

EXPATRIATE STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TO LEARN ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT: The aim of this article is to present and analyse the motivational factors that drive expatriates in Brussels to learn English as a second language. Brussels is a very cosmopolitan city, where 179 different nationalities live and use English as a lingua franca to communicate among each other. There is not much research on expatriates in the literature on second language learning motivation, and all the available publications focus on the motivation to learn the language of the host country rather than global English. The present study takes a quantitative research approach in the context of Dornyei's second language self-motivation theory. It employs Taguchi, Magid and Papi's (2009) questionnaire to understand what motivational factors are most related to the effort expatriates intend to invest in studying English. The surveyed group consists of 40 expatriates learning English in Brussels. The main outcome of the statistical analysis is that the attitudes towards learning English and the incentive values (a variable which includes promotion- and prevention-focused instrumental motives and travel orientation) are the factors most closely related to the intended effort to learn English, whereas the Ideal L2 self and the Ought-to L2 self do not directly correlate with the intended effort.

KEY WORDS: language learning motivation, the L2 Motivational Self System, foreign language learning, attitudes towards learning English, incentive values, motivation survey, expatriates

Introduction

The study of language learning motivation can be useful for individual students and teachers, as well as the education system as a whole by providing informative analyses and thus aiding decisions about language course content and methodology, students' and/or teachers' evaluation, teacher education, etc. This article aims to give a snapshot of the factors that motivate foreign language students to learn English, with expatriates in Brussels, where English is not predominant, as a case in point – a target group that has not specifically been addressed in language motivation research so far. The concept of motivation is often associated and explained with the desire to learn (Jodai, Zafarghandi & Tous, 2013). Language learning motivation is seen as ‘the second-best predictor of learners' achievement scores’ (Gardner & Lambert, 1959, p. 266), and, unlike the first one – language aptitude – more subject to change (Ellis, 2004). Therefore, language learning motivation is considered a highly significant factor for the language learning success and attracts a great deal of research. Expatriates, however, have rarely been in its focus, which has stimulated our interest in this particular group. Expatriates should not be confused with immigrants who are perceived as people ‘obliged to leave their countries because of the tough life and work conditions in their homeland’ (Gatti, E., 2009). Expatriates, on the other hand, are educated people whose stay abroad is motivated by professional reasons or the search for a new experience rather than by their basic needs (Gatti, E., 2009). Thanks to the concentration of the headquarters of many international institutions and of related companies, Brussels attracts a significantly large community of expatriates from all over the world, with approximately 70% of the people of foreign origin (“Brussels population”, 2022). Yet, there is no dominant language group that could be associated to the host country languages (“One in three inhabitants not Belgian”, 2018). Brussels is in a bilingual region where the two official languages are French and Flemish. Additionally, English is ‘frequently used in an economic and cultural context’ (Janssens, 2008, p. 3). Therefore, expatriates arriving in Brussels may need to attend English courses to improve their English to integrate in the international community. Moreover, given the usually temporary nature of their stay abroad, expatriates may value English language skills more than the ability to use the host country's official languages, as English could still be useful once their sojourn in Brussels ends, and they are ready to move on to a different country.

Despite the growing number of expatriates in our globalised world, there are very few publications that study their second language¹ (L2) motivation, and they typically focus on the motivation to learn and/or use the language of the host country (Froese, 2012; Tarp, 2020; Zhang and Harzing, 2016). They generally suggest that the host language proficiency, often associated with the motivation to learn the language, impacts respondents' career opportunities and their professional and personal relationships. The factors that influence language learning motivation are left unaddressed. Additionally, none of the studies deals with expatriates' motivation to study English as a lingua franca, i.e. 'a 'contact language' between persons who share neither a common mother tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen *foreign* language of communication' (Firth, 1996, p. 240), and, additionally, for whom English is often 'the only option' (Seidhofer, 2011, p.7). The aim of the present article is to address this gap and provide new insights into expatriates' motivation to learn English as a second language.

Theoretical overview

Attempts to understand language learning motivation have led to the proposal of several models, the most robust of which are Gardner's (2007) socio-educational model, Noels, Pelletier, Clément and Vallerand's (2003) L2 motivation model, and Dörnyei's (2009) L2 motivation self-system². The first of them, Robert Gardner's (2007) socio-educational model of L2 learning, elaborates on previous research on two groups of reasons (or orientations) for learning the target language (Gardner and Lambert, 1959), and establishes three major factors that determine motivation. These factors comprise integrativeness, which involves the desire to learn the language in order to communicate and learn about different cultural communities; attitudes towards the learning situation, which include all the variables directly associated with the educational environment; and instrumentality, which associates acquired language skills with better career opportunities. The first two factors are better predictors of motivation than instrumentality. Integrativeness, in particular, has a very strong influence on motivation as it is strictly related to the concept of identification (Mowrer, 1950), and thus is critical in the process of language learning. An important concept in Gardner's model of L2 learning is the integrative motive. It can be seen as the aggregate of three concepts: attitudes towards the learning situation, integrativeness and motivation. Students with a positive attitude towards the learning situation are high in integrativeness, are correspondingly highly motivated, and have a high integrative motive. Integratively motivated students in turn are keen on getting closer emotionally to the target language community (Gardner, 2007). Gardner's model could be questioned when it comes to the distinction between integrative and instrumental orientation in some foreign language learning contexts, its failure to acknowledge the influence of success in language learning on motivation, and the lack of clear implications for foreign language pedagogy (Ellis, 2004). Notwithstanding these criticisms, however, the model spurred further research in the field of motivation studies, which led to the adaptation of Edward Deci and Richard Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory to L2 learning (Noels et al., 2003). Noels et al. distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to learn a language. They define three types of intrinsic motivation (IM): IM-knowledge, which pertains to the positive feelings when exploring new ideas and enhancing knowledge; IM-accomplishment, or the satisfaction of attempting to complete a task or achieve a goal; and IM-stimulation, i.e. the aesthetic pleasure associated with a task accomplishment (Noels et al., 2003, p. 38). Noels et al.' (2003, p.39) also distinguish three types of extrinsic motivation (EM): EM-external regulation, which includes influences by sources external to the person; EM-introjected regulation, which relates to pressure incorporated into the self; and EM-identified regulation, which pertains to personally relevant reasons. These three types of extrinsic motivation are presented in order of increasing self-determination, with the external regulation being the least self-determined form of EM and the identified regulation the most self-determined type. (Noels et al., 2003, p.39). Noels et al.'s framework of L2 motivation is quite in line with Gardner's socio-educational model of L2 learning if one identifies the integrative motive with more self-determined types of motivation, and the instrumentality with less self-determined types.

The third influential proposal is Zoltan Dörnyei's (2009) L2 motivational self system, which is largely based on Gardner and Lambert's (1959) concept of integrative L2 motivation, and the studies

¹ Throughout the article, the term 'second language' is used to describe a language other than the first language that has been acquired. 'Foreign language' is used when formal, classroom context is discussed.

² Cf. Markova and Yaneva (2020) for a detailed discussion.

of ‘possible selves’ (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and ‘future self-guides’ (Higgins, Klein & Strauman, 1987) in mainstream psychology. Dörnyei's theory establishes three different types of language learning motivation. The first is the ideal L2 self, i.e. the person we would like to become using the target language, or in short what we really want to be. The second type of language learning motivation is the ought-to L2 self, which pertains to what language users learners have to become, and concerns duties, responsibilities, associations with standards in society and the desire to live up to certain expectations. Therefore, the factors here are more extrinsic, and not so internalised as the ones that go under the umbrella term of the ideal L2 self. The third is the L2 learning experience, which covers all the various circumstances and situations in the classroom that influence motivation – factors such as the teacher, the curriculum, the class as a group, the group dynamics, the peer pressure, the experience of success. Dörnyei (2009) argues that the three key elements of his L2 motivational self system are compatible with Gardner's motivation factors (namely, integrativeness, instrumentality and attitude towards the learning situation), and in line with Noels et al.'s framework as the ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self and the L2 learning experience correspond to identified regulation, introjected regulation and intrinsic motivation respectively. Dörnyei (2009) also draws parallels between his L2 Motivational Self System and Ema Ushioda's (2001) motivation construct, which introduces eight motivation elements: academic interest, language-related enjoyment/liking, desired levels of L2 competence, personal goals, positive learning history, personal satisfaction, feelings about L2 speaking countries and people, and external pressures and incentives. Dörnyei argues that these eight elements could be reorganised in three bigger groups: actual learning process, external pressures/incentives, and integrative disposition, which closely correspond to the three components of the L2 motivational self-system. The L2 motivational self-system has been tested multiple times and validated in different contexts, including six different countries, various learner groups (urban versus rural background, English versus non-English university students, different age groups) with a total number of participants of over 16 500³. Although the strength and usefulness of Dörnyei's theory has been confirmed, some studies have revealed potential weaknesses in the construct or in its measurement (Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Lamb, 2012). In response, more elaborate measures have been introduced to handle different types of external factors separately (Taguchi, Magid & Papi, 2009; Dörnyei & Chan, 2013). Dörnyei's theory unites and adds to previous frameworks in the field of motivation studies, and has been proved to be robust in a number of cases. Its latest measurement instrument has been tested extensively and used in large-scale studies (Taguchi et al., 2009; You & Dörnyei, 2016). Therefore, it can be considered appropriate for the present study as well.

Research question and methodology

The question central to the present research is: What are the L2 motivational characteristics of expatriates in Brussels who study English as a second language? To answer this question, a survey among 40 foreign expatriates in Brussels (Belgium), all of whom students in a general B1-English-level⁴ course in the Saint Josse Language Centre (Brussels), was conducted, with respondents in the age range 20–58. Ninety percent of them were in the 20–40 age range; the rest 10% were over 40 years old. The respondents were predominantly female (72.5% of the whole group). Their countries of origin are reported in the figure below – in total, 17 countries of origin, across three different continents (ten in Europe, five in Asia and two in Latin America). The data collection took place online after the course completion, between June and July 2021. The questionnaire was sent via a Google Forms link, which ensured anonymous and voluntary participation.

³ Cf Markova and Yaneva (2020) for a detailed discussion.

⁴ According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (“The CEFR Levels”, 2022)

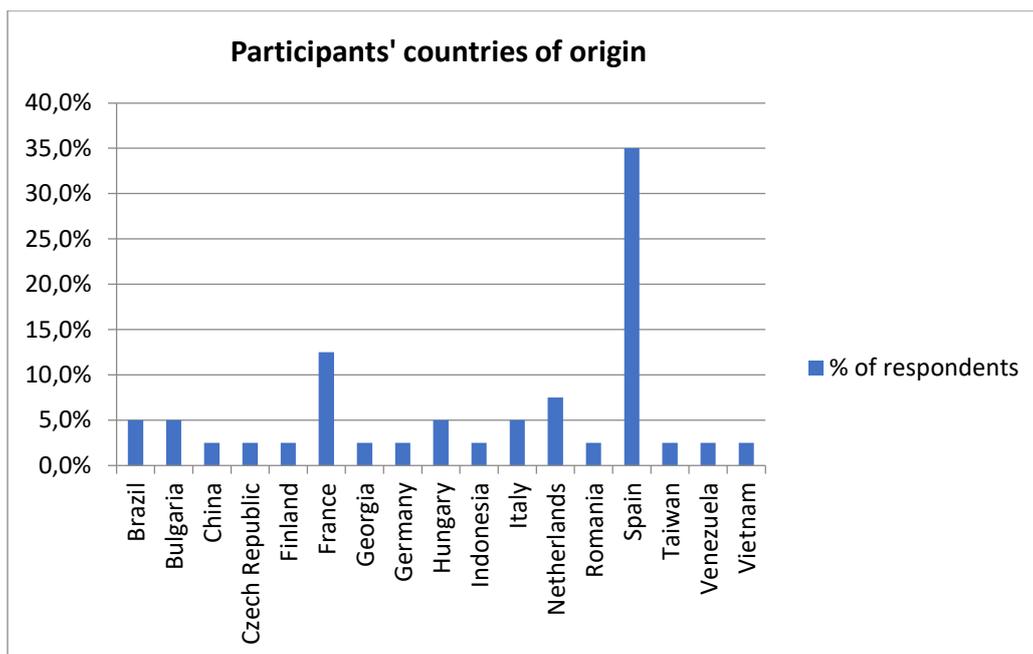


Figure 1: Respondents' countries of origin

The Iranian version of the questionnaire employed in Taguchi et al.'s (2009) study was used as a data collection instrument since it was considered the most appropriate for this research context. The questions addressing beliefs related to Islam and Islamic culture were omitted as this topic is a sensitive issue in Belgian society at present. Hence, the questionnaire consisted of 73 six-level Likert items which range from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (6) for the statements in Part I, and from *not at all* (1) to *very much* (6) for the questions in Part II. Multiple items were used to target the same motivation variable. In total, the 73 items target 14 motivation variables which are listed below⁵.

Variables	Item number	Sample items
Criterion measure (intended effort)	8, 16, 24, 31, 39, 48	I would like to study English even if I were not required.
Ideal L2 self	9, 17, 25, 32, 40, 49	I can imagine myself living abroad and using English effectively for communicating with the locals.
Ought-to L2 self	1, 10, 18, 26, 33, 42	Studying English is important to me because other people will respect me more if I have a knowledge of English.
Parental encouragement/family influence	2, 11, 19, 27, 34, 43	My parents/family believe(s) that I must study English to be an educated person.
Instrumentality-promotion	3, 12, 20, 28, 36, 44	Studying English can be important to me because I think it will someday be useful in getting a good job and/or making money.
Instrumentality-prevention	4, 13, 21, 29, 35, 41, 46, 50	I have to study English; otherwise, I think I cannot be successful in my future career.
Attitudes towards learning English	51, 56, 60, 64, 68, 72	Do you like the atmosphere of your English classes?
Travel orientation	5, 30, 45	I study English because with English I can enjoy travelling abroad.
Fear of assimilation	6, 14, 22, 37, 47	I think the cultural and artistic values of English are going at the expense of the values of my country of origin.
Ethnocentrism	7, 15, 23, 38	It would be a better world if everybody lived like the people from my country of origin.

⁵ The full version of the questionnaire is not included for lack of space. It is available in Markova and Yaneva (2020).

English anxiety	52, 57, 61, 65, 69, 73	How afraid are you of sounding stupid in English because of the mistakes you make?
Integrativeness	53, 66, 70	How much do you like English?
Cultural interest	54, 58, 62, 71	Do you like the music of English-speaking countries (e.g. pop music)?
Attitudes towards L2 community	55, 59, 63, 67	Do you like to travel to English-speaking countries?

Table 1: Variables used in the study and respective question item numbers

Results and discussion

Reliability analysis

Reliability analysis was conducted on all variables to measure the consistency of the scales through Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha was calculated in Excel using the definition formula:

$$\text{Cronbach's } \alpha = \frac{k}{k-1} \left(\frac{\text{Var aggregate} - \sum_i \text{Var question } i}{\text{Var aggregate}} \right),$$

where k is the number of question items used to describe the variable (for example six for the criterion measure, eight for instrumentality prevention, three for travel orientation, etc.), *var aggregate* is the variance of the sum of the scores of all questions describing the variable and *var question i* is the variance of the score of each question describing the variable (indicated with the index i , which also appears as summation index). The table below reports the values of Cronbach's alpha for the different variables.

Variable	Cronbach's alpha
Criterion measure (intended effort)	0.82
Ideal L2 self	0.67
Ought-to L2 self	0.82
Parental encouragement/family influence	0.83
Instrumentality - promotion	0.61
Instrumentality - prevention	0.84
Attitudes towards learning English	0.79
Travel orientation	0.69
Fear of assimilation	0.65
Ethnocentrism	0.69
English anxiety	0.88
Integrativeness	0.49
Cultural interest	0.76
Attitude towards L2 community	0.55

Table 2. Cronbach's alpha for the different variables in the study

All the variables, excluding integrativeness and attitudes towards L2 community, have a Cronbach's alpha above 0.6, which shows sufficient internal consistency of the subscales for these variables. On the other hand, integrativeness and attitudes towards the L2 community show a Cronbach's alpha below 0.6, which suggests an insufficient consistency of the subscales. The threshold of 0.6 is the one commonly adopted in literature as a minimum threshold to determine whether the scales are acceptably reliable (Lamb, 2012). To solve the issue of the low consistency of integrativeness and attitudes towards the L2 community, it was investigated whether removing one or more items from these variables could help in increasing the Cronbach's alpha above 0.6. For integrativeness, by removing item 70 (How much do you like English?) the Cronbach's alpha increased from 0.48 to 0.55, which is still below the threshold of 0.6. Trying to remove any other question instead would reduce the Cronbach's alpha even further. The same conclusion is valid for attitudes towards L2 community. For

this variable, by removing question item 63 (Do you like to travel to English-speaking countries?) the Cronbach's alpha increased from 0.55 to 0.57, which is still below 0.6. As it was not possible to optimise the subscale items to reach a satisfactory scale consistency, the variables integrativeness and attitudes towards L2 community have been excluded from the subsequent analysis. This result could suggest that the respondents of this study may seem to not clearly identify an L2 English speaking community in their context. Consequently, the willingness to take on characteristics and behaviours of the L2 community (integrativeness) and the attitudes towards the L2 community could not make much sense in this case. This could be due to the highly globalised context in which the respondents live, Brussels, where English is spoken by people from different nationalities and with different cultural backgrounds. This hypothesis has been formulated before. For instance, as Lamb (2012) puts it, for many learners around the world it [L2] is no longer associated with any particular ethnic or national group but may instead be identified with either more educated and cosmopolitan members of one's own group, or with an amorphous imagined community of international English users (p.1000).

It is important to note that while integrativeness does not show a good enough reliability, the ideal L2 self does. This result confirms Dornyei's assertion that the ideal L2 self is more suitable than integrativeness to predict motivated behaviour.

Mean scores analysis

The table below presents the mean values of the motivation variables of the surveyed group and of the female and male subgroups.

Variable	Total	Female	Male
Criterion measure (intended effort)	4.2	4.3	3.7
Ideal L2 self	5.5	5.7	4.9
Ought-to L2 self	2.8	2.7	3.1
Parental encouragement/family influence	2.8	2.9	2.7
Instrumentality - promotion	5.0	5.1	5.0
Instrumentality - prevention	3.5	3.4	3.6
Attitudes towards learning English	4.2	4.3	3.8
Travel orientation	5.2	5.2	5.3
Fear of assimilation	2.4	2.3	2.7
Ethnocentrism	2.2	2.2	2.2
English anxiety	2.2	2.2	2.2
Cultural interest	5.3	5.3	5.4

Table 3: Mean scores for each variable, including gender breakdown

The highest average scores (five or above) were attained for the variables ideal L2 self, instrumentality-promotion, travel orientation, and cultural interest. These are all variables expected to be linked to the ideal L2 self domain. This is in line with the participants' profile: as expatriate students a positive attitude towards travel, intercultural experiences and, in general, different communities from the ones of their own country of origin is critical to ensure a successful academic and future work career. The lowest average scores (2.2) were attained for the variables ethnocentrism and English anxiety. This is also expected based on the participants' profile. Students who are willing to travel abroad and learn a new language must definitely overcome the anxiety to speak English with others and the fear of making mistakes for a successful integration in the foreign country, and would not be willing to travel abroad in the first place if they were convinced that their country of origin is the best place to be.

The motivation variables ought-to L2 self, parental encouragement and fear of assimilation scored the lowest averages if one excludes ethnocentrism and English anxiety. This is again in line with other English language motivation studies (You and Dornyei, 2016), where the variables linked to the ought-to L2 self area scored the lowest average results. When it comes to fear of assimilation, it is understandable why expats in Brussels give low scores – intercultural communication and assimilation to other cultural groups are important parts of their life and/or career. The average scores were rather consistent between the genders. For intended effort, ideal L2 self and attitudes towards learning

English, however, the average scores of the female group are more than 0.5 points higher than the ones of the male group, which shows that in this case these areas seem to be more developed in women rather than men.

Correlation analysis

The correlation matrix below shows in one overview the correlation factors between pairs of motivation variables.

	Criterion measure (effort)	Ideal L2 self	Ought-to L2 self	Parental encouragement/family influence	Instrumentality - promotion	Instrumentality - prevention	Attitudes towards learning English	Travel orientation	Fear of assimilation	Ethnocentrism	English anxiety	Cultural interest
Criterion measure (effort)	1.00											
Ideal L2 self	0.15	1.00										
Ought-to L2 self	0.29	-0.08	1.00									
Parental encouragement/family influence	0.35*	-0.01	0.77**	1.00								
Instrumentality - promotion	0.44**	0.38*	0.40**	0.28	1.00							
Instrumentality - prevention	0.39*	0.03	0.69**	0.69**	0.52**	1.00						
Attitudes towards learning English	0.73**	0.19	0.24	0.18	0.34*	0.15	1.00					
Travel orientation	0.43**	0.11	0.42**	0.39*	0.51**	0.53**	0.16	1.00				
Fear of assimilation	-0.10	0.01	0.52**	0.50**	0.24	0.44**	0.04	0.21	1.00			
Ethnocentrism	0.16	-0.01	0.28	0.18	0.10	-0.01	0.26	0.04	0.46**	1.00		
English anxiety	0.37*	-0.05	0.30	0.33*	0.22	0.35*	0.12	0.20	0.05	0.33*	1.00	
Cultural interest	0.00	0.24	0.12	0.06	0.33	0.09	0.12	0.14	0.09	0.14	0.01	1.00

*p < 0.05 (2-tailed), **p < 0.01 (2-tailed)

Table 4: Correlation matrix between all variables

Correlations between the motivation variables and intended effort

The motivation-effort correlation factors can be read in the first column, which contains all correlation factors between the different motivation variables and the criterion measure (intended effort). Intended effort (just ‘effort’ in the table for lack of space) shows a statistically significant correlation at 99% confidence with the variables attitudes towards learning English (r = 0.73), instrumentality promotion (r = 0.44) and travel orientation (r = 0.43), and a statistically significant correlation at 95% confidence with the variables instrumentality prevention (r = 0.39), English anxiety (r = 0.37), and parental encouragement (r = 0.35). The correlation with attitudes towards learning English is strong, as it has a correlation coefficient r above 0.7, whereas the correlation with the other variables is moderate as the coefficient r is between 0.3 and 0.7 (Ratner, 2009).

These correlations suggest that the respondents’ desire to acquire English is related to their positive attitude towards learning English and their enjoyment of the learning experience. This may be because in their context, the English lessons are not only needed to improve their language skills but may be perceived as an opportunity for social interaction, cultural exchange and network building, much needed and uplifting for students who have left their home country and might feel lonely and disoriented in a foreign country. This interpretation is in line with previous publications (Zielinska, 2017; Czaban, 2020), which suggest that language learning/exchange activities are a great way to handle loneliness in expatriates. Additionally, similar strength of the correlation between intended effort and attitudes towards learning English was found in previous studies (Lamb, 2012; You and Dorney, 2016).

Other important factors correlating with intended effort are related to instrumentality (both in a promotional or a preventive aspect) and travel orientation. This is expected given the participants’ profiles as foreign expat students of English tend to see the importance of mastering the language for better career and travelling opportunities. This finding is consistent with previous research (Froese, 2012), according to which the international experience, the job conditions and the labour market situation, most of which relate to the ought-to L2 self, were among the main factors motivating the respondents to move to Korea. On the other hand, the variables travel orientation, instrumentality-promotion, instrumentality-prevention and parental encouragement, in particular, are also strongly correlated to ought-to L2 self (the correlations between ought-to L2 self and other motivation variables are discussed in more details below). Moreover, English anxiety, though not directly correlated with ought-to L2 self, shows a significant correlation with instrumentality-prevention, which is correlated

both with ought-to L2 self and intended effort. The motivational impact of anxiety in prevention-focused learners has been theorised before. According to Teimouri (2016, p.689), ‘anxiety fits prevention-focused learners in stimulating them to expand more vigilant efforts to avoid the presence of negative outcomes. Thus, it is beneficial for their motivation’. Given this, it seems that for this sample, the ought-to L2 self might play a bigger role than the ideal L2 self in the way it is connected to the intended effort, though there seems to be no strong direct correlation between either ought-to L2 self or ideal L2 self and intended effort. This finding is not in line with previous studies (Taguchi et al., 2009; Dörnyei and Chan, 2013), which show that ideal L2 self and the variables related to it are more closely connected to intended effort than ought-to L2 self. This might be due to the specific group subject of this study, which is different from the previous studies quoted. The ideal L2 self might not be a strong enough self-guide in this case to trigger motivation, in the sense that it reduces the discrepancy between the current self and the self-guide. In highly globalised contexts there could be insufficient discrepancy between the current perceived self and the ideal English specific self-guide, therefore the ideal L2 self-guide might not be able to explain motivated behaviour (Henry and Cliffordson, 2017). The present study also confirms a finding in previous research where the ought-to L2 self cannot explain the criterion measure (intended effort). For instance, Taguchi et al. (2009) could not find a significant correlation between ought-to L2 self and intended effort in their study on Japanese, Chinese and Iranian students, and Martin Lamb (2012) could not even properly measure ought-to L2 self due to the lack of reliability of the scale. In the present study, the reliability of the ought-to L2 self scale is good, as the Cronbach’s alpha is rather high (0.82), yet ought-to L2 self does not correlate directly with intended effort. Though ought-to L2 self does not correlate with intended effort, however, four of the five variables correlating with intended effort also correlate with ought-to L2 self (parental encouragement, instrumentality-promotion, instrumentality-prevention and travel orientation). This suggests that ought-to L2 self might actually be an important motivating self-guide for this group of respondents. However, its correlation with the criterion measure does not come out directly from the analysis, potentially due to issues with the measurement of this variable (Teimouri, 2016).

Correlations between ideal L2 self and other motivation variables

Ideal L2 self shows a statistically significant correlation at 95% confidence only with instrumentality-promotion ($r = 0.38$). This is a moderate correlation as the coefficient r is between 0.3 and 0.7 (Ratner, 2009). Such a finding is in line with Dörnyei’s theory and previous studies confirming that ideal L2 self has typically a strong correlation with instrumentality-promotion (Higgins, 1998; Dörnyei, 2009; Taguchi et al., 2009), though the actual value of the correlation factors from this study is lower than the correlation factors found in previous studies ($r > 0.5$). The correlation result from this study reinforces the point that the promotion focus is an important pillar of the ideal self-guide, and that the ideal L2 self is professionally successful (on top of being personally agreeable). The lack of correlation between ideal L2 self and instrumentality-prevention also confirms the promotion focus of the ideal L2 self-guide as opposed to the prevention focus of the ought-to L2 self-guide. The lack of correlation between ideal L2 self and family influence (which is strongly correlated to ought-to L2 self instead) shows once again that family influence is more linked to the ought-to L2 rather than the ideal L2 self-construct, thus corroborating previous results leading to the same conclusion (Taguchi et al., 2009). Previous studies (Taguchi et al., 2009) also found a significant positive correlation between ideal L2 self and integrativeness (concluding that ideal L2 self and integrativeness tap into the same construct, though ideal L2 self has a higher correlation with the criterion measure than integrativeness does), and ideal L2 self and attitudes towards the L2 community, which led to the authors’ conclusion that the ideal L2 self is personally agreeable. These correlations could not be seen in this study, however, because of the lack of reliability of the integrativeness and attitudes towards L2 community scales.

Correlations between ought-to L2 self and other motivation variables

Ought-to L2 self shows a statistically significant correlation at 99% confidence with family influence ($r = 0.77$), instrumentality-prevention ($r = 0.69$), fear of assimilation ($r = 0.52$), travel orientation ($r = 0.42$) and instrumentality-promotion ($r = 0.40$). The correlation with family influence is strong, as it has a correlation coefficient r above 0.7, whereas the correlations with the other variables are moderate as the coefficients r are between 0.3 and 0.7 (Ratner, 2009). The first two correlations with family influence and instrumentality-prevention are not surprising. It has been shown that for other subject groups motives that typically have a prevention focus and come from the external environment, like pressure from parents, enter into the ought-to self-guide (Higgins, 1998; Dörnyei, 2009). The

significant correlation, though with a lower correlation factor, between ought-to L2 self and instrumentality-promotion is also worth noting. This finding is again not new as it is common to other research work (Taguchi et al, 2009). There might be different reasons that might explain it – for the context of the Chinese and Iranian groups Taguchi et al. (2009) hypothesise that it could be related to parents' investment in their children and the corresponding expectations up to which children feel obliged to live. It is not unreasonable to suggest that in the expatriates' context, similarly, parents may have invested more financially, and therefore, their children might feel pressurised to invest time and effort in their language education. However, such an interpretation is not supported by the data of the present survey given the lack of correlation between family influence and instrumentality-promotion. Another possible explanation is provided by Teimouri (2016), who points out potential limitations of the research instrument to describe the ought-to L2 self as some questions refer to the presence or absence of positive outcomes (like 'Studying English is important to me in order to gain the approval of my peers/teachers/family/boss') and other questions refer to the presence or absence of negative outcomes (like 'If I fail to learn English, I will be letting other people down'). A third explanation could be that it is just quite hard to separate the promotion from the prevention aspect of the instrumentality from these data, and the aspect of instrumentality should rather be considered just one single entity. This is supported by the statistically significant correlation at 99% confidence between instrumentality-promotion and instrumentality-prevention ($r = 0.52$). Given this, it becomes statistically very hard to try to distinguish the separate effects that these two variables have on the other motivation variables (such as ideal L2-self or ought-to L2 self) or on intended effort. Further research, potentially with a bigger sample size or using qualitative research instruments, may be needed to understand the separate effects between the two variables. The correlation between ought-to L2 self and travel orientation could be explained by expatriates' need to master their English to continue travelling, and thus meet their personal and career needs. As these are more extrinsic instrumental motives rather than intrinsic, they closely relate to the ought-to L2 self. Another possible explanation of this finding could be the aforementioned ambiguity of some questionnaire items (Teimouri, 2016).

The final correlation of ought-to L2 self with fear of assimilation is not unexpected. More extrinsic instrumental motives to learn English, pertaining to the ought-to L2 self-sphere, are more likely to be related to the fear of losing the values and traditions from one's country of origin.

Correlations between parental encouragement/family influence and other motivational variables

Parental encouragement/family influence shows statistically significant correlation at 99% confidence with instrumentality prevention ($r = 0.69$), fear of assimilation ($r = 0.5$), and statistically significant correlation at 95% confidence with travel orientation ($r = 0.39$) and English anxiety ($r = 0.33$). All these correlations are moderate as the coefficient r is between 0.3 and 0.7 (Ratner, 2009). The other correlations between parental encouragement and intended effort, and parental encouragement and ought-to L2 self have already been analysed. The correlation between parental encouragement and instrumentality-prevention is not surprising as both variables refer to extrinsic types of motives that are linked to the ought-to L2 self and have a prevention focus. The correlation between parental encouragement and fear of assimilation was not found in previous studies, though it is not counterintuitive. Fear of assimilation is expected to be present only in students with very low integrative motives and more extrinsically motivated, whereas students who are willing to integrate with the L2 community or are more intrinsically motivated would score low in this variable. Following the same direction, one would expect that parental encouragement similarly relates more to the less self-determined forms of motivation. For an expatriate's profile, one could assume that if the motivation to expatriate has mainly been driven by parental encouragement, the student may more likely experience fear to incorporate in the new foreign context as the motivation to move abroad would be mainly extrinsic rather than intrinsic, or because of the pressure that the student may feel due to parents' expectations. The correlation between parental encouragement and travel orientation is open to interpretations. It is quite understandable that English language students who are expatriates in Belgium have a positive predisposition to travel, and this correlation might suggest that this attitude is inherited by their parents or family. Also, both parental encouragement and travel orientation are linked to the dimensions of the ought-to L2 self (they both have significant correlations with ought-to L2 self), therefore, a positive correlation between these two variables is imaginable. The correlation between

parental encouragement and English anxiety was also found in previous studies (Papi, 2010; Teimouri, 2016). What is more, Teimouri (2016) introduces the concept of the ought-to L2 self/others, which describes attributes one is expected by others (including family) to have. This is the most extrinsic type of self-guide and its discrepancy with the current perceived self can generate feelings of anxiety.

Correlations between instrumentality-promotion and other motivational variables

Instrumentality-promotion showed a statistically significant correlation at 99% confidence with travel orientation ($r = 0.51$) and a statistically significant correlation at 95% confidence with attitudes towards learning English ($r = 0.34$). Both correlations are moderate as the coefficient r is between 0.3 and 0.7 (Ratner, 2009). The correlations between instrumentality-promotion and intended effort, ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self and instrumentality-prevention have already been discussed.

The correlation between instrumentality-promotion and travel orientation is expected, since the respondents are expatriates in Belgium and they need to master the use of English well enough to make sure their experience in the country (and possibly other foreign countries in the future) brings good outcomes. As discussed previously, the two types of instrumentality (promotion and prevention) are highly correlated between each other. Also, travel orientation correlates not only with instrumentality-promotion but also with instrumentality-prevention. An interpretation of a similar finding is suggested by Taguchi et al. (2009), according to whom, some students may perceive travelling abroad in a promotional way (e.g. they would need to master the language to have positive experiences abroad, both current and future) and some other students may perceive travelling abroad in a preventional way (e.g. after their studies they would like to work abroad and would not be able to do it without good language skills). Additionally, Dörnyei and Kormos' (2000) findings also indicate that travel incentives are involved in the instrumental motivational dimension, which leads them to suggest the label 'incentive values' to refer to a more complete concept that unites the three variables.

The correlation between instrumentality-promotion and attitudes towards learning English is to be expected. Students with an instrumental-promotional focus on English language acquisition appreciate the importance of English to achieve a valued goal, which contributes to building a positive attitude towards English language learning.

Correlations between instrumentality-prevention and other motivational variables

Instrumentality-prevention showed a statistically significant correlation at 99% confidence with fear of assimilation ($r = 0.44$) and a statistically significant correlation at 95% confidence with English anxiety ($r = 0.35$). Both correlations are moderate as the coefficient r is between 0.3 and 0.7 (Ratner, 2009). These two correlations are not surprising as fear of assimilation and English anxiety are expected to be present in students with less self-determined types of motivation which typically have a prevention focus. The correlations between instrumentality-prevention and the rest of the variables have already been discussed.

Other correlations

The other significant correlations present in the correlation matrix and not discussed so far are the positive correlation between ethnocentrism and fear of assimilation ($r = 0.46$) and ethnocentrism and English anxiety ($r = 0.33$). Both correlations are moderate as the coefficient r is between 0.3 and 0.7 (Ratner, 2009). These correlations are understandable. Ethnocentric beliefs, which are mainly about pride and superiority of one's country of origin, could give rise to feelings of anxiety when having to use a different language from one's own and fear of becoming part of a different cultural group.

Conclusion

The main limitation of this study is its sample size – although it is big enough to carry out statistical analysis, the results and conclusions may be representative for the specific target group only. A second limitation concerns the constraints of the self-reported questionnaire as a research tool: social desirability bias and response fatigue, for example. Therefore, care should be taken when extrapolating the study findings to other contexts, especially when they differ in sociocultural aspects.

Yet, the study presents a detailed picture of the language learning motivation of an underexplored group: expatriates studying English in a cosmopolitan city where it is not the dominant language. Its results are in general agreement with previous research. First, consistent gender differences are found in the descriptive statistics, which is in tune with the pattern in other empirical studies (Henry, 2011; Henry & Cliffordson, 2013; You & Dörnyei, 2016). Second, the respondents in this study have given higher scores on average on factors associated with the ideal L2 self compared

with the ought-to L2 self. Third, the data from this study also support the link (Dörnyei, 2009) between promotional aspects of motivation and the ideal L2 self, whereas the factors pertaining to extrinsic motives are closer to the ought-to L2 self. Last but not least, the strongest factor emerging from this study that relates to the effort students intend to invest in English language acquisition is attitudes towards learning English. Similarly to other studies (Lamb, 2012; You and Dorney, 2016), this finding underscores the importance of high-quality language learning experiences for students' motivated behaviour and could serve as a constant reminder that more involving learning conditions should be offered. Other results differ from previous studies, and the differences could be attributed to the specific profile of the surveyed group. For instance, even though also here the impact of ought-to L2 self on intended effort is not evident, as the correlation between the ought-to L2 self and the intended effort is non-significant, most of the factors that strongly correlate with intended effort also strongly correlate with ought-to L2 self. This seems to suggest that, for this specific group of respondents, the ought-to L2 self might be connected more than the ideal L2 self to the motivation to study English. This aspect of the findings is not consistent with previous studies (Taguchi et al., 2009; You and Dorney, 2016), which showed a stronger correlation between the ideal L2 self and the motivated L2 learning behaviour. The absence of predictive power of the ideal L2 self on the intended effort may be related to the highly globalised environment of the specific group subject of this research, and suggests that other concepts, like the ideal multilingual self (Henry & Thorsen, 2017), might be more suitable to predict the intended effort. Further research would be needed to verify whether this hypothesis is correct. Though the ideal L2 self was not predictive of the intended effort, however, the scale showed satisfactory reliability, unlike integrativeness and attitudes towards the L2 community, which had to be excluded from the analysis as their reliability was not high enough. This confirms the hypothesis (Dörnyei, 2009) that the ideal L2 self is more valuable than integrativeness to explain the motivated behaviour. Another result which is not in line with the L2 Motivational Self System is the intercorrelation between the promotional and the preventive aspect of the instrumentality variable. This does not allow to statistically separate the impacts of these two different aspects of instrumentality on the other motivational variables and the criterion measure. Such a result may be due to the fact that even questions phrased as promotional might have a preventive interpretation in the respondents' minds, especially when working abroad is seen as an essential part of their future. The two types of instrumentality are also both correlated at 99% confidence with travel orientations. Thus, in this research both instrumentalities and travel orientations should be included in one common concept, incentive values, as suggested by Dörnyei and Kormos (2000). Together with attitudes towards learning English, incentive values is confirmed as a strong predictor of the intended effort. More in depth research, perhaps with the help of qualitative research instruments, may be needed to understand these three aspects more thoroughly, especially when it comes to expatriate students of English in international cities. The thought-provoking specifics of the motivation profile of expatriate language learners in cosmopolitan context, found in this study, merit further exploration. It remains to be seen whether they will be addressed in the future.

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