a general conclusion above, the following section provides the answers to the individual research questions.

7.1.1. Research question 1

What do young multilingual subjects remember about their language learning experiences, especially of those languages they learned in secondary school, and in what manner do they recall these memories? To what extent are emotions represented in these memories?

In response to this question, the results demonstrated that the participants tended to remember less about topic or class content and more about the learning environment as a whole, including the others who were involved, most prominently teachers, family members, and peers, three parties often cited in literature on school belonging and success (e.g., Wentzel, 1998; Wentzel et al., 2016). Furthermore, participants tended to remember how they felt and what they thought during the learning period in a broad or general way. Much of what participants had to say was about their personal thoughts, feelings, emotions, and opinions rather than factual

accounts of what happened. As Participant D noted, she did not realize how much French she had actually learned because her memory was focused on the negative experience of inconsistency among teachers and the repetitive and tedious nature of the classes. While she may not feel as though she can use it fluently, she is not starting with nothing. Her feeling of not having learned anything was clearly not true: she had indeed learned something, but she simply could not see that she had learned because the emotional appraisal of the class stood larger in her mind.

Since many participants spoke about memories of events or periods from years ago, it is to be expected that such descriptions will lack accuracy in factual detail. Still, the salience of subjective elements like emotions towards language learning experiences indicates that, regardless of achieved proficiency, there is some relationship between emotion and language that emerges within the context of a language classroom. This context includes areas that, while physically distant from an actual classroom, still impact what goes on in the classroom, such as family and home life. Participants remembered how they enjoyed learning languages at school or hated them, or how they hated them only to grow to love them at a later date. They remembered feeling frustrated and bored or excited and engaged when learning a language. The variety expressed here goes beyond anxiety and illustrate a range of emotions that are more typical of education (Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2014).

Through the lens of meaning-making, the memories that the participants chose to discuss were those that the participant was trying to create meaning for by giving them context within the greater arc of their lives. The role of meaning-making in adolescents for the purposes of gaining insight into their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors has been explored before (e.g., McLean, 2005b; McLean & Pratt, 2006; McLean & Thorne, 2003);

the relevance in this study is in how the chosen memories emphasize active meaning-making of the foregrounded relationships with other parties and the educational process. Conversely, the memories that participants chose not to speak about until I asked, specifically the language learning experiences that participants did not at first disclose, could be interpreted to be experiences that had no meaning for the participant. For example, Participant P did not disclose learning Russian not only because she did not put in much effort to learn it, but she had actively closed herself to it: she “threw it away.”

Memories of being motivated to learn can also be viewed as the endeavor to create meaning for the participants’ actions at the time. Meaning-making is an activity undertaken with the purpose of explaining and gaining insight into one’s identity development by creating a life story (McAdams, 2001, 2019); participants saw themselves as active learners of languages: they asked questions, refined their knowledge, practiced what they knew, and worried about what they did not know. In telling these stories and explaining their actions, participants were actively constructing themselves as motivated language learners. This may explain why some participants expressed feelings of loss and stagnation after secondary school had ended: they were no longer able to be motivated in the same way, and they struggled to find contexts that would allow their motivation to flourish. The process of meaning-making may help further explain why learners are motivated when they find the activity to be meaningful and personally fulfilling (e.g., Li et al., 2018; Nakata, 2009; Zhang & Tsung, 2021).

In sum, participants remembered several meaningful moments that factored into how they understood themselves and how they defined their identity as a person foremost; such episodes resonate with studies such as Ng (2021) and Flowerdew and Miller (2008). Language learning was not necessarily separate to other areas of their life;

it was embedded in familial and school-based relationships, and it factored into career decisions as well. Participants remembered not the languages per se, but the meaning they created for themselves, or chose not to create, in trying to study and learn languages within school.

7.1.2. Research question 2

How do these memories of their language learning experiences continue to impact the motivation to learn, develop and use different languages (i.e., practice their multilingualism)?

Several participants seemed to use their experiences of secondary school language learning, as well as other language learning they engaged in prior to the time of the study, as a basis for their expectations for further language learning; the use of previous experiences to fuel motivation to further learn languages, or perhaps a new language, was previously explored in studies such as Mayumi and Zhang (2021). Interestingly, some participants reported a desire to learn a new language despite previously having had a negative experience. It is possible that, for certain individuals, motivation may not be language-specific; instead, being bi- or multilingual itself is the motivation (cf. Henry, 2017), and individuals are searching for the most appropriate languages to learn to accomplish this feat.

In general, participant experiences continued to influence their relationships with their languages and with potential further language learning; although the L2 learning experience (Dörnyei, 2019) tends to focus on the immediate environment, that environment may seemingly affect the individual long after they have left. Csizér and

Kálmán (2019) have provided a useful broadening of the L2 learning experience to encompass a “retrospective contemplation” of previous language learning to account for this phenomenon. Participants mentioned emotionally tinged memories of trauma, fear, and loss that affected their engagement with and expectations of language learning and use. Positive memories were fewer in number, but still tended to influence how participants viewed their languages and their ability to use them.

It seems that the experience of language learning can leave an indelible mark on an individual (cf. Moate & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2020), especially at a time when that individual is beginning to conceive of a formative history for themselves. The adoption of a multilingual aspect to the individual’s self-concept, as conceived of through their life story, appears to be related to the type and quality of language education they received during secondary school.

7.2. Implications

This study adds to the growing body of research on dynamic models of motivation by providing a holistic view of the language learner as a person-in-context and reemphasizing the view that motivation emerges from a confluence of factors. By incorporating concepts from social and adolescent psychology, primarily those that have to do with education, meaning-making, and the construction of identity, I approached the conversation of motivation focused on the learner and their context, with the intention to see how practitioners can learn from understanding the student experience and memories of that experience. It has been demonstrated that teachers can use their own language learning experiences to affect their teaching (Ariogul, 2007; Csizér & Kálmán,

2019), but that may not be enough; listening to the current generation of students about their own learning may further help teachers develop their craft.

As a language instructor myself, I undertook this dissertation project with the impetus of learning about the student experience to improve my own teaching; as a result, the implications are primarily directed towards practitioners. The first implication of this study is a therapeutic one: a comment several participants made was that, by discussing their stories, they were able to understand themselves and their relationship with languages better. Because language learning may be an intensely emotional endeavor, there may be a need for individuals to discuss things with a professional; language counselling (e.g., Castro, 2019; Karlsson et al., 2007) could help individuals understand how learning languages and being or becoming multilingual fit into their lives. Instructing language teachers in the benefits of language counselling and providing them time and space to counsel their students may help improve the learning experience for all involved. It may also help young people by providing them a foil by which their stories are reflected back, assisting them in the meaning-making process. This would also provide teachers with the opportunity to learn more about their students, which may help in engendering positive relationships that may promote motivation and effort (Wentzel et al., 2016).

This study has further confirmed the influence that teachers have on learners. Students pay attention to their teachers' nonverbal and behavioral communication, such as perceived motivation and attitude toward language teaching, and appreciate teachers who are attentive to their emotional needs as students (Cuéllar & Oxford, 2018; Elahi Shirvan et al., 2021; Moskowitz et al., 2022). Teachers aware of this may be in a better position to address potential issues, such as dealing with frustrated students, as they

engage in the already difficult task of language teaching. Teachers may also benefit from being able to recognize the contextual factors that may affect students inside the classroom (Kantaridou & Psaltou-Joycey, 2021).

While teacher education generally includes courses on learner psychology, that may not be the case for all instructors: for example, in certain contexts, all that is required to teach English is a Bachelor's degree and TESOL certification, the latter of which is the result of completing a 140-hour course; the course tends to go over linguistic knowledge and teaching method in ESL/EFL contexts, but only perfunctorily, if at all, covers learner psychology. Moreover, teachers who are cognizant of their influence may find it challenging to attend to the needs of their class due to factors such as high stakes testing and crowded curricula. Creating room in the curriculum to attend to learners' emotional growth and providing greater opportunities for professional development in the way of workshops or short courses to reinforce the social and emotional aspects of teaching, in addition to the cognitive, may better prepare teachers for more fruitful careers. It may also lead to more frequent positive encounters with language, which may in turn promote further language learning (Mayumi & Zheng, 2021). The current study has demonstrated that students remember how helpful teachers were: assisting teachers to create environments where they are not just "teaching language to students" but are "teaching students to language," environments that are not just enjoyable but also satisfy students' desire to explore language, will ultimately benefit all involved in language learning.

An additional implication is that the accounts demonstrate a need to further efforts to connect language learning across educational phases, such as in Ireland's Languages Connect initiative (Department of Education and Skills, 2017). Such initiatives

may help individuals see how language learning is not a temporary endeavor but can be extended beyond secondary school. This also reaches into improving language offerings both in secondary school and in university, so that learners motivated to become multilingual are afforded the opportunity to find languages that fit them, and so that the languages learned during secondary school do not stagnate once individuals have left the school.

Initiatives like Languages Connect also require an improvement in awareness and education about multilingualism and the different ways that multilingualism can be experienced. Some participants wondered if they should consider themselves multilingual even without native or near-native proficiency; promoting views such as the idea of domain-specific languages and complementary multilingualism (Grosjean, 2015; Nakamura, 2015, 2019) may in turn help promote multilingualism on both individual and societal levels.

7.3. Limitations and Further Development

A primary limitation of this study was that it was conducted just as the COVID-19 pandemic arose, which severely limited the availability of participants. Although I was able to successfully interview Korean participants during the first round, I encountered difficulties when it came to conducting the first round of interviews in Ireland. The participant pool was limited by the fact that many potential participants became available to take part in the multiple rounds of interviews and follow-ups that the study demanded. Participants from Ireland tended to have more than one home language, while those from Korea tended to have just one, which also affects how results from this study may be interpreted. These facts, combined with the idiosyncratic perspective of

motivation and multilingualism adopted in the study, mean that the results of the study are not generalizable over any specific population. However, results show that certain elements, such as the influence of significant others, may be present in multiple contexts.

Another limitation was in the framing of this study as a study of multilingualism. After speaking with participants, it was clear that the definition of “multilingual” is still tied to the image of a perfectly balanced user of multiple languages with native or near-native ability in each language. This resulted in some participants admitting hesitancy to participate, which may imply that other potential participants would have been turned off by the label. Moreover, the participants all had a marked interest in language in general, so they came into the study already being interested in the topic; without the participation of individuals who are less interested, the study is limited by the lack of a counterbalance to the rather intense accounts provided here.

This qualitative study provides a limited view of the experience of becoming a multilingual at least partly through formal education; further development would include conducting more studies of this type to broaden the variety of perspectives and experiences of multilingualism and language learning. Further, more insight may be generated by the application of other theoretical views, such as those afforded by theories of investment (Norton Peirce, 1995), affordances (Aronin, 2017; Singleton & Aronin, 2007), or a translanguaging perspective (García & Wei, 2013), for example.

A greater variety of voices may also help in enriching the description of the language learning experience. Of the participants in this study, nine were female and one was male; inviting more diversity in terms of gender representation may help in generating further insight, particularly as gender is sometimes associated with language learning (e.g., Lasagabaster, 2016; Thompson & Vásquez, 2015). Applying other

contextual lenses, such as socioeconomic factors, or racial and ethnic factors, may also help generate further insight. For example, although I recruited from two locations, Ireland and Korea, due to difficulties cited above, the respondents included individuals from outside those contexts, making it difficult to conduct a cross-cultural study. Hence, a cross-cultural view (e.g., Lee et al., 2020) might yield fruitful results.

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