# Goals, attitudes and self-related beliefs in second language learning motivation: An interactive model of language learning motivation

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**Abstract**

In the present study we surveyed the English language learning motivations of 518 secondary school students, university students and young adult learners in the capital of Chile, Santiago. We applied multi-group structural equation modeling to analyze how language learning goals, attitudes, self-related beliefs and parental encouragement interact in shaping motivated behavior and to investigate age- and group-related differences in the internal structure of language learning motivation. We compared our findings to previous studies using similar instruments in different settings, and based on our findings, we proposed a new interactive model of language learning motivation, which consists of goal-systems, attitudes, self-efficacy beliefs and future self-guides.

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## Introduction

Based on Dörnyei's (2005) theory of the motivational self-system, a number of studies have recently been conducted which highlighted the important role of self-concept in motivation. Parallel to this, recent thinking about motivation has started to reinterpret motivation in the light of dynamic systems theory (Dörnyei, 2009; Csizér, Kormos & Sarkadi, 2010), and attempts have been made to view motivation interacting with the cognitive and affective characteristics of the individual. In our paper we investigated how cognitive, affective and social factors within the construct of motivation interact in shaping motivated behavior in an as-yet-unexplored context: Chile. The selection of the research site was motivated by the lack of research on language learning motivation in the South-American context. Spanish is the most frequently spoken language on the continent, and in many parts of the world it has retained its status as a lingua franca. Therefore, we were interested in examining whether the fact that students' L1 is Spanish would result in a different structure of motivation than in contexts where either the students' L1 is a rare language (e.g. Hungarian in Europe) or where English is the most important mediating language across cultures (e.g. in certain countries in Asia such as India).

We applied multi-group structural equation modeling to analyze how language learning goals, attitudes, self-related beliefs and parental encouragement interact, and to investigate age- and group-related differences in the internal structure of language learning motivation. We compared our statistical models to previous studies using similar instruments in different settings, and based on our findings, we proposed a new interactive system of language learning motivation, which consists of goal-systems, attitudes, self-efficacy beliefs, and future self-guides.

## Review of literature

Language learning motivation research has a long history in the field of second language acquisition starting from Gardner and Lambert's (1959) pioneering work in the bilingual context of Canada. There is also a long-standing tradition of motivation research in educational psychology. In both fields of study, goals, attitudes and self-related beliefs have served as central constructs. Therefore, in order to gain a better understanding of these concepts, it is important to compare models of L2 learning motivation with general psychological models of motivation and identify constructs that are overlapping and concepts that are specific to the field of second language acquisition (SLA).

Motivation explains why people select a particular activity, how long they are willing to persist in it and what effort they invest in it (Dörnyei, 2001). These three components of motivation correspond to goals and the initiation and maintenance of learning effort. In the field of SLA a number of different language learning goals have been proposed. Gardner (Gardner, 1985, 2006; Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003) differentiated instrumental goals, which are associated with the utilitarian values of speaking another language, from integrative goals, which express students' wish to learn the language in order to become integrated into the target language culture. In the 21st century English, however, has become an international language serving as a lingua franca in a globalized world (e.g. Jenkins, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2005; Widdowson, 1993). Therefore the English language has become separated from its native speakers and their cultures (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Consequently, a new language learning goal has emerged: international posture, which includes "interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to study or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners … and a non-ethnocentric attitude toward different cultures" (Yashima, 2002, ibid, p. 57). Further language learning goals can also include friendship, travel and knowledge orientations (Clément & Kruidenier, 1983).

Goals, however, are only effective motivators if they become internalized to some extent (Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 1999); an assumption which is expressed in Deci and Ryan's (1985) important distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsically motivated students engage in the learning process because they find it interesting and enjoyable; whereas extrinsically motivated learners carry out the learning activity in order to gain a reward or to avoid punishment. In the field of language learning motivation, Noels (2003) also identified intrinsic language learning goals, which are related to feelings of enjoyment and enhancement experienced during the process of language learning.

Although highly motivating goals are conscious and help learners focus their attention on the learning task (Zimmerman, 2008), goals also exert their motivational influence through emotional arousal (Ford, 1992). In educational psychology emotional arousal is conceptualized either as the intrinsic enjoyment derived from learning (see e.g. Ryan & Deci, 2000) or as an attitude to the object of learning (Ajzen, 2005). In the field of L2 motivation, attitudes have been identified as emotional precursors of the initiation of learning behavior. Gardner (1985, 2006) identified three important attitudes in his socio-educational model: attitudes to the target language community, attitudes to language learning in general, and attitudes toward the learning situation in particular.

Additional key elements of motivation which regulate goal setting and affect the translation of goals into action are personal agency beliefs, which in educational psychology are embodied in two constructs: self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1986) and self-concept (Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976). Self-efficacy beliefs express one's views as to whether one is capable of performing a given learning task and are consequently future-oriented; whereas self-concept beliefs are based on past experiences and are broader evaluations of one's general self-worth or esteem (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). In the field of L2 motivation, the best known parallel of personal agency beliefs is the L2 Motivational Self System Theory

proposed by Dörnyei (2005), who argues that the main driving force of language learning is the students' future self-image. His model of motivation contains two self-related components: Ideal L2 self and Ought-to L2 Self. In this model, Ideal L2 Self is one's ideal self-image expressing the wish to become a competent L2 speaker. The Ought-to L2 Self contains "attributes that one believes one ought to possess (i.e. various duties, obligations, or responsibilities) in order to avoid possible negative outcomes" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 106) associated with not being able to speak the L2 in question.

No model of motivation is complete without considering the final outcome of the motivational processes, which is called volition in educational psychology and motivated learning behavior in the field of SLA. Volition is defined by Corno (1993) as a "dynamic system of psychological control processes that protect concentration and directed effort in the face of personal and/or environmental distractions, and so aid learning and performance" (Corno, 1993, p. 16). In the field of language learning motivation, the parallel construct for volition is motivated behavior, which is usually seen to consist of effort and persistence (e.g. Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei, 2001, 2005; Gardner, 1985, 2006).

Motivation is also strongly influenced by social and contextual factors. Students' immediate environment: their family and friends play an important role in goal setting, attitude formation, and influencing students' self-efficacy beliefs and the effort and persistence with which they carry out a learning activity. The effect of milieu on language learning was recognized in the early work of Gardner (1985; Gardner & Lambert, 1959), who highlighted the significant effect of parental encouragement and praise on students' motivated behavior. Subsequent models of motivation also included the role of significant others (Williams & Burden, 1997) and the students' family in their model of motivation (Noels, 2001). The construct of parental encouragement has subsequently been used in a number of research projects (see e.g. Atay & Kurt, 2010; Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Csizér & Kormos,

2009; Gardner, Masgoret & Tremblay, 1999; Kormos & Csizér, 2008; Ryan, 2009; Taguchi, Magid & Papi, 2009). Further external influences on motivation include the school environment, in which the teachers, the peer-group and the instructional materials seem to be the most influential factors (Dörnyei, 1994).

Most theories of L2 learning motivation, but not all, include all the above-described important components of motivation: goals, emotional arousal and self-related beliefs, but some of the models proposed in the field of SLA merely identify and list these components (e.g. Dörnyei, 1994; Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998; Williams & Burden, 1997), and only a few make an attempt to describe in detail how these motivational constructs interact (e.g. Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1995; Noels, 2001; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). Even in models of motivation which consider the interplay of goals, attitudes and self-efficacy beliefs, these constructs are placed on different stages of the motivational system and researchers make contradictory assumptions as to how they influence motivated learning behavior.

In our research we used structural equation modeling to gain more insight into the interaction between language learning goals, attitudes and students' self-related beliefs in three groups of English language learners in Chile. In our study we also compared the models for the investigated sub-samples to detect age- and group-related variation in language learning motivation by means of multi-group structural equation modeling. One of the inherent difficulties involved in examining motivation in quantitative research is that one needs to restrict and simplify the number of factors that can be analyzed within a single study. Therefore, in our research we decided to represent contextual factors in language learning motivation only by parental encouragement, which expresses the views of the learners' milieu concerning the value of language learning. In order to be able to compare our results with studies focusing on the role of self-concept in L2 learning motivation, we decided to use a similar instrument as in previous work conducted in Hungary (Csizér & Kormos, 2008;

Kormos & Csizér 2008) and in North Asian contexts (Ryan, 2009; Taguchi, Magid & Papi, 2009).

## Method

*Research assumptions*

Our hypothetical model is presented in Figure 1. The model is based on previous research in the field of L2 learning motivation and educational psychology outlined above and contains four levels: social influence (expressed by parental encouragement), goals (measured by knowledge orientation and international posture), attitudes and self-related beliefs at a joint level and finally motivated behaviour. In accordance with Dörnyei's (2005) model as well as with previous studies using a similar instrument (Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Kormos & Csizér 2008; Ryan, 2009; Taguchi et al., 2009), three antecedent variables were linked to the criterion measure: the *Ideal L2 self* , the *Ought-to L2 self* and *language learning attitudes*. As the Ought-to L2 self dimension supposedly contains extrinsic motivational forces, we hypothesised that it would be affected by *parental encouragement,* that is, parents' views on the importance and necessity of language learning, *knowledge orientation,* which covers the instrumental value of English with the help of which students can gain more knowledge about the world, and *International Posture*, that is, students' views of the role of English as a lingua franca. As for the *Ideal L2 self*, we proposed that *language learning attitudes, International Posture* and the *Ought-to L2 self* will have an influence on students' future oriented self-guide and self-efficacy beliefs. We postulated that positive emotional experiences concerning L2 learning will help the formation of students' images of themselves as competent language users, and learning goals such as the international position of English combined with respondents' Ought-to L2 selves will also contribute to the process of developing salient L2 self-related beliefs. Previous empirical studies have also shown that milieu plays an important

role in forming and sustaining students' L2 learning motivation (see for example Atay & Kurt, 2010; Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei, Csizér & Németh, 2006; Gardner, Masgoret & Tremblay, 1999, Ryan, 2009; Taguchi, et al., 2009); therefore we hypothesised that parental encouragement would contribute to the participants' L2 learning experience, knowledge orientation and their Ought-to L2 selves.

*Insert Figure 1 here*

*Participants*

This study investigated language learners in Santiago, the capital of Chile. Santiago is the largest city in the country, where more than a quarter of the population lives. In addition, the majority of the population is monolingual, with 99% of the population Spanish speakers, and with a literacy rate of 95.7%. Santiago has similarities to major metropolitan cities in Europe, with a growing economy and as a regional financial centre has a great deal of business contact with North America and Europe (WolframAlpha Curated Data, 2009).

In our research we used criterion-sampling. As regards secondary school students, we surveyed students from four schools in Santiago. Schools in Chile can generally be considered to be one of three main types:

a) Municipal or State schools which are totally financed by the state.
b) Mixed funding schools in which the government subsidises part of the students' expenses and the rest is paid by the parents or different kinds of foundations/institutions, etc.
c) Private schools in which parents pay the full fee.

The government also divides schools into rural or urban and according to the number of students each school has. Another division to consider is according to the income bracket of

the inhabitants in the area where the schools are located: Low (A), Lower Medium (B), Medium (C), Higher Medium (D), High (E). The four schools surveyed can be classified according to the above criteria in as follows[1]:

1. School A is a religious, urban, mixed funding school corresponding to the High bracket (E) – it is located in downtown Santiago.
2. School B is an urban, state funded school corresponding to the Higher Medium bracket (D) – it is located in a higher middle class residential neighbourhood.
3. School C is an urban, state-funded school corresponding to the Higher Medium bracket (D) – it is located in a higher middle class residential neighbourhood.
4. School D is an urban, state funded school corresponding to the Higher Medium bracket (D) – it is located in a higher middle class business and residential neighbourhood.

All together 201 learners, 49 male and 152 female, responded to our questions in the secondary school sample. The average age of students was 14.51 years (see Table 1), and students' English language proficiency typically ranges from A2 to B1 in Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001) at this age in the state schools considered.

University students were selected from a range of subjects and university types – both in the public and private sector. All students were studying English, some as optional parts of their degree courses and some on compulsory courses which form part of their programme. 174 university students responded to our questions. The students' average age was 21.8 years, and 69 of them were male and 105 female. Most students in the sample were in the 3rd or 4th year of their programmes and consequently from B1 to C1 in CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001) levels. It is a feature of the university system in Santiago that the great majority of students continue to live at home whilst studying for their university degree.

We also surveyed students at two branches of a private language institution in Santiago. Almost all these students were adults, with an average age of 31.1. All students have elected to take private English language classes, or been requested to do so by their employers. The adult classes ranged from beginner to upper-intermediate, that is, studying courses between A1 and B2 level in the CEFR, and most participants were studying for work-related reasons. The respondents in this category generally came from middle and lower-middle class social backgrounds, and the majority of these participants were white-collar workers and secretaries.

*Insert Table 1 here*

*Instruments*

Each of the latent variables in the model was measured by several five-point scale Likert-type questionnaire items. The questionnaire used in this study was identical to the one applied in two previous studies conducted in Hungary in the recent years (Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Kormos & Csizér 2008). This instrument was originally developed in collaboration with researchers investigating the role of Ideal L2 self in language learning motivation (see e.g. Ryan, 2009; Taguchi et al., 2009), and it shared a sufficient number of items with their questionnaire to allow for the comparability of findings across language learning settings. The items for the questionnaire were adapted from several sources: a previous motivation questionnaire used by Dörnyei and Csizér in a variety of Hungarian research projects (for an overview see Dörnyei et al., 2006) and from a questionnaire by Ryan (2005). These previously-used questionnaires also included items originally developed by Gardner (1985) and Clement and Kruidenier (1983). The questionnaire consisted of 40 Likert-scale items and a 10 item section containing multiple choice and short answer questions that provided background information about the participants. Below we give a brief summary of the

definitions of the latent motivational concepts that the questionnaire intended to measure with sample items. We also indicate the number of items these scales originally consisted of.

- *Parental encouragement* (4 items out of which 3 were originally developed by Gardner (1985) and one additional item from (Dörnyei et al., 2006): the extent to which parents support their children in studying English. Example: My parents really encourage me to study English. (Cronbach α = .83)
- *L2 learning attitude* (4 items out of which 3 were originally developed by Gardner (1985) and one additional item from (Dörnyei et al., 2006): the extent to which students like learning English. Example: I really enjoy learning English. (Cronbach α = .84)
- *Knowledge orientation* (4 items out of which 3 originally developed by Clement & Kruidenier, 1983 and an additional new item): students' views on how learning English will help them gain information about the world around them. Example: Studying English will help me to become more knowledgeable. (Cronbach α = .79)
- *International posture* (4 questions originally developed by Ryan, 2005): students' attitudes to English as an international language. Example: Studying English will help me to understand people from all over the world. (Cronbach α = .78)
- *Ideal L2 self* (9 questions originally developed by Ryan, 2005): students' views of themselves as successful L2 speakers. Example: I like to think of myself as someone who will be able to speak English. (Cronbach α = .76)
- *Ought-to L2 Self* (6 questions originally developed by Ryan, 2005): students' perceptions of how important learning English is in the opinion of significant

others. Example: If I fail to learn English, I will be letting other people down. (Cronbach α =.75 )

- *Motivated learning behaviour* (9 items 4 of which originally developed by Gardner (1985) and 4 items from Dörnyei et al., 2006): students' efforts and persistence in learning English. Example: I am willing to work hard at learning English. (Cronbach α =.80)

*Procedures*

The instrument was translated into three Spanish forms from the English version used in the original study. The versions of the questionnaire designed for the three learner groups were almost identical in content, with minor changes to certain questions to reflect peer / parental influences and appropriate biodata-gathering questions. Back-translation was used with two pairs of bilingual translators and a single version was agreed on in consultation with all four translators based on the similarity between the versions re-translated into English, and the original English version. The three versions were piloted on two students (one of 18 years old, and the other of 53). Problematic items were reworded and the final versions agreed on by the two translators who had performed the English – Spanish translation from the original.

The final versions of the questionnaire were personally delivered to the secondary schools, universities and language institute branches, where a person who agreed to take charge of the administration of the questionnaires distributed them among teachers and collected the filled-in questionnaires.

*Analysis*

In order to draw up a comprehensive model of motivation of Chilean learners of English, multiple-group structural equation modelling (SEM) was applied. SEM is based on a combination of factor analysis, path analysis and regression analysis, and consequently allows for the establishment of latent variables from questionnaire items and as such provides statistical data on the validity of measurement scales (Bentler, 1995). SEM is also able to test relationships and interactions between latent variables as well as to detect differences in these relationships across sub-groups in the sample. Therefore, we applied this statistical analysis for constructing factors, verifying links among them and for analyzing the differences in the links in the three samples of participants involved in the study. We used the software AMOS 4.0.

First, *measurement models* were drawn up in accordance with the earlier factor analytical results reported in Csizér and Dörnyei (2005), Dörnyei et al. (2006) and Csizér and Kormos (2009) on similar datasets in different contexts. Following this, the various latent variables were combined into a *full structural model* on the basis of theoretical considerations as well as correlational and regression analyses conducted in the Hungarian context (Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Kormos & Csizér 2008). The three models for secondary school students, university students and adult learners were compared by a multi-group procedure, that is, the three models were fitted simultaneously in order to assess possible differences in the structural models. To assess the overall model fit, we used indices most often advised in the SEM literature (Byrne, 2001) and besides the chi-square statistics and the CMIN/df (chi-square divided by the degrees of freedom), we report additional indices: Comparative Fit Index (CFI) (Fan, Thompson, & Wang, 1999; Hu & Bentler, 1999), the Bentler-Bonett normed fit index (NFI), the Tucker-Lewis coefficient (TLI), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Fan *et al*., 1999; Hu and Bentler, 1999),

and the Parsimony-adjusted Comparative Fit Index (PCFI). We have compared the various paths within a multi-group framework with the help of the critical ratios (C.R.) (Byrne, 2001). When C.R.s values were above the recommended 1.96 (Byrne, 2001), we concluded that there is a significant group-related difference concerning the given path.

**Results**

*The structural equation models*

As a first step, the initial model was submitted to evaluation using maximum likelihood estimation simultaneously for the three sub-samples (secondary school pupils, university students and adult language learners) (Byrne, 2001), as a result of which we found that although the hypothetical model provided acceptable joint model-data fit indices for the samples (e.g., CFI= .980 and chi square/df = 1.92, for the university students), there were four relations that turned out to be non-significant for each sample (Parental encouragement →International posture, International posture → Ought-to L2 self, Knowledge orientation → Ought-to L2 self and Ought-to L2 self → Motivated learning behaviour), thus these paths were removed from the initial models and from the multi-group analysis. In addition to this, one additional modification had to be applied to the model describing secondary school students, as in their case a new path was included into the model (Parental encouragement → Ideal L2 self) as well as an additional non-significant path being removed (Ought-to L2 self → Ideal L2 self). As a result, the final model contains 10 significant relationships for each of our sub-samples, although the model describing secondary school students is different from the other two models concerning the two paths described above. Next, the final models of the three sub-samples were combined into a single multi-group model and the subsequent multi-group procedure was carried out. Figures 2a-c contain the schematic representation of the

final model with the standardised estimates for each sample studied, and Table 2 presents various joint goodness of fit measures for the multi-group analysis.

*Insert Figures 2a-c and Table 2 here*

As can be seen in Table 2, the Chi Square/df ratio is above the usually recommended value of 2 (Byrne, 1989); however, as we pointed out earlier, it is advisable to rely on more than one fit index, therefore, we also examined alternative fit indices, which all indicate a very good fit for the joint models, and thus we can conclude that the models in Figure 2a-c provide an adequate representation of our data. As a next step, we compared the paths in the structural model in order to find out whether there are any significant differences between the structural models for the three investigated samples. There are several paths for which the critical ratio for differences showed significant difference. Between the secondary school and university students there were three significantly different paths: Language learning attitudes → International Posture (C. R.=3.780), Parental encouragement → Ought-to L2 self (C. R.=-2.997) and International posture → Ideal L2 self (C. R.= -2.831). In terms of differences between secondary school students and young adult language learners four paths proved to be significantly different: Parental encouragement → Knowledge orientation (C.R.= -2.977), Parental encouragement → Language learning attitudes (C.R.= -2.309), Language learning attitudes → International posture (C.R.= 2.472) and International Posture → Ideal L2 self (C.R.= -3.309). As regards university students and young adult language learners again four paths produced significantly different results: Parental encouragement → Knowledge orientation (C.R.= -2.109), Parental encouragement → Language learning attitudes (C.R.= -2.173), Parental encouragement → Ought-to L2 self (C. R.=3.013) and Language learning

attitudes → Ideal L2 self (C.R.= -2.214). Figure 3 shows the comparison of the coefficients across the models for the three sub-samples.

*Insert Figure 3 here*

## Discussion

### *The role of the Ideal L2 self and attitudes*

The models lend general support for the importance of self-related beliefs in L2 learning motivation. In interpreting our models, however, it is also necessary to consider the questionnaire items that constitute the Ideal L2 self construct. In his conceptualization of the Ideal L2 self, Dörnyei (2009) claims that mental imagery, that is, the ability to imagine oneself as a successful L2 user is core to the construct. In our models, however, only one item that explicitly involves a statement referring to imagination could be included in the scale of Ideal L2 self ("Whenever I think of my future career, I *imagine* myself *being able to* use English") because the remaining four questionnaire items did not describe this latent variable adequately in the investigated sample. Three other items referred to distal future goals ("English will help you in your future career", "When I think about my future, it is important that I use English" and "The things I want to do in the future require me to speak English"), whereas the fifth item ("I like to think of myself as someone who will *be able to* speak English") expressed a self-efficacy belief (Bandura, 1986). Two items out of five included the expression "being able to", which suggests that the Ideal L2 self construct in our models is a combination of future-oriented goals and perceptions of one's ability to reach these goals. Our models seem to indicate that although the vision of the future is part of the Ideal L2 self, in our research context, the Ideal L2 self needs to be reconceptualized as a future second language self-guide, which includes distal personal goals related to L2 learning and one's beliefs about being able to realize these goals.

The models also show that in the case of second language learning, future self-guides have the potential to influence effort and persistence invested in acquiring a desired level of second language competence. Given the fact that in the case of secondary school students, the goals embodied in these future self-guides are quite distant, it is remarkable that the link between motivated behavior and Ideal L2 self is still very strong. This suggests that the investigated sample of secondary school students in this South-American context has managed to translate their future goals into proximal goals and has developed an elaborate action plan for reaching these goals. In the lack of these, distant future goals would remain fantasies and would not initiate action (see Markus & Ruvolo, 1989; Miller & Brickman, 2004). Even though career-related goals are not distant for university students, we can detect a similar strength of relationship between the Ideal L2 self and motivated behavior in this sample, which suggests a similarly efficient process of goal- and self-realization for this group of participants. The relatively strong link between the Ideal L2 self and motivated behavior in our study is in line with findings in general educational psychology, which have demonstrated consistent relationships between self-concept and motivational variables as well as between self-efficacy and effort and persistence (for a review of these studies see Bong and Skalvik, 2004).

Another core component in our models is Attitudes to the L2. The items constituting this scale all express enjoyment derived from language learning ("I really enjoy learning English", "I find learning English really interesting" and "Learning English is really great."). Attitudes to L2 can be regarded as affective reactions that partly derive from one's self-appraisal (Skaalvik, 1997). Bong and Skaalvik (2004) argue that this affective dimension of one's self-efficacy has important motivating power. Our results also suggest that irrespective of age, attitudes to L2 learning have a strong influence on effort and persistence.

The models also reveal that language learning attitudes are inter-related with the Ideal L2 self. It is interesting to observe that enjoyment derived from learning English exerts a significantly more important influence on the Ideal L2 self of university students than for the other two groups of participants. We might hypothesize that for secondary school students language learning attitudes might be strongly influenced by the instructional context, and their attitudes might be related to English being as one of the school subjects. Moreover, we can also observe that the Ideal L2 self of this generation is the most strongly related to international orientation. Thus the views they hold about the international role of English has considerably stronger influence on their self-concept than their attitudes to language learning (see below for a more detailed discussion). As for the adult learners in language institutes, their Ideal L2 self seems to be more self-contained. Due to the fact that these students are fully aware of the pragmatic value of L2 competence, they find it easier to maintain positive future self-guides independent of the enjoyment they derive from the learning process.

*The role of Ought-to L2 self and parental encouragement*

As opposed to studies in Japanese and Chinese contexts (Taguchi et al., 2009), we did not find a significant link between students' Ought-to L2 self and motivated behavior. The scale of Ought-to L2 self primarily expresses what views the participants' milieu holds about the relevance of L2 competence for the future, hence the strong link with parental encouragement. The Ought-to L2 self is similar to what Ryan, Connell and Grolnick (1992) call an external regulator, and it does not contribute to the motivational effort in the investigated sub-samples. Previous educational research conducted mainly in the USA has consistently demonstrated that unless students internalize the goals of their social environment, external regulation plays a limited role in enhancing motivated behavior (see Deci, et al., 1991). The comparison of our results in Chile and in Hungary with the outcomes

of studies in North Asian contexts (Taguchi et al, 2009) reveals that in certain cultures where socio-educational factors put a great pressure on students' achievement and where foreign language education is highly exam-oriented (e.g. China and Japan), it is possible that the Ought-to L2 self has an effect on effort and persistence in language learning.

The results of our study indicate that the internalization of the values of the milieu into the learners' self-concept seems to be related to maturation. Whereas for secondary school students the Ought-to L2 self and the Ideal L2 self are unrelated constructs, a link between these two scales can be established for university students and adult language learners. Parallel to this, it can be observed that the relationship between parental encouragement and the Ideal L2 self disappears for these two groups of language learners; a finding which is similar to the results of studies conducted in North Asia (China and Japan - Taguchi et al., 2009) and in Hungary (Csizér & Kormos, 2009, Kormos & Csizér 2008). Based on these results, we can conclude that for the participating teenagers in the Chilean context, parents' views on the importance of language learning and their support might positively influence future self-guides including judgments of self-efficacy. Past puberty, however, students' milieu plays a role in shaping students' internalized self-concept indirectly with the mediation of the Ought-to L2 self.

Interestingly, in Chile and in Hungary the link between the Ought-to L2 self and parental encouragement is considerably stronger than in the North Asian countries investigated in similar studies. We might speculate that whereas for the surveyed learners in South-America and in Central Europe, the major source of influence on how students should see themselves as language learners is the family and other members of their close social context such as friends and peers, in China and Japan, there are additional factors outside the family that exert an influence on Ought-to L2 self such as educational requirements (primarily

exams) and pressures to compete with peers (Magid, personal communication 24th June, 2009).

Although parental encouragement has a limited effect on the Ideal L2 self, that is, on self-concept and efficacy beliefs, it seems to play an important role in influencing enjoyment and pleasure derived from language learning, in other words, L2 learning attitudes. Moreover, the results show that this influence is the strongest in the case of the university students. The Chilean university student sample might be strongly influenced by their parents' value system due to the fact that these students come from families of high socio-economic status, where education is highly valued. Moreover, the vast majority of university students in Chile live at home with their parents throughout their university lives, and thus have the constant influence of parental values and expectations. In contrast, the secondary school students are at an age where they start asserting independence from their parents, and thus their parents' views and encouragement have somewhat weaker effect on their attitudes. Young adult learners are understandably more independent of their parents' views than the younger generation, nevertheless even for this generation, attitudes seem to have strong contextual antecedents. This might be partly due to the fact that in the Chilean society knowing English might be a stepping stone to higher social status. The relatively strong link between parental encouragement and knowledge orientation in the secondary school and university student population also reveals that parents' active support in language learning is instrumental in forming their views on the role of English as a means of gaining knowledge about the world.

*The role of language learning goals*

In our survey we measured two motivational orientations: knowledge orientation and international posture. Both of these are long-term and distal goals in language learning and

primarily embody goals that can be characterized as instrumental. Knowledge orientation expresses the drive to learn the language in order to be a better-educated person who knows more about the world and who can gain information with the help of English. International posture describes the students' intention to use English as a lingua franca and communicate with other people in the world. Both of these orientations point to the very important role of English as an International Language (Jenkins, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2005; Widdowson, 1993) in the Chilean context. This is especially interesting because the first language of the students, Spanish, is widely spoken in the South-American continent, and Spanish can also be regarded as a lingua franca in this setting. Nevertheless, similar to contexts where students' first language is spoken by only very few people in the world such as in Hungary (Csizér & Kormos, 2009, Kormos & Csizér 2008), the investigated Chilean learners also seem to have a strong motif to learn English in order to become a member of the globalized international English-speaking community. This points to the fact that for the young generations of language learners regardless of the ethnolinguistic vitality of their L1, English plays a highly important role as a mediating language in the often borderless and globalized cultural environment they are part of (see Lamb, 2001, 2009; Yashima, 2009).

The models also reveal that the Ideal L2 self of the students is strongly influenced by International Posture. The results suggest that from among the learning goals, it is the wish to use English as a means of international communication that has a direct link to students' future self-guides. The strength of the link, however, varies significantly across the three learner groups. We might explain this strong relationship for the young adults with reference to the fact that their primary goal in learning English is to be able to use it in their work, which involves communication with speakers of other languages as well as native speakers of English. Their future self-concept thus partly involves being a member of an international community of English-speaking professionals. As for the young generation, their motif to

learn English is in all likelihood associated with the wish to become part of the global community of teenagers interacting in the borderless environment of the Internet and information technology. The university students seem to be in a position in between these two generations. Due to the study requirements at university, they might not have the time to participate in the internet-community as intensively as at a younger age, but they do not fully identify with the professional L2 speaking community either yet.

*An emerging model of motivation*

We believe that the fact that a range of studies have been conducted using similar instruments in the past few years in a number of very diverse learning contexts (see the collection of studies in Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009) allows us to draw conclusions concerning the general structure of L2 learning motivation. We propose here a primarily learner-centered model of motivation, which is based on work in educational psychology; nevertheless social-contextual and instructional factors can also be incorporated in the model (see Figure 4). In our model motivation consists of goal, attitude and self-guide components, which display reciprocal relationships with each other. Our model is an extension of Dörnyei's (2005) theory of the motivational self-system in that it also includes goals and social contextual factors and describes the interaction between these constituents of motivation. The proposed interactive model of motivation is also different from that of Tremblay and Gardner (2005) in that it allows for reciprocal relations between motivational constructs, and it places goals and attitudes at separate levels of the motivational system.

We argue that at the top of the inter-active system of motivation we can find motivated behavior, which acts as a volitional system controlling effort and persistence invested in language learning and which is linked to actual language learning behavior. At the next level, students' self-guides and language learning attitudes can be located. Self-guides include the

learners' own internalized views of the value and importance of L2 learning (Ideal L2 self) and self-efficacy beliefs as well as the external views of their environment (Ought-to L2 self). As shown in the case of the surveyed Chilean sample, attitudes and Ideal L2 self interact with each other, and Ideal L2 self and Ought-to L2 self can also be related for certain generations of language learners. The strength of links between self-guides and attitudes as well as between self-guides, attitudes and motivated behavior varies across socio-cultural and educational contexts. For example, in certain Asian countries, such as China or Japan, Ought-to L2 self might affect motivated behavior, but in other settings such as the one in Chile or in Hungary this influence might not exist. Although our research was not suitable for establishing causal relations, it is possible that the link between self-guides and attitudes and motivated behavior is reciprocal: increased effort might enhance self-related beliefs and foster positive attitudes but also positive images of oneself as a language learner and favorable attitudes to the processes of learning might induce more effort and higher levels of persistence.

*Insert Figure 4 here*

We propose that the third layer of the interactive model includes distal goals of language learning such as international posture and knowledge orientation as well as other possible instrumental and integrative goals depending on the context of language learning. These goals foster the establishment of self-guides and attitudes, but self-related beliefs and language learning experience can also modify language learning goals. Different types of learning goals might have equal status (see Taguchi et al, 2009) or might be sub-ordinated to other goals such as in our models, where knowledge orientation was found to have an indirect effect on attitudes and self-concept with the mediation of international posture.

As shown in our models and in other recent work on motivation in different contexts (Atay & Kurt, 2010; Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Csizér & Kormos, 2008; Gardner, Masgoret &

Tremblay, 1999, Kormos & Csizér, 2008; Ryan, 2009; Taguchi, et al. 2009), the immediate social environment of students, which is represented by milieu and parental encouragement, is a higher-order factor, which affects learning goals as well students' attitude, self-efficacy beliefs and self-concept. Social context and parental encouragement, however, do not have a direct link to motivated behavior, as effort and persistence can only be regulated by the learners themselves (Deci & Ryan, 1985). For the majority of language learners, and even for young adults, parents and the family are the mediators of the societal and cultural values and norms, although in all likelihood, peers and friends also play a similarly important role in conveying motivational influences. Students' self-guides and attitudes to language learning as well as their learning goals are also affected by the instructional setting (Csizér et al. 2010). The influence of milieu and educational context on goals, self-related beliefs and attitudes is mostly likely to be unidirectional although it is possible that students' positive attitudes to language learning might change the views of their milieu about language learning.

**Conclusion**

In our study we investigated the internal structure of language learning motivation of three different age groups of students in Chile: secondary school students, university students and young adult learners by means of a questionnaire. The structural equation models showed that self-related beliefs play a highly important role in L2 learning motivation, but we also found that externally and internally mediated future self-guides enter into different interactions with each other and with motivated behavior in the case of the different groups of language learners. The models revealed that the most important learning goal of the surveyed students was related to the status of English as a lingua franca, and the wish to use English as a means of international communication had a strong direct relationship with students' future self-

guides. The strength of the link, however, was found to vary significantly across the three learner groups depending on the salience of the imagined international community for the given generation. Additionally, external influences stemming from the students' immediate social environment, the family, also had a differential effect on language learning goals, attitudes and future-self-guides.

In our paper we drew up a comprehensive model of language learning motivation, in which four learner-internal factors: goals, affective reactions (attitudes), self-guides and self-efficacy beliefs interact with each other. We also argued, however, that these factors are hierarchically layered with relation to each other, with self-guides, self-efficacy beliefs and attitudes having direct links to goals, and motivated behavior influencing effort and persistence invested in language learning through the mediation of attitudes and self-related beliefs. We pointed out that the learners are situated in the systems of their social, cultural and instructional setting and these external factors influence the components of learner internal motivation.

Our study, however, is not without limitations. Similarly to previous research in this field, our participants primarily came from middle- and upper-class backgrounds, which might be the reason why one of the primarily learning goals for the students was associated with the international status of the English language. It would also be very important to examine the language learning motivation of students in socially disadvantaged settings. The lack of economic resources often deprives students of sufficient learning opportunities, and the social influences for these students might mediate different learning goals and potentially have negative effects on their future self-guides and self-efficacy beliefs. Longitudinal studies could also yield an insight into the causal relationships among motivational effort, self-concept and achievement. Finally we also need to mention that the female participants in the

study outnumbered the male learners. This might also have influenced our results as gender might have an impact on the internal structure of motivation.

**Notes**

1. Research on the motivation of students from social classes is regrettably scarce. The main reason why we did not include students from lower social classes was that we wanted to make direct comparisons with work using similar instruments, and these works have been confined to middle-class secondary students, university students and adult learners.

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**Table 1. A summary of participant characteristics**

| | N | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sample 1 | | | |
| Secondary school students | 201 | 49 | 152 |
| Sample 2 | | | |
| University students | 174 | 69 | 105 |
| Sample 3 | | | |
| Language Institute students | 143 | 63 | 80 |
| Total | 518 | 181 | 337 |

Table 2

| **Joint selected fit measures for the final models** | |
|---|---|
| Chi Square / df ratio | 2.535 |
| CFI | .970 |
| NFI | .951 |
| NNFI | .964 |
| RMSEA | .052 |
| PCFI | .812 |

**Figure 1 The schematic representation of the initially tested model for the three samples**

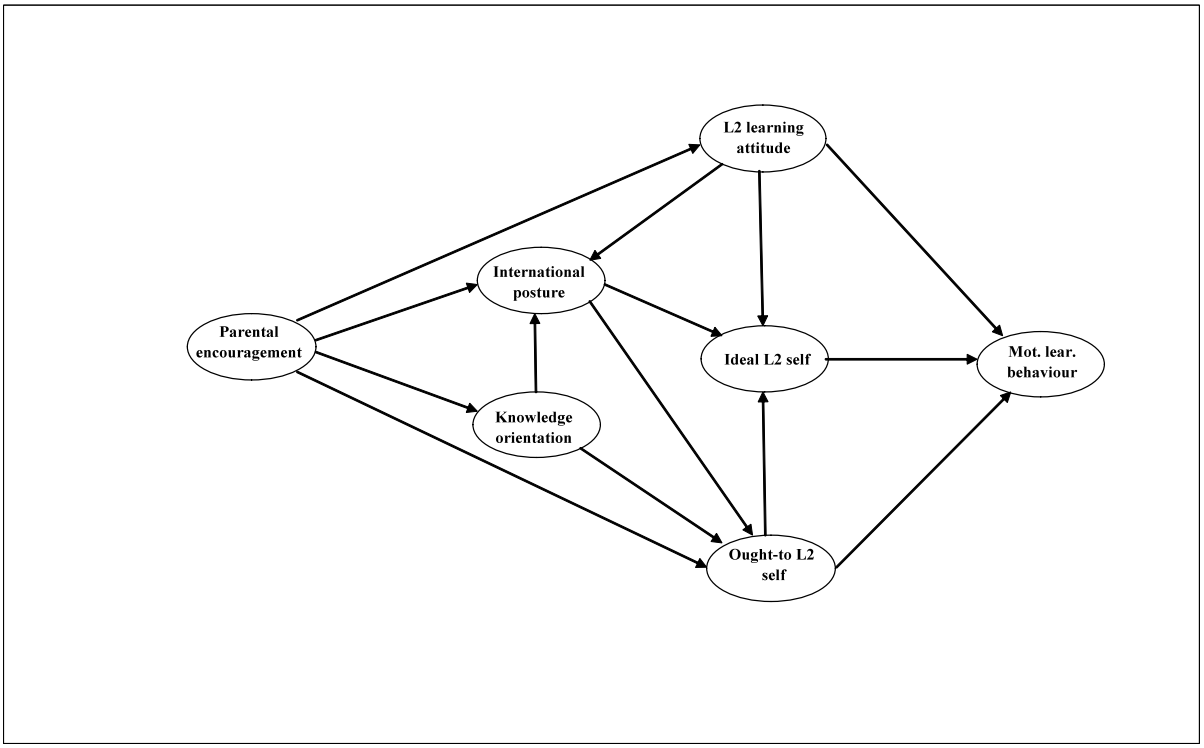

**Figure 2a The final model for secondary school students with standardised estimates**

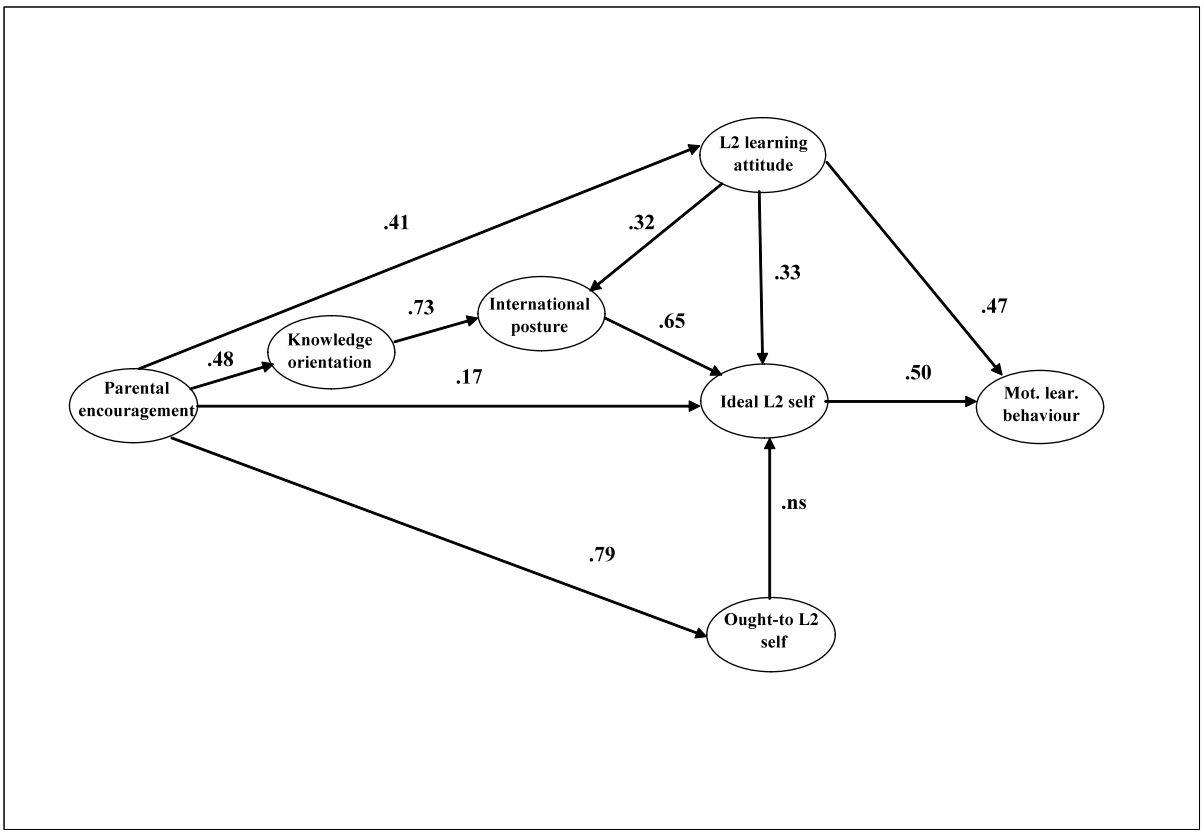

**Figure 2b The final model for university students with standardised estimates**

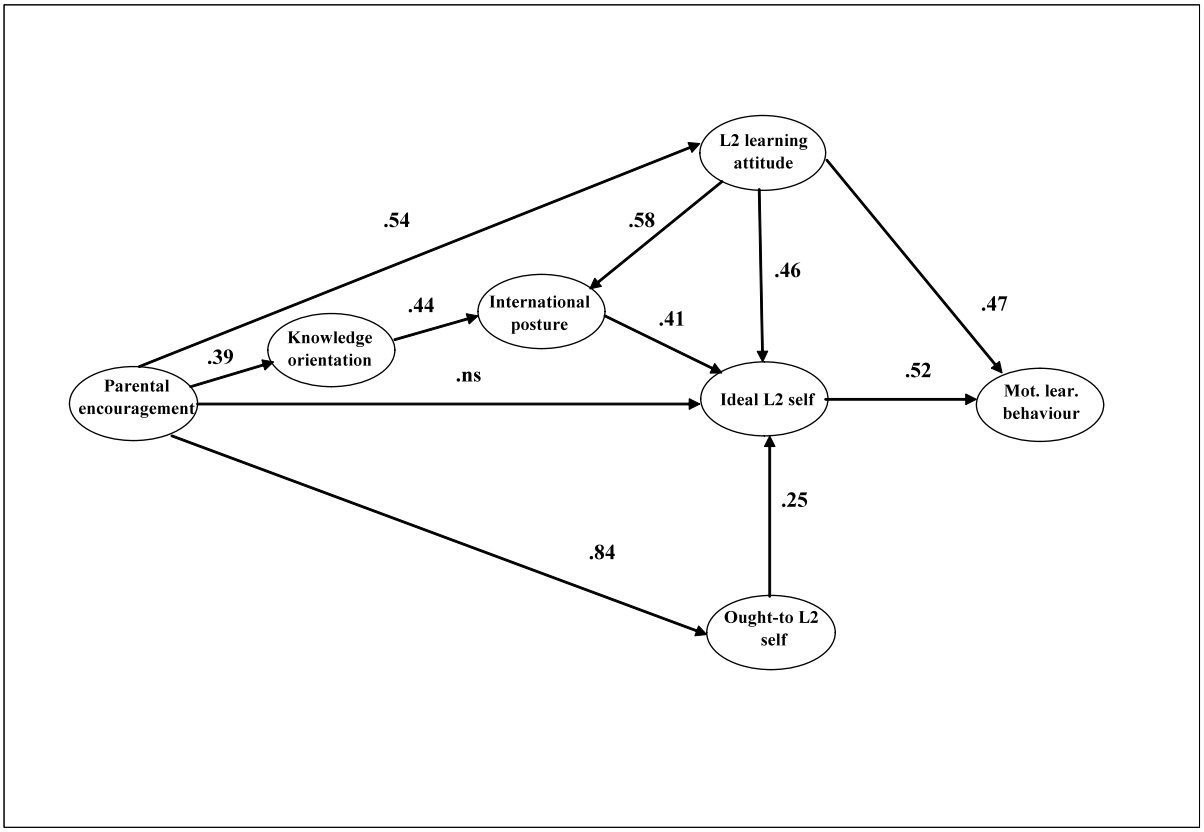


**Figure 2c The final model for young adult language learners with standardised estimates**

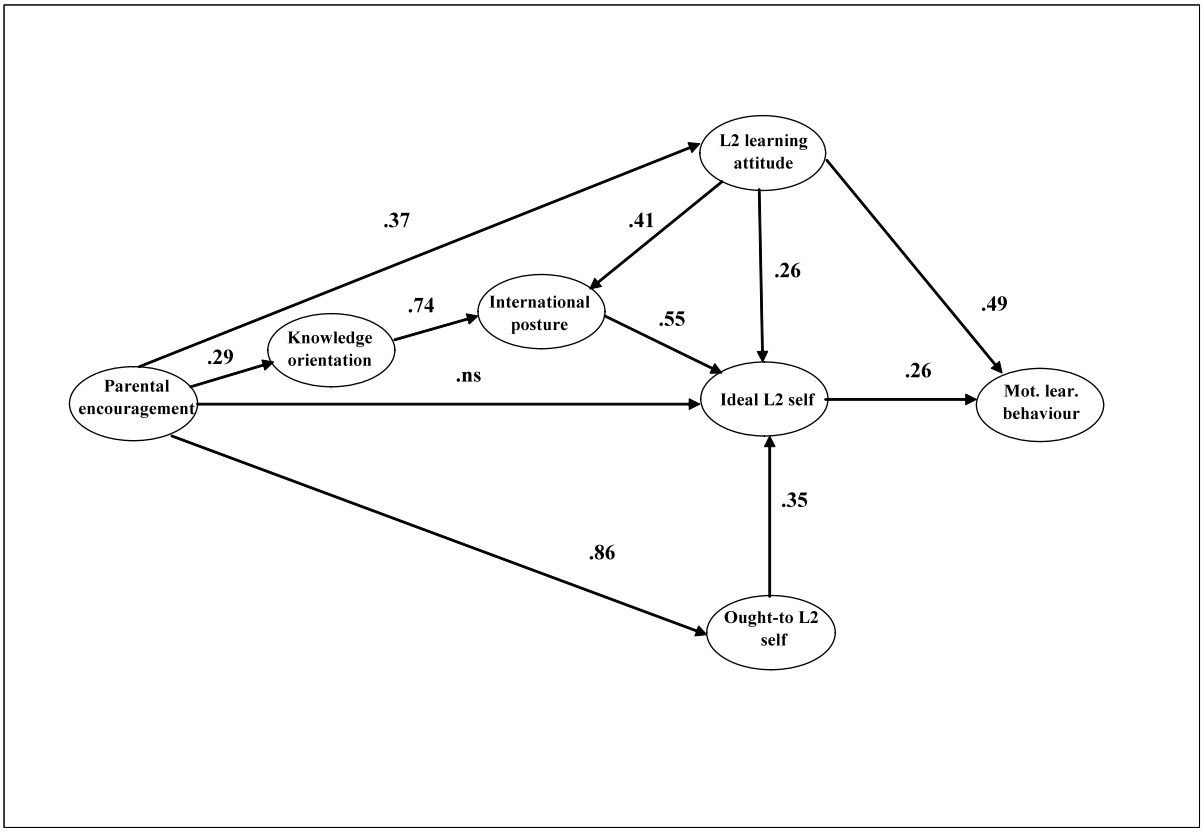

**Figure 3 The comparison of the coefficients among the models for secondary school learners, university students and young adult language learners**