Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

SciVerse ScienceDirect

System 41 (2013) 178–191

SYSTEM

www.elsevier.com/locate/system

Foreign language learning in a 'monoglot culture': Motivational variables amongst students of French and Spanish at an English university

Leigh Oakes*

School of Languages, Linguistics and Film, Queen Mary University of London, London E1 4NS, UK

Received 18 April 2012; revised 11 January 2013; accepted 21 January 2013
Available online 7 March 2013

Abstract

The study on which this article is based investigated reasons for learning a foreign language at university in a predominantly English-speaking environment (the UK). It examined the relative importance of motivational variables as theorised in the field of second language (L2) motivation, and the effect of first language (L1) and linguistic background (English only versus other), country of birth (the UK versus other), choice of target language (French versus Spanish) and centre of study (specialist language department versus language centre). Despite the 'monoglot culture' that prevails in many English-speaking countries, having an English-only profile and especially being born in the UK proved to be important motivating factors in the participants' decision to learn a foreign language. Few significant differences were found between learners of French and Spanish, which were both deemed to have continued instrumental value despite the dominance of English in the world today. The notion of ideal L2 self proved potentially more useful than traditional motivational constructs. However, it is argued that the concept would benefit from further research in particular amongst non-specialist language learners, who appear to have been largely neglected by L2 motivation theory to date, despite possibly representing the future of foreign language learning.

Keywords: Motivation; Language learning; French; Spanish; English speakers; Ideal L2 self; Integrative orientation; Instrumental orientation

1. Introduction

In a recent report on higher education in Europe, a House of Lords sub-committee noted that UK students were prevented from participating in European Union-funded mobility schemes on account of a so-called 'monoglot culture' (House of Lords, 2012: 5) reflected in the country's poor foreign language skills. Indeed, a Eurobarometer survey (2006: 9) found UK citizens to be amongst the least multilingual Europeans: only 38% claimed to be able to hold a conversation in a language other than their mother tongue (compared to 51% in France and 67% in Germany) while the majority (62%) claimed not to know any foreign language (compared to 49% in France and 33% in Germany). That only Ireland fared worse (34% and 66% respectively) suggests the source of the problem: the current

* Tel.: +44 20 7882 8319.
E-mail address: l.oakes@qmul.ac.uk.

0346-251X/$ - see front matter © 2013 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2013.01.019

status of English as the global lingua franca would appear to have a demotivating effect on native English speakers, who do not feel the need to learn foreign languages to succeed in an increasingly globalised world. Despite the country being part of a multilingual Europe, official UK language education policy has also been criticised for a similar 'English is enough' mentality (see e.g. Coleman, 2009; Lanvers, 2011). If languages are of any importance at all in the eyes of the Government, many believe that it is 'purely as a support for business and economic development' (see Worton, 2009: 6), with possibly only a limited number of languages considered 'strategically important' (see Lane and Worton, 2011: 6). Such attitudes might well explain, on the one hand, the decline observed over the last two decades in the specialist study of languages, which tends to place a certain emphasis on the study of the associated cultures (e.g. through literature, film studies, etc.), and, on the other, the increasing demand for languages studied as a supplementary skill, which prioritises the attainment of linguistic proficiency over the study of culture (Kelly and Jones, 2003; Worton, 2009). Indeed, the latter form of provision looks set to increase further, as UK universities are urged to include language learning as part of their international strategies (Footitt, 2005) and to 'do more to encourage language skills among their students through language centres and extra-curricular courses' (House of Lords, 2012: 37).

Inspired by such debates, the study on which the present article is based aimed to investigate reasons for learning a foreign language in the UK, a predominantly English-speaking country that is nonetheless in close proximity to mainland Europe with all its linguistic diversity. A quantitative and qualitative analysis of the responses to a questionnaire of 378 students of French and Spanish at an English university, it sought to examine the relative importance of motivational variables as theorised in the field of second language (L2) motivation. It also aimed to go further, by considering the effect of first language (L1) and linguistic background (English only versus other), country of birth (the UK versus other), choice of target language (French versus Spanish) and centre of study (specialist language department versus language centre).

2. Theoretical framework

In recent years, the field of L2 motivation has undergone a major paradigmatic shift, prompted by the new circumstances brought about by globalisation and new poststructuralist conceptions of identity (Ushioda and Dörnyei, 2009: 1). The traditional distinction between instrumental and integrative orientations (Gardner and Lambert, 1959, 1972) that had dominated the field for decades has come under increasing fire. Not only has this been shown to be a false dichotomy (see Gardner and Tremblay, 1994: 361), but the concept of integrative orientation is particularly problematic. For one, it is considered too broad, with a recognised need to distinguish between strong (e.g. desire to integrate or assimilate) and weak (e.g. interest in L2 culture and language) forms. It has also been argued that 'in FLL [foreign language learning] situations – especially with an international target language such as English, Spanish, or Russian – affective predispositions toward the target language community are unlikely to explain a great proportion of the variance in language attainment' (Dörnyei, 1990: 49). This observation is particularly valid for the learning of English, now considered a basic form of literacy around the world: 'as English loses its association with particular Anglophone cultures and is instead identified with the powerful forces of globalization, the desire to "integrate" loses its explanatory power' (Lamb, 2004: 3). By contrast, with the rise of English, one could perhaps now hypothesise the reverse for learners of other foreign languages. That is to say, the 'monoglot culture' or 'English is enough' mentality may now have usurped much of the instrumental value of other foreign languages, the take-up of which today could rely predominantly on integrative orientations, be they of the strong or weak variety.

In an attempt to overcome some of the problems, an alternative model proposes a continuum of an individual's self-determination in the learning process, from amotivation through extrinsic orientation to intrinsic orientation (Noels et al., 2000; Noels, 2001). Whereas intrinsically oriented students engage in language learning because of an inherent pleasure in the activity (e.g. satisfaction of curiosity, intellectual stimulation, thirst for knowledge, sense of accomplishment), extrinsically oriented students do so for reasons external to the enjoyment of the activity itself (e.g. parental pressure, because it is a requirement for a career). The model does not seek to replace integrative orientation, which is retained as a third component. Others would argue for the need to retain instrumental orientation as well, conceptualising the interaction between the four constructs as in Table 1.

Another model derived from qualitative instead of quantitative methods identifies eight motivational variables (Ushioda, 2001). However, these have since been grouped into three broader clusters that largely mirror the intrinsic, extrinsic and integrative orientations proposed by Noels (Dörnyei, 2005: 105, 2009: 30): actual learning process

Table 1
Motivational constructs (Brown, 2007: 175).

	Intrinsic	Extrinsic
Integrative	L2 learner wishes to integrate with the L2 culture (e.g. for immigration or marriage)	Someone else wishes the L2 learner to know the L2 for integrative reasons (e.g. Japanese parents send kids to Japanese language school)
Instrumental	L2 learner wishes to achieve goals utilising L2 (e.g. for a career)	External power wants L2 learner to learn L2 (e.g. corporation sends Japanese businessman to US for language training)

(including language-related enjoyment/liking, positive learning history, and personal satisfaction); external pressures/incentives; and integrative disposition (including personal goals, desired levels of L2 competence, academic interest, and feelings about L2-speaking countries or people).

Criticising again the notion of integrativeness, Dörnyei and Csizér (2002: 453) hypothesised that this was 'not so much related to any actual, or metaphorical, *integration* into an L2 community as to some more basic *identification process* within the individual's *self-concept*.' Dörnyei (2005, 2009) developed this idea further to formulate the L2 motivational self system, drawing on 'possible selves' theory (Markus and Nurius, 1986) which considers individuals' imagined future conceptions of themselves. Of the different possible selves is the ideal self, the one we would like to become. Applying the paradigm to the field of L2 motivation, Dörnyei identifies the ideal L2 self, which he contrasts with the ought-to L2 self, 'which concerns the [L2] attributes that one believes one *ought to* possess to meet expectations and to *avoid* possible negative outcomes' (Dörnyei, 2009: 29). The third component of Dörnyei's model is the L2 learning experience, which relates to the learning environment (e.g. the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, the experience of success). A basic hypothesis of the model is that 'if proficiency in the target language is part and parcel of one's *ideal* or *ought-to* self, this will serve as a powerful motivating factor to learn the language because of a psychological desire to reduce the discrepancy between our current and possible future selves' (Ushioda and Dörnyei, 2009: 4).

The L2 motivational self system seeks to replace the theoretical concepts previously used in L2 motivation research. Integrative orientation is incorporated into the concept of ideal L2 self in so far as the person one is striving to become like is not a member of a more or less identifiable L2 community so much as an imagined version of one's future self. However, as noted above, this idea stems in particular from motivational research on the learning of English and there is a particular need to examine the relevance of the concept of the ideal L2 self to learners of other foreign languages. As for instrumental orientation, Dörnyei divides this into two types. On the one hand, instrumentality-promotion, concerned with approaching a desired end-state, relates to more internalised reasons for learning a language, and so thus forms part of the ideal L2 self. On the other hand, instrumentality-prevention, related to the avoidance of a feared end-state, concerns more external reasons for learning a language, and so is subsumed into ought-to L2 self. While it seems plausible that extrinsic orientations also fall largely within the field of the new ought-to L2 self, quite where intrinsic orientations fit in the new model is less clear. Dörnyei (2009: 30) seems to claim that these are a 'close match' to his notion of the L2 learning experience. However, since intrinsic orientations are about 'feelings of enjoyment [that] come from *developing a sense of competence* over a voluntarily chosen activity' (Noels, 2001: 45, emphasis added), do they not also overlap with the ideal L2 self? Indeed, some of the responses to the question 'Why are you learning Spanish?' classified by Noels (2001: 46) as examples of intrinsic orientation would seem to be indicative of some imagined future self: 'The exciting ability to become bilingual', 'I enjoy the language, I am good at it, and I want to become fluent in speaking Spanish'.[1] It would seem that the various paradigms proposed do not map onto each other as readily as implied, and there is a need for further theoretical clarity, not least so as to gain a full understanding of the new concept of ideal L2 self. For this reason, the project which forms the basis of the current article made use of all of the main motivational constructs discussed here, with the exception of extrinsic orientation (deemed more or less identical to ought-to L2 self) and the L2 learning experience (which was beyond the

[1] It may be that the problem lies in the difficulty in distinguishing between intrinsic and extrinsic orientation at the point where they meet on the continuum. While the orientations cited here are described as intrinsic, they are very similar in nature to integrated regulation, the most self-determined sub-category of extrinsic orientation (Noels, 2001: 48). Alternatively, Dörnyei may be referring to one of the specific sub-categories of intrinsic orientation also identified by Noels (2001: 45) when he draws a parallel with his idea of the L2 learning experience.

scope of the study), and with the addition of desire for language proficiency (included to test the hypothesis that this is a central component of ideal L2 self).

3. Aims of the study

The study examined the relative importance of the above-mentioned motivational constructs with regard to students of French and Spanish at an English university. No attempt was made to correlate these with actual linguistic proficiency or with intended learning effort, which was assumed to exist amongst students who had chosen to study a language at university. Particular attention was paid to instrumental orientation, so as to investigate whether French and Spanish continue to enjoy instrumental value as foreign languages despite the status of English in the world today. In addition to comparing the findings with those of similar research amongst students of German (Busse and Williams, 2010), the study sought to go further by also examining the potential effect of the following independent variables: L1 and linguistic background (English only versus other), country of birth (UK versus other), target language (French versus Spanish) and centre of study (specialist language department versus language centre). As suggested by the debates highlighted in the Introduction, having an English-only profile may have an impact on motivations to learn a foreign language. The particular case of UK-born citizens is also worth considering. Unlike many other native English speakers (e.g. in the US and Australia), UK citizens live in close proximity to mainland Europe with its manifest linguistic diversity. The country's membership of the European Union has also brought the question of multilingualism to the fore, affecting policy-making and possibly also language attitudes. If the future of foreign language learning lies increasingly in the acquisition of languages as a supplementary skill, as has also been suggested, there is value, too, in investigating whether there exist any differences in motivation amongst language specialists and non-specialists. As for the inclusion of target language as an independent variable, this had two purposes: 1) to shed light on whether attitudes towards different foreign languages of the sort commonly heard amongst the general public (e.g. 'Spanish is a more useful language than French') reflect different motivations; and 2) to contribute to the more general theorisation of L2 motivation. Indeed, in justifying their own comparison of motivation amongst Hungarian students of English, German, French, Italian and Russian, Dörnyei and Csizér (2002: 427) noted that:

> [h]ardly any research has focused on the motivational dispositions related to learning various L2s within the same community (for exceptions, see Clément and Kruidenier, 1983; Schmidt and Watanabe, 2001), even though it is only through such investigations that the learning population can be held constant and thus L2-related variation in the motivation construct can be reliably identified.

The specific research questions were thus as follows:

1. What is the relative importance of the motivational variables examined? Specifically, do French and Spanish continue to enjoy instrumental value despite the role of English as a global lingua franca today? And is the concept of the ideal L2 self of relevance even for students of foreign languages other than English?
2. What is the effect on motivations of L1 and linguistic background (English only versus other) and country of birth (UK versus other)?
3. Are there any differences according to target language (French versus Spanish)?
4. Are there any differences according to centre of study (specialist language department versus language centre)?

4. Methods and participants

The study made use of a direct method of enquiry in the form of a questionnaire in English. Following piloting amongst final-year university students in May 2011, the questionnaire items were refined. The final version contained 25 items designed to investigate the participants' reasons for learning French or Spanish depending on the version of the questionnaire (see Appendix A). Randomly ordered throughout the first part of the questionnaire, the individual items reflected the following motivational factors: desire for language proficiency, integrative orientation, instrumental orientation, intrinsic orientation, ought-to L2 self and ideal L2 self. Most of the individual items were taken or adapted from Busse and Williams (2010), who themselves drew on items used in previous L2 motivation research

(Gardner et al., 1997; Noels, 2001, 2009; Noels et al., 2000; Ryan, 2008; Taguchi et al., 2009). The only major difference related to the items for the intrinsic orientation scale. As there was considered to be too much overlap between three of the variables that comprised this scale in the Busse and Williams study ('Learning German is a challenge which I enjoy', 'I find learning German really interesting' and 'I like the challenges that German poses'), these were replaced with two different items also designed to test personal enjoyment of language learning: 'I find it exciting to be able to communicate in French/Spanish' and 'I like the intellectual challenge of learning French/Spanish'.[2] Responses to all items were measured on a 5-point Likert-like scale (1 = very much, 2 = quite a lot, 3 = so–so, 4 = not really, 5 = not at all).

In addition to the items used to generate quantitative data, the questionnaire also included three items of a qualitative nature (see Appendix B). Using slightly different angles of questioning and worded broadly so as to not impose any pre-determined concepts or categories, these items sought to triangulate the quantitative results. Finally, a series of additional questions sought to gain information about the profile of the participants: degree programme, year of study, sex, age, L1, and L1 of parents and any partner.

The two versions of the questionnaire were distributed between September 2011 and January 2012 at a London university to two categories of students: 1) all non-*ab initio* students of French or Spanish in the university's specialist language departments (excluding students spending their third year abroad); 2) all students enrolled in a French or Spanish course in the university's language centre.[3] The former category included seven so-called language non-specialists for whom the language was not a necessary and named component of their degree programme. Conversely, the latter category included three specialist language learners who were in the language centre to study an additional language to the one(s) named in their degree programme. Both categories included some visiting Erasmus and (American) Associate students at the university for one or two semesters only, while the latter category included the occasional non-student enrolled solely in the non-specialist language course. Students of both French and Spanish were treated as two separate participants for the purposes of the study and were given one questionnaire for each of the languages. As the study sought the views of young people whose identities have been shaped by globalisation, the cut-off age was set at 35, in line with a tendency for a somewhat extended youth today (see St. Laurent, 2008: 20).

In total, 378 questionnaires were returned, the sample distributed according to the independent variables of interest as in Table 2. For the purposes of the present study, a multilingual background was defined as having an L1 other than or in addition to English, or a parent or partner in this situation. Although not related to linguistic competence *per se*, the figures for linguistic background, along with those for L1, nonetheless highlight the multilingual nature of London, contrasting with studies that reveal the poor language skills of UK citizens more broadly (see Introduction). Participants had studied either French or Spanish for an average of 7.28 years (SD = 5.22), with the non-*ab initio* students of the specialist language departments having, as expected, studied for longer (mean = 8.75; SD = 4.30) than the language centre students (mean = 4.82; SD = 5.71). Finally, it is also worth noting that the greater number of females (N = 296; 78.3%) than males (N = 81; 21.4%) included in the sample is typical for language learning in UK universities (see e.g. Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2005: Table 3).

A series of Kolmogorov–Smirnov tests conducted with the PASW Statistics software package revealed the non-normal distributions of the data related to the independent variables of interest: L1 and linguistic background (English only versus other), country of birth (UK versus other), target language (French versus Spanish) and centre of study (specialist language department versus language centre). Non-parametric tests (Mann–Whitney, Wilcoxon, Friedman ANOVA, Spearman Rho) were therefore used for the subsequent analyses, with Bonferroni corrections applied for post-hoc comparisons. Although such tests do not make use of means, these were used so as to allow for comparisons with Busse and Williams' findings.[4]

[2] It is unclear why Busse and Williams decided that intrinsic motivation should comprise five items, when all others factors bar desire for language proficiency only comprise four. Indeed, they mistakenly state in their methodology section that only four items were included (Busse and Williams, 2010: 71).

[3] The decision not to include *ab initio* students in the university's specialist language department was made out of a concern for consistency, there existing such courses in Spanish but not in French.

[4] A further reason for using means was that they proved more useful than medians for interpreting the data, especially in those cases where a significant difference for the test statistic was not matched by an actual difference in medians.

Table 2
Distribution of the sample according to the independent variables of interest.

		N	%
L1	English only	191	50.5
	Other language(s) instead of or in addition to English	185	48.9
Linguistic background	English only	147	38.9
	Multilingual	229	60.6
Place of birth	UK	202	53.4
	Elsewhere	176	46.6
Target language	French	214	59.5
	Spanish	134	40.5
Centre of study	Specialist language department	232	61.4
	Language centre	146	38.6

Table 3
Means and standard deviations (SD) for the six motivational variables examined. 1 = very much, 2 = quite a lot, 3 = so–so, 4 = not really, 5 = not at all. Cr α = Cronbach's alpha internal consistency reliability coefficient.

	Busse and Williams		Present study		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Cr α
Desire for language proficiency	1.36	.47	1.35	.51	.84
Ideal L2 self	1.88	.62	1.87	.70	.76
Intrinsic orientation	1.77	.74	1.89	.62	.71
Instrumental orientation	2.14	.71	2.09	.71	.76
Integrative orientation	2.38	.71	2.48	.71	.76
Ought-to L2 self	4.14	.65	3.81	.88	.81

5. Results

5.1. The relative importance of the motivational variables

Unlike in the Busse and Williams (2010) study, exploratory factor analysis (principal components) did not completely corroborate the motivational scale structure used, in that only four factors could be extracted. Using orthogonal rotation (varimax) and a loading coefficient cut-off of ≥.6, these were clearly identified as: desire for language proficiency, ought-to L2 self, integrative orientation, and instrumental orientation. That intrinsic orientation did not appear as a distinct factor may have been due to the changes made to the items comprising that scale as discussed above. However, this was not the case for the ideal L2 self items, which were the same as those used in the other study. Instead, the four items for intrinsic orientation and the four for ideal L2 self items all loaded onto the integrative orientation factor, albeit at lower levels (.43–.56); those for ideal L2 self also loaded onto the instrumental orientation factor (.35–.47).

Another reason for the possible difference with the Busse and Williams study relates to the fact that two types of students were included here: language specialists and non-specialists. Indeed, when a factor analysis was conducted on the language specialists data only, five factors were extracted. The additional factor showed the beginnings of the ideal L2 concept, grouping three of the relevant items at high loadings (.50–.82); the fourth ('Being able to converse in French/Spanish is an important part of the person I want to become') loaded less well (.23). However, other items also loaded onto this factor, including three intrinsic orientation items at a fairly high level (.52–.57). This prompts two possible conclusions. First, the concept of ideal L2 self may be more relevant for language specialists, who have specifically chosen to devote part of their lives to language learning. Second, there would seem to be some overlap between intrinsic orientation and ideal L2 self especially, and between ideal L2 self, integrative orientation and instrumental orientation more broadly. These observations confirm the conceptual overlap noted in Section 2.

Returning to the overall dataset comprising language specialists and non-specialists, the scales for intrinsic orientation and ideal L2 self were nonetheless retained for the analyses of the present study so as to allow for comparison with the findings of Busse and Williams. Likewise, the item 'I think knowing French/Spanish will help me to become

a more knowledgeable person' was retained as a component of the instrumental orientation scale, even though it displayed a comparably lower loading (.32) than the other items comprising this factor. Despite the problems with intrinsic orientation and ideal L2 self discussed above, reliability analyses established acceptable Cronbach's α scores for all six scales.

Table 3 shows the mean scores for the six motivational scales examined, which bear a remarkable resemblance to those obtained by Busse and Williams (2010) for German. As in the latter study, a desire to attain proficiency in the target language was deemed to be the most important motivational factor ($z = -11.95$, $p < .001$ when compared with the mean for ideal L2 self). Comparison of the individual items that made up the language proficiency scale also revealed, as noted equally by Busse and Williams, that it was a desire to improve speaking skills in particular that motivated the participants the most (mean = 1.20); slightly more than a desire to improve skills in listening comprehension (mean = 1.40; $z = -6.44$, $p < .001$), writing (mean = 1.40; $z = -6.09$, $p < .001$) or reading (mean = 1.51; $z = -7.50$, $p < .001$). As expected, a significant correlation was observed between desire for proficiency and the concept of ideal L2 self, even if the effect size was only modest ($r_s = .38$, $p < .001$).

As in the Busse and Williams study, no significant difference was found between ideal L2 self and intrinsic orientation (both of which also correlated strongly with one another: $r_s = .62$, $p < .001$). Notwithstanding the problems with these two scales noted above, the means observed here could indicate that the students were strongly motivated by their enjoyment of learning French or Spanish and that being a speaker of French or Spanish formed an important component of the person they wanted to become.

In a rejection of the hypothesis that English may have usurped much of the instrumental value of foreign languages today, the participants reported a fair degree of instrumental orientation, which they claimed was even stronger than integrative orientation ($z = -3.89$, $p < .001$). When examining individual items within the latter scale, it was found that although the participants claimed to like meeting people from French- and Spanish-speaking countries (mean = 1.71) and spending time there (mean = 1.80), they felt only a weak affinity with people there (mean = 2.85) and expressed little desire to become more like them (mean = 3.59). Together with the results of Busse and Williams, who also reported lower means for these latter two items (means = 3.05 and 3.28 respectively), this provides further evidence that integrative orientation as traditionally conceived is too broad a concept for accounting for motivation.

Finally, as was also the finding of Busse and Williams for the students of German, the concept of ought-to L2 self was deemed of unimportance. This is perhaps understandable considering that, unlike at school, students at university presumably have a greater degree of choice in their subject(s) of study and thus have less external pressure exerted upon them.

The fact that the rank ordering of the motivational variables was remarkably similar to that observed by Busse and Williams with regard to German suggests that the findings might be applicable to a somewhat broader population, if not to foreign language students at UK universities in general, at least to students of the bigger European languages.

5.2. *Effect of L1, linguistic background and country of birth*

The study went further than Busse and Williams by also examining the potential effect of certain independent variables, in the first instance L1, linguistic background and country of birth.

As seen in Table 4, those participants who reported to have only English as their L1 reported stronger motivations for three of the variables examined: desire for proficiency ($U = 14{,}766.00$, $z = -3.03$, $p < .01$), intrinsic orientation ($U = 13{,}641.00$, $z = -3.85$, $p < .001$) and integrative orientation ($U = 15{,}433.00$, $z = -2.13$, $p < .05$). In addition, the participants who reported an English-only linguistic background reported stronger motivations for two of the variables examined: desire for proficiency (mean = 1.23 versus 1.42; $U = 13{,}806.50$, $z = -3.23$, $p < .01$) and intrinsic orientation (mean = 1.74 versus 1.99; $U = 12{,}846.50$, $z = -3.91$, $p < .001$). Far from having a demotivating effect on the language learners examined, having only English as an L1 would thus seem to be an important motivational factor in their desire for proficiency in French or Spanish and in their wanting to learn the languages for intrinsic and integrative reasons. Similarly, having an English-only linguistic background would seem to lead to a greater desire to be proficient in French or Spanish and to learn these languages for reasons related to personal enjoyment.

When country of birth was considered, the differences were even more striking: participants born in the UK claimed to be more motivated than those who were born elsewhere with respect to every one of the six variables examined (see Table 5). They reported stronger motivations for desire for language proficiency ($U = 14{,}590.50$, $z = -3.31$, $p < .01$), ideal L2 self ($U = 15{,}409.50$, $z = -2.25$, $p < .05$), intrinsic orientation ($U = 13{,}763.00$,

Table 4
Means and standard deviations (SD) for the six motivational variables examined according to L1 (English only versus other). 1 = very much, 2 = quite a lot, 3 = so–so, 4 = not really, 5 = not at all. *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

	English only		Other	
	$N = 202$		$N = 176$	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Desire for proficiency	1.26**	.43	1.44**	.58
Ideal L2 self	1.83	.67	1.91	.73
Intrinsic orientation	1.79***	.64	1.99***	.57
Instrumental orientation	2.05	.66	2.14	.75
Integrative orientation	2.42*	.71	2.55*	.69
Ought-to L2 self	3.75	.93	3.88	.81

Table 5
Means and standard deviations (SD) for the six motivational variables examined according to country of birth (UK-born versus born elsewhere). 1 = very much, 2 = quite a lot, 3 = so–so, 4 = not really, 5 = not at all. *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

	UK-born		Born elsewhere	
	$N = 202$		$N = 176$	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Desire for proficiency	1.26**	.44	1.45**	.57
Ideal L2 self	1.80*	.68	1.95*	.72
Intrinsic orientation	1.79***	.61	2.01***	.61
Instrumental orientation	1.97**	.64	2.23**	.76
Integrative orientation	2.41*	.71	2.57*	.70
Ought-to L2 self	3.69**	.94	3.95**	.79

$z = -3.82$, $p < .001$), instrumental orientation ($U = 14{,}287.50$, $z = -3.82$, $p < .01$), integrative orientation ($U = 15{,}167.00$, $z = -2.48$, $p < .05$) and ought-to L2 self ($U = 14{,}932.50$, $z = -2.70$, $p < .01$). It thus appears that it is the 'monoglot culture' of the UK in particular that is being challenged here. Having grown up in an increasingly united Europe that encourages individual mobility, the UK-born participants are perhaps especially aware of the disadvantages of English monolingualism.

Analysis of the qualitative data would seem to add weight to the general thrust of these findings. When asked why they were studying French or Spanish, some UK-born and/or English L1 participants made explicit reference to the perceived poor language skills of British people as a motivating factor:

> Sometimes I feel embarrassed to be English as we are notorious for being reluctant to learn other languages. Those in other countries often converse in English with us, therefore I would like to show my respect by being able to speak another language. (UK-born, English L1, French)

> I don't want to be seen as an ignorant British person who can only speak English and I would ideally like to learn other languages too. (UK-born, English L1, French)

> You can speak another language: it's embarrassing so many British people can only speak one. (UK-born, English L1, French)

> I think in Britain today not many people speak foreign languages, perhaps in the job market speaking a second language gives you an extra edge. (Australian-born, English L1, French)

Other comments point to the monolingualism of English speakers more generally as a source of motivation for learning French or Spanish:

> Because most native English speakers don't know a single foreign language. Naturally, I want to learn this! (USA-born, English L1, French)

> I think it is important to talk to people in their own language and not presume that everyone speaks English. (UK-born, English L1, Spanish)
>
> Speaking only one language is boring! I would like to travel to South America and be able to communicate effectively with others around the world. (UK-born, English L1, Spanish)
>
> [N]ot everyone speaks English and deciding to study a foreign language shows in my opinion a desire and respect to integrate with other cultures. (Irish-born, English L1, French)

These findings can of course not be generalised to all English speakers or UK citizens, and it must be remembered that these were people who were already motivated enough to choose to study a foreign language at university. However, it remains noteworthy that amongst this latter category of people, an English-only and especially a UK-born profile would seem to be important motivating factors for learning a foreign language.

5.3. Effect of target language

Considering that some languages are frequently judged as more important or worthy of being learned than others, it was hypothesised that target language might affect the scores for the different motivational variables. Surprisingly, this was not the case and differences were only observed with regard to three of the individual items. The students of French were on average slightly more convinced than their Spanish counterparts that studying their language to a high level of proficiency would allow them to earn more money (mean = 2.52 versus 2.75; $U = 14{,}960.50$, $z = -2.12$, $p < .05$). They also claimed to like the intellectual challenge of studying their language slightly more than the Spanish students (mean = 1.68 versus 1.93; $U = 14{,}877.00$, $z = -2.34$, $p < .05$) and were on average somewhat more adamant in their rejection of the suggestion that it was important to learn the language because the people they respected thought they should do so (mean = 3.79 versus 3.51; $U = 14{,}732.00$, $z = -2.20$, $p < .05$). That no differences were observed between the students of French and Spanish with regard to the motivational scales more generally adds further weight to the possibility of generalising the findings concerning the rank ordering of the motivational factors.

Analysis of the qualitative data confirmed the insignificance of target language as a motivating factor when considering the sample as a whole. Responses to the question about the advantages and disadvantages of knowing French or Spanish today revealed evidence of different beliefs about French and Spanish of the type one expected to find, notably concerning the perceived prestige, utility and the global nature of these languages. However, many of these beliefs balanced each other out and/or were negated by the fact that the same belief was also expressed about the other language by other participants:

> The good thing about French is that it is a global language, it allows you to have access to a great number of cultures while your employment horizons are enlarged when speaking French. (French)
>
> It's pretty much a global language. Such a huge amount of people speak Spanish. Having knowledge of it, even just a bit, is beneficial within work, travelling and socialising. (Spanish)
>
> It is a widely spoken language all over the globe [but] it is not yet the language of the EU that is most commonly used and French is needed to access jobs in this sector. (Spanish)
>
> It's not incredibly widely used, not like Mandarin for business or English for, like, almost everywhere. It's a posh language in the sense that people who speak French as a second language are normally quite well educated apart from that, and a good education is still affiliated with money. (French)

Indeed, most participants, even those who had expressed a preference for their particular language of study, stressed the value of learning *any* foreign language:

> Knowing any language other than English is valued in the world of work. (French)
>
> Learning any language makes you a more open-minded individual. (French)
>
> There can be no disadvantages for knowing any language. (Spanish)

Table 6
Means and standard deviations (SD) for the six motivational variables examined according to centre of study (specialist language department versus language centre). 1 = very much, 2 = quite a lot, 3 = so–so, 4 = not really, 5 = not at all. *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

	Specialist language dept		Language centre	
	$N = 232$		$N = 146$	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Desire for proficiency	1.27***	.46	1.48***	.57
Ideal L2 self	1.70***	.61	2.14***	.74
Intrinsic motivation	1.74***	.58	2.13***	.59
Instrumental orientation	1.96***	.59	2.30***	.82
Integrative orientation	2.33***	.70	2.73***	.65
Ought-to L2 self	3.74	.92	3.92	.79

Clearly, the participants of this study valued the importance of learning a foreign language irrespective of which one they had chosen. This contrasts with a study of motivational variables amongst language students in Hungary, which revealed a clear and stable rank ordering of the languages studied: English, followed by German, French, Italian and finally Russian (Dörnyei and Csizér, 2002). Further research conducted in a variety of settings would be needed to investigate the differences between the studies, which could well be due to context, not least the dominant position of English in the environment in which the present study was undertaken.

5.4. *Effect of centre of study*

If no differences were found for target language, this was not the case for centre of study, where differences were observed on all of the motivational scales bar one, namely ought-to L2 self, for which statistical significance was not achieved (see Table 6). Students studying in the specialist language departments expressed on average a greater desire for proficiency in their language of study ($U = 13{,}194.50$, $z = -3.98$, $p < .001$), a stronger ideal L2 self ($U = 10{,}932.00$, $z = -5.85$, $p < .001$), and stronger intrinsic ($U = 10{,}314.00$, $z = -6.46$, $p < .001$), instrumental ($U = 12{,}855.00$, $z = -3.97$, $p < .001$) and integrative ($U = 11{,}352.50$, $z = -5.43$, $p < .001$) orientations. On the one hand, these findings are perhaps not surprising, considering that these students had studied French or Spanish for longer and chosen to devote much of their university studies to these languages. On the other hand, the learning of a foreign language is completely voluntary for language non-specialists in the UK, unlike in countries such as the US, where it is often a requirement of some non-language programmes. As such, one may have expected to observe fewer differences between the language specialists and non-specialists, since the latter had also made a specific choice to devote time and energy to learning a foreign language.

Indeed, analysis of the qualitative data revealed a great variety of motivations amongst those taking a French or Spanish course in the university's language centre. Some explained that it allowed them to keep up a language previously learned at school:

> Having studied it at school and not reached what I consider my potential, I wanted another chance to learn the language well enough to be able to communicate in France. (Environmental Studies, French)

Others stressed the pleasurable nature (intrinsic orientation) of undertaking an activity different from their main field of study:

> It is a wonderful break away from essays, lectures and seminars. Almost respite. (History, Spanish)

Confirming the findings of a recent study amongst non-specialist language learners in the UK that revealed a perceived link between learning a foreign language and improved job opportunities (Canning, 2011: 11), the participants frequently cited instrumental reasons for studying the language:

> Because it would give me an opportunity for a better job in the future. (International Relations, French)

> You can work and look more employable to a future employer. (History and Comparative Literature, Spanish)

Such reasons were not always geared towards increasing employability but also related to other motivational factors that could still be considered instrumental in nature:

> To become a more knowledgeable and respected person. (International Foundation Programme, Spanish)

> To enhance my knowledge of the world. (Business Management, French)

Despite such instrumental considerations, a great number of the participants expressed an integrative orientation towards their language of study, be that of the strong (direct contact with the L2 community) or weak (indirect contact with the L2 and related culture) variety:

> I have some friends in French speaking countries, I'll stay in touch with them after my time at university. Besides I really enjoy watching movies and reading books in French. (Management and Organisational Innovation)

> So that I can read French magazines and watch French movies without subtitle[s]. (Law)

> Because it is a language I enjoy learning and I have a strong interest in Spanish culture. (History)

Some students of French even cited a love of French literature as a motivation for their studying the language as a non-specialist:

> Because I really like French fiction and I'd [like] to read it in [the] original, also poetry. And I enjoy French songs. (Environmental Studies)

> Because I want to be able to read French authors that have not been translated into English, Portuguese or Spanish (the languages I currently speak). (Politics)

It has been claimed that there is a 'need to challenge the "false dichotomy" which exists between Language Centres (perceived as merely teaching language skills) and academic Departments (who define themselves as teaching language through content and culture)' (Worton, 2009: 31). However, the results of this study suggest that there may indeed exist a difference between the two with regard to the strength of the students' motivations. Could these differences relate to the different emphasis placed on culture by the two forms of language provision? Or might they result from other differences, such as those of a structural nature (e.g. contact hours, forms of assessment used)? Considering the importance increasingly placed on the study of languages as a supplementary skill, it would be worth investigating further the source of these motivational differences.

6. Implications

The findings of the study suggest a number of theoretical and policy implications. In the first instance, a strong version of integrative orientation might not only be inappropriate in EFL contexts, but also for the learning of other languages which nonetheless have more clearly identified L2 communities. The data revealed evidence of an 'international posture', a concept advanced in the context of EFL in Japan to refer to 'interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners, and […] openness or a non-ethnocentric attitude toward different cultures' (Yashima, 2002: 57). That the participants expressed little desire to go beyond this and become more like people from French- and Spanish-speaking countries and felt only a weak affinity with them provides further support for the idea of a 'globally-involved but nationally-responsible future self' (Lamb, 2004: 16) also confirmed by research in other fields and contexts. For example, in a study of national identity and globalisation conducted in 1998 amongst 2500 young people in seven contexts, it was found that national identity was not undermined by globalisation; rather it was reinforced, the nation still constituting for the participants the main 'place of belonging' and 'primary reference point', a 'springboard from which to cast oneself elsewhere' (Létourneau, 1998: 412–413). Another qualitative study of cultural identity in the globalised era showed that, even if the nation is at times 'in conflict with personal cultural realities', it nonetheless 'provides a framing for identities' (Holliday, 2010: 175).

As such, the concept of ideal L2 self may indeed prove more beneficial for understanding motivation for learning a foreign language today. However, the findings of the present study suggest the need to consider two points regarding

the ideal L2 self. First, there may be some overlap with the notion of intrinsic orientation that may be worthy of further investigation. What is the relationship between a forward-pointing ideal L2 self and present-focused intrinsic orientations? Second, it may be that the notion of ideal L2 self is more relevant to specialist than to non-specialist language learners. This mirrors an observation made in Japan regarding university English majors versus non-English majors and secondary school students (Ryan, 2009: 133–135). A theoretical framework that seeks to provide a general account of L2 motivation would do well to consider as wide a variety of language learners as possible, not least because non-specialist language learning looks set to increase in the future. To the list of aspects of the learning context that should be considered – e.g. monocultural versus multicultural setting, dominance versus non-dominance of the language learner's own ethnolinguistic group, ethnolinguistic background of the learner (Noels, 2001: 58–60) – type of learner (specialist versus non-specialist) should also be added. Future research might employ cluster analysis techniques to investigate the differences between various types of language learner.

In addition to theoretical considerations, the differences observed between specialist and non-specialist students also highlight important policy implications. While the latter group exhibited a great variety of motivations for learning French and Spanish – which again can be compared with findings amongst non-English majors in Japan (Rivers, 2012) – the fact remains that the strength of these motivations was weaker, even though the language learning was completely voluntary. If the future of language learning lies in non-specialist courses, as has been suggested, it is important that such students be as motivated as possible. This will certainly require further research into the motivations of such language learners, which may be affected by the nature of the courses offered by language centres as opposed to specialist language departments (e.g. with regard to course content, number of contact hours, forms of assessment used).

The rank ordering of the various motivational orientations observed in the present study and by Busse and Williams (2010) also has clear policy implications. That the most important reason behind the decision to study a foreign language was the desire to attain proficiency in it, and spoken proficiency in particular, is something that all providers of foreign language teaching would do well to take into account when designing programmes and courses. Contact hours devoted to actual language learning as opposed to so-called 'content' (i.e. literature, cultural studies, film studies) is often limited, at least in the UK, where content classes are also seldom taught in the target language as is the case in many other countries. Arguments in favour of teaching content in English instead so as not to hinder intellectual development are clearly at odds with students' desire to attain proficiency in the L2 first and foremost.

Finally, the hypothesis that English may have usurped much of the instrumental value of other foreign languages was not confirmed by the data, which showed that the participants were in fact more instrumentally than integratively orientated. Despite the recognised importance of English as a global lingua franca, French and Spanish were thus still perceived to have instrumental value. Together with the observation that having some form of English-only profile and especially being born in the UK were important motivating factors, this represents a clear rejection of the 'monoglot attitude' by the participants. While the latter cannot be considered representative of English speakers or UK citizens in general, their views nonetheless add further support to the increasing realisation that, even in this globalised world, English is not enough.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express his gratitude to the two anonymous reviewers for their comments on a previous version of this article.

Appendix A. Questionnaire items (quantitative data)

Desire for language proficiency

- I am studying French/Spanish because I want to improve my French/Spanish
- By studying French/Spanish I hope to improve my speaking skills in French/Spanish
- By studying French/Spanish I hope to improve my reading skills in French/Spanish
- By studying French/Spanish I hope to improve my written French/Spanish
- By studying French/Spanish I hope to improve my listening comprehension in French/Spanish

Integrative orientation

- I like to spend time in French/Spanish-speaking countries
- I would like to become more like people from French/Spanish-speaking countries
- I like meeting people from French/Spanish-speaking countries
- I feel an affinity with people who live in French/Spanish-speaking countries

Instrumental orientation

- Knowing French/Spanish will help me to obtain a better job
- I think knowing French/Spanish will help me to become a more knowledgeable person
- I think French/Spanish will help in my future career
- Studying French/Spanish to a high level of proficiency will allow me to earn more money

Intrinsic orientation

- I really enjoy learning French/Spanish
- Learning French/Spanish is one of the most important aspects of my life
- I find it exciting to be able to communicate in French/Spanish
- I like the intellectual challenge of learning French/Spanish

Ought-to L2 self

- I consider learning French/Spanish important because the people I respect think that I should do so
- People around me (e.g. parents, partner) believe that I ought to study French/Spanish
- I study French/Spanish because people around me expect me to do so
- If I fail to learn French/Spanish, I will be letting other people down

Ideal L2 self

- Being able to converse in French/Spanish is an important part of the person I want to become
- If my dreams come true, I will use French/Spanish effectively in the future
- I can imagine myself as someone who is able to use French/Spanish well
- Whenever I think of my future, I imagine myself being able to use French/Spanish

Appendix B. Questionnaire items (qualitative data)

- Why are you studying French/Spanish?
- Do you envisage using French/Spanish after your time at university? How so?
- What, in your view, are the advantages of knowing French/Spanish today? Are there any disadvantages?

References

Brown, H.D., 2007. Principles of Language Learning and Teaching, fifth ed. Pearson Education, White Plains, NY.

Busse, V., Williams, M., 2010. Why German? Motivation of students studying German at English universities. Language Learning Journal 38 (1), 67–85.

Canning, J., 2011. A Survey of Non-specialist Language Learners in UK Higher Education 2011. University Council for Modern Languages and the Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies, Southampton. http://www.ucml.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Survey%20of%20non-specialist%20language%20learners%202011.pdf (accessed 17.04.12.).

Clément, R., Kruidenier, B., 1983. Orientations in second language acquisition: I. The effects of ethnicity, milieu and target language on their emergence. Language Learning 33 (3), 272–291.

Coleman, J.A., 2009. Why the British do not learn languages: myths and motivations in the United Kingdom. Language Learning Journal 37 (1), 111–127.
Dörnyei, Z., 1990. Conceptualizing motivation in foreign-language learning. Language Learning 40, 45–78.
Dörnyei, Z., 2005. The Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition. Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ.
Dörnyei, Z., 2009. The L2 motivational self. In: Dörnyei, Z., Ushioda, E. (Eds.), Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp. 9–42.
Dörnyei, Z., Csizér, K., 2002. Some dynamics of language attitudes and motivation: results of a longitudinal nationwide survey. Applied Linguistics 23 (4), 421–462.
Eurobarometer, 2006. Europeans and Their Languages. In: Special Eurobarometer 243/Wave 64.3. European Commission, Brussels.
Footitt, H., 2005. The National Languages Strategy in Higher Education. Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies, Southampton.
Gardner, R.C., Lambert, W.E., 1959. Motivational variables in second-language acquisition. Canadian Journal of Psychology 13 (4), 266–272.
Gardner, R.C., Lambert, W.E., 1972. Attitudes and Motivation in Second-language Learning. Newbury House, Rowley.
Gardner, R.C., Tremblay, P.F., 1994. On motivation, research agendas, and theoretical frameworks. The Modern Language Journal 78 (3), 359–368.
Gardner, R.C., Tremblay, P.F., Masgoret, A.-M., 1997. Towards a full model of second language learning: an empirical investigation. The Modern Language Journal 81 (3), 344–362.
Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2005. Students in Higher Education Institutions 2003/04. HESA, Cheltenham. http://www.hesa.ac.uk/content/view/1906/251 (accessed 17.04.12.).
Holliday, A., 2010. Complexity in cultural identity. Language and Intercultural Communication 10 (2), 165–177.
House of Lords European Union Committee, 2012. The Modernisation of Higher Education in Europe (27th Report of Session 2010–12). http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201012/ldselect/ldeucom/275/275.pdf (accessed 17.04.12.).
Kelly, M., Jones, D., 2003. A New Landscape for Languages. The Nuffield Foundation, London.
Lamb, M., 2004. Integrative motivation in a globalizing world. System 32 (4), 3–19.
Lane, P., Worton, M., 2011. Introduction. In: Lane, P., Worton, M. (Eds.), French Studies in and for the Twenty-first Century. Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, pp. 3–11.
Lanvers, U., 2011. Language education policy in England. Is English the elephant in the room? Apples – Journal of Applied Language Studies 5 (3), 63–78.
Létourneau, J., 1998. La nation des jeunes. In: Jewsiewicki, B., Létourneau, J. (Eds.), Les jeunes à l'ère de la mondialisation. Quête identitaire et conscience historique. Septentrion, Sillery, pp. 411–430.
Markus, H.R., Nurius, P., 1986. Possible selves. American Psychologist 41 (9), 954–969.
Noels, K.A., 2001. New orientations in language learning motivation: towards a model of intrinsic, extrinsic and integrative orientations and motivation. In: Dörnyei, Z., Schmidt, R. (Eds.), Motivation and Second Language Acquisition. University of Hawai'i, Honolulu, pp. 43–68.
Noels, K.A., 2009. The internalisation of language learning into the self and social identity. In: Dörnyei, Z., Ushioda, E. (Eds.), Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp. 295–313.
Noels, K.A., Pelletier, L.G., Clément, R., Vallerand, R.J., 2000. Why are you learning a second language? Motivational orientations and self-determination theory. Language Learning 50 (1), 57–85.
Rivers, D.J., 2012. Modelling the perceived value of compulsory English language education in undergraduate non-language majors of Japanese nationality. Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development 33 (3), 251–267.
Ryan, S., 2008. The ideal L2 selves of Japanese learners of English. Doctoral dissertation. University of Nottingham.
Ryan, S., 2009. The ideal L2 self and Japanese learners of English. In: Dörnyei, Z., Ushioda, E. (Eds.), Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp. 120–143.
Schmidt, R., Watanabe, Y., 2001. Motivation, strategy use, and pedagogical preferences in foreign language learning. In: Dörnyei, Z., Schmidt, R. (Eds.), Motivation and Second Language Acquisition. University of Hawai'i, Honolulu, pp. 313–359.
St. Laurent, N., with the collaboration of Maraillet, E., Chastenay, M.-H., Tessier, C., 2008. Le français et les jeunes. Conseil supérieur de la langue française, Quebec City.
Taguchi, T., Magid, M., Papi, M., 2009. The L2 motivational self system among Japanese, Chinese and Iranian learners of English: a comparative study. In: Dörnyei, Z., Ushioda, E. (Eds.), Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp. 66–97.
Ushioda, E., 2001. Language learning at university: exploring the role of motivational thinking. In: Dörnyei, Z., Schmidt, R. (Eds.), Motivation and Second Language Acquisition. University of Hawai'i, Honolulu, pp. 93–125.
Ushioda, E., Dörnyei, Z., 2009. Motivation, language identity and the L2 self: a theoretical overview. In: Dörnyei, Z., Ushioda, E. (Eds.), Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp. 1–8.
Worton, M., 2009. Review of Modern Foreign Languages Provision in Higher Education in England. Higher Education Funding Council for England, Bristol. http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09_41/09_41.pdf (accessed 29.01.10.).
Yashima, T., 2002. Willingness to communicate in L2: the Japanese EFL context. The Modern Language Journal 86 (1), 54–66.