

Doktori (Ph.D.) értekezés tézisei - Summary of Doctoral Dissertation

EXPLORING ADVANCED ENGLISH LEARNERS' MULTILINGUAL IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION FROM MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

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Topic and Research Aims

Research into language learners' multilingual identity construction has enjoyed heightened interest since the turn of the millennium drawing on post-structuralist theories (Kristeva, 1980; Weedon, 1997) that allow researchers to take a more complex and holistic view of language learners and their second language (L2) learning experiences. This line of study does not separate learners from the learning processes they experience and looks at learners in their complexity and entirety (Kristeva, 1980; Kramsch, 2009). Studies (Kramsch, 2002, 2009; Norton, 2013) drawing on the post-structuralist or language ecological approach are usually case studies or interview studies and focus on the individual and their idiosyncratic experiences. By contrast, traditional SLA research into individual differences (IDs) investigates different aspects of L2 learning and L2 learners in isolation. Studies (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998; Noels, Pelletier, Clément, & Vallerand, 2000) drawing on traditional SLA research mostly follow the psychometric tradition that employs statistical procedures to calculate averages and to make generalizations about the constructs under scrutiny. Consequently, this tradition does not focus on the individual but rather on large groups and investigates the relationship between the various factors involved in SLA. In my dissertation I explored how these two seemingly irreconcilable traditions can complement rather than exclude each other to study advanced English learners multilingual identity construction from multiple perspectives.

With regard to identity research, I drew on Kramsch's (2009) multidisciplinary approach of identity research. I adopted her concept of successful L2 learning that does not address L2 attainment or language proficiency level; instead, it refers to how transformative language learning is in learners' life and how meaningfully it is lived by them. Furthermore, imagination plays in a crucial role in creating learners' subjective associations, feelings, emotions, attitudes, beliefs, fears, anxieties, and thoughts about the L2, its culture, and the people speaking the

language. Learners' creative and subjective meaning-making practices and resonances about the new language are unconventional from the perspective of native speakers (NSs), which makes L2 learners multilingual subjects (MLSs) and L2 learning a symbolic activity (Kramersch, 2009). In the process of SLA learners create an inwardly generated identity based on their imagined and real-life experiences, which reflects their desire for self-fulfillment in an via the L2 (Kramersch, 2009; Kristeva, 1980). Kramersch (2009) proposes that some learners embrace the transformative potential of L2 learning, whereas others feel threatened by the magnitude of the threat that the L2 poses to the integrity of the learner's identity. Since language and culture are interwoven in L2 learning (Kramersch, 1998), SLA can shape not only learners' linguistic identity construction but also their cultural and social identity construction, because with the new language comes a new consciousness, as well (Lacan, 1977).

As for traditional SLA research into IDs, in my dissertation I also investigated the participants' individual differences such as their motivation, language anxiety (LA), willingness to communicate (WTC) in English, perfectionism, competitiveness, and their self-perception subsuming two dimensions: perceived English language proficiency and perceived language learning aptitude. To my knowledge, there are no other empirical studies that merge these two traditions to explore L2 learners' multilingual identity construction. Most inquiries draw on either the post-structuralist/ecological approach or traditional SLA research.

In addition to the aforementioned two research traditions, there were two additional theoretical frameworks that I utilized in my study. I analyzed the data and interpreted the findings from the perspective of English as a lingua franca (ELF) (Jenkins, 2007) and complex dynamic systems theory (CDST) (Larsen-Freeman, 2017). Due to the fact that non-native English speakers (NNESs) greatly outnumber native English speakers (NESs) (Crystal, 2003), traditional English as a foreign language (EFL) speakers are shifting to using the language as a lingua franca (LF) instead of a foreign language (FL) (Widdowson, 2012). This phenomenon

is also true for my research context, providing the rationale for including the ELF perspective in my inquiry. Furthermore, the study of ELF addresses how ELF speakers are exempted from having to conform to the native speaker norm (Medgyes, 2017) and how ELF speakers can gain ownership of English (Holliday, 2005; Widdowson, 2012) through successful language use even when their language proficiency level does not approximate that of NESs. Finally, ELF is also linked to international posture that refers to L2 speakers' predisposition to relate themselves to an international community in which English knowledge is valued rather than to a specific L2 community (Yashima, 2009, p. 145).

The fourth framework I drew on in my dissertation is CDST (Larsen-Freeman, 2017; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008) that has gained momentum in social sciences and in language education alike. Since I take a complex and holistic view of identity construction, I look at language learners and their L2 learning experiences in their entirety and complexity, which calls for a more dynamic and complex framework afforded by CDST. Complexity theory in SLA sheds light on how language learners and their language learning process can be perceived as a complex dynamic system (CDS) in which various factors constantly interact with one another, constituting the lower levels of the system and shaping the system's behavior that also responds to stimuli coming from the environment in the form of interaction with other L2 speakers and contextual factors. In addition to the four theoretical frameworks I described above, my study also drew on the various perspectives of other disciplines such as cultural studies, literary and language theory, neurology, psychology, philosophy, narrative inquiry, and communication studies.

Although my inquiry focusing on multilingual identity construction is dominantly embedded in the qualitative research approach, the relatively high number of participants (N=42) allowed me to present and discuss some numerical data on trends and frequencies, thus making the dissertation a mixed methods study. The use of mixed methods is beneficial, as it

combines the strength of quantitative and qualitative research while neutralizing their weaknesses by providing insights where one research method cannot (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 45). Furthermore, my study is also classroom research and action research (Nunan & Bailey, 2009), because my research was conducted in the classroom, and the teacher and the person carrying out the research were one and the same person (Nunan & Bailey, 2009, p. 226). In action research, the teacher-researcher seeks to better her teaching practice by conducting classroom research with the intention to also publish her findings.

To explore advanced English learners' multilingual identity construction from various perspectives, I sought to answer the following research questions (Table 1).

Table 1
Research Questions, Instruments, Employed Methods of Analysis, and the Numbers of Students

Research questions	Instruments	Method of analysis	Number of participants
1. What characterizes the participants' multilingualism?	Structured speaking task	Qualitative content analysis Descriptive statistics	38
2. What characterizes the participants' multiculturalism?	Structured speaking task	Qualitative content analysis Descriptive statistics	38
3. What characterizes the participants' identity construction in their various languages?	Structured writing task	Qualitative content analysis	31
4. What characterizes the participants' self-perception, competitiveness, perfectionism, motivation, language anxiety, and willingness to communicate in English?	Open-ended questionnaire on IDs	Qualitative content analysis Descriptive statistics	30
5. In what ways do the above individual differences shape the participants' identity construction in and via English?	Open-ended questionnaire on IDs	Qualitative content analysis Descriptive statistics	30

The participants in the study constituting my dissertation were 42 English majors who attended three Listening and Speaking Skills II (LSS II) courses that I taught in the spring semester of the academic year 2014/2015 at the University of Pécs (UP) in Hungary. I employed convenience sampling (Dörnyei, 2007) to recruit participants. To gather data for my inquiry, I designed three instruments that served two purposes: they served as data sources in my study, whereas they also served as meaningful home assignments for the students participating in the research. The three instruments included (1) a structured speaking task (a structured interview recorded by students) exploring the participants' multilingualism and multiculturalism, (2) a structured written task mapping their multilingual identity construction, and (3) a questionnaire on IDs comprising open-ended questions. The datasets of oral and written texts allowed the triangulation of data. To analyze the data I gathered, I performed qualitative content analysis to detect emerging themes, which was an iterative process characteristic of exploratory qualitative research (Dörnyei, 2007). Having detected emerging themes, I counted frequencies to complement and support the qualitative results and to achieve the triangulation of data.

In summary, the aim of the doctoral dissertation was to explore advanced English learners' multilingual identity construction from various theoretical and research approaches and perspectives, which made my research an exploratory study. The multiple perspectives that I adopted allowed for a more complex and holistic view of L2 learners and their multilingual identity construction. In my dissertation I advocated the synthesis of identity research and traditional SLA research into IDs, since they are interconnected and thus provide insights where one approach cannot.

The Structure of the Doctoral Dissertation

The doctoral dissertation is divided into two parts comprising three and five chapters, respectively (see Table 2 at the end of this section). The first part gives an overview of the literature and the second part presents and discusses the findings of the empirical study included in the dissertation. In Chapter 1 I elaborate on the literature of identity research that I draw on in the empirical study and I discuss ELF and CDST perspectives on identity research. First, I expand on how the Self is perceived in various disciplines such as philosophy, neurobiology, psychology, SLA, and CDST. Then I move on to elaborating on the multidisciplinary approach of identity research that I utilize in my dissertation which was inspired by Kramsch's (2009) similar approach of identity research that looks at L2 learners as MLSs and L2 learning as symbolic language use. I also elaborate on Kristeva's (1980) concept of desire for self-fulfillment in and via the L2. Furthermore, I discuss blended space theory (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), linguistic relativity (Carroll, 1956), Bourdieu's (1997) concept of habitus along with the concept of language socialization (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2017), and enculturation (Sussman, 2002) to explore the unconventional and hybrid meanings that L2 learners create drawing on their various languages that influence their ways of thinking and behaving in the L2. Afterwards, I discuss the rationale for adopting Sussman's (2002) cultural identity model of the sojourn in the context of SLA and I elaborate on the study of learner narratives in constructing L2 learners' narrative identity (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). In Chapter 2 I provide an overview of the literature on L2 learners' individual differences including motivation, language anxiety, willingness to communicate, self-perception, competitiveness, and perfectionism. As for L2 motivational constructs, I expand on Gardner's (1985) integrative motive, Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory, Dörnyei's (2005) L2 motivational self-system, and Yashima's (2009) concept of international posture. In Chapter 3 I present the findings of empirical studies on L2 learners' multilingual identity construction and IDs. As for studies on

linguistic identity construction, I present inquiries that follow the post-structuralist approach of identity research as well as studies that address identity from the perspective of ELF. With regard to inquiries on IDs, I review studies that either drew on the CDST approach or were conducted in the Hungarian context, thus providing comparable results for my study. In Chapter 4, which is the first chapter of the empirical part of the dissertation, I detail the empirical study I conducted constituting the dissertation. I discuss the research context, the research questions, participants, instruments, procedures, and methods of analysis. In Chapter 5 I present the findings on the participants' reflections on their multilingualism and multiculturalism based on the data gathered with the help of the structured speaking task. The findings led me to reinterpreting international posture from the perspective of identity research by adding the dimension of ownership of English, multilingualism, affect, and identity to the construct. In the same chapter I present a case study on the different language socialization and enculturation experiences of learners who learnt their L2 in a native environment and those who learnt EFL in Hungary. In Chapter 6 I detail the findings on the participants' identity construction in their various languages with regard to how they became MLSs in the process of SLA, their L2 learning as an embodied experience, and linguistic relativity. The data that I analyzed here were gathered by means of the structured writing task. In Chapter 7 I scrutinize what characterized the participants' individual differences including their motivation, LA, WTC, competitiveness, perfectionism, and self-perception on the basis of the data I collected using an open-ended questionnaire. Afterwards, I discuss how these IDs constructed and shaped the students' linguistic identity construction. In Chapter 8 I draw the main conclusions of my study, discuss pedagogical implications, and delineate limitations and future directions for research.

Table 2
The Structure of the Doctoral Dissertation

<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research aims • Context of research • Research questions • The structure of the dissertation
<p>PART 1</p> <p>Chapter 1: An overview of literature on research into multilingual identity construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining key concepts in the dissertation with regard to identity research • Elaborating on a multidisciplinary approach of L2 learners' multilingual identity construction <p>Chapter 2: An overview of literature on research into L2 learners' individual differences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding on literature on relevant motivational constructs, language anxiety, willingness to communicate in English, perfectionism, competitiveness, and self-perception <p>Chapter 3: An overview of empirical studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing the findings of relevant empirical studies on L2 learners' linguistic identity construction drawing on the post-structuralist tradition • Elaborating on the findings of empirical studies on L2 learners' IDs drawing on CDST as well as of relevant studies conducted in the Hungarian context
<p>PART 2</p> <p>Chapter 4: Elaborating on the empirical study included in the dissertation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing the research context, research questions, participants, instruments, procedures, and methods of analysis <p>Chapter 5: The participants' identity construction through language and culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisiting international posture from the perspective of identity research • Presenting a case study on the participants' different language socialization and enculturation experiences <p>Chapter 6: The participants' identity construction in their various languages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming a multilingual subject in the process of SLA • Language learning as an embodied experience • Exploring linguistic relativity in the study <p>Chapter 7: The participants' individual differences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring the participants' motivation, language anxiety, willingness to communicate in English, competitiveness, perfectionism, and self-perception • Exploring how these IDs construct and shape the participants' multilingual identity construction
<p>Final conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main conclusions of the study • Pedagogical implications • Limitations and future directions for research

The Findings of the Study on Advanced English Learners' Multilingual Identity Construction from Multiple Perspectives

The first two research questions tackled the participants' multilingualism and multiculturalism. The findings shed light on how the participants are shifting to using English as a lingua franca, which shapes their identity construction as language learners and language speakers. The themes in connection with ELF that emerged in the datasets led me to reinterpreting international posture from the perspective of identity research. I added the concept of multilingualism, ownership of English, affect, and identity to the construct. Affect is inherently implicated in international posture, as using ELF is an embodied experience, triggering emotional responses in learners. With regard to multilingualism, ownership of English, and identity construction, those students who recognized in what ways they are using English successfully were aware of their ownership of the language, which constituted their self-perception as multilingual speakers. Students who sought to approximate NESs followed the native speaker model in their language learning despite the fact that they may still have resorted to ELF use. These students fell short of the native speaker norm, which shaped their self-perception in a way that they did not consider themselves multilingual. Furthermore, in a case study I pinpointed the differences between the multilingual and multicultural experiences of learners coming from different language learning backgrounds, casting light on the participants' different language socialization and enculturation processes. Students who had learnt their L2 in a native environment focused on how naturally and effortlessly they could use the L2, whereas students who had learnt their L2 in a non-native environment in Hungary stressed what they could do in the L2 and at what level.

The data gathered with the help of the structured writing task that explored the participants' identity construction in their various languages revealed overlaps between my findings and Kramsch's (2009) study. The findings of my inquiry confirmed that language learners respond to L2 learning emotionally by engaging their brain, their mind, and their body

in the process of SLA, which pinpoints the embodied nature of L2 learning. Furthermore, the data pointed out that the participants use their L2 for much more than mere information exchange, they use their L2 to construct a new identity for themselves and to rid themselves of the constraints of their L1 language and its culture. Some students pursue language learning to become like other L2 speakers (mostly native English speakers) or another L2 speaking version of themselves and they embrace the transformation afforded by the L2, whereas others prefer identifying with their familiar L1 to avoid the transformative potential of L2 learning that could shape their linguistic and cultural identity. Some of the participants became tricksters of language; thus, they could act upon and change their own and their interactants' psychological and social reality using their L2. The students experienced language learning mostly meaningfully, which was irrespective of their command of the L2, but it was linked to the intrinsic and extrinsic dimension of their motivation to learn English. The participants' narratives were characterized by self-centeredness and self-enhancement as well as by the desire for self-fulfillment in and via the L2 and a strong identification with NESs.

Based on the findings I coined the term imagined L2 habitus that language learners may adopt in interactions when using their L2. It derives from the learner's borrowing of NES and ELF speakers' habitus to replace their L1 habitus in L2 interactions. When doing so, learners speak, act, and think differently from how they would do in their L1 that is linked to their L1 habitus (Bourdieu, 1997). Acting upon their imagined L2 habitus, learners tend to rely on their imagination because the other speaker whose habitus they borrow is unknown to them; the person's image or representation is only created in the learner's imagination. Finally, aspects of linguistic relativity were pointed out by the data.

As for the participants' individual differences, the majority of the students' self-perceived English language proficiency is at B2 level, while their reported language aptitude is high. They are highly competitive with peers resulting in heightened emotional responses such as anger,

frustration, or shame. Their competitive behavior is linked to perfectionism and language anxiety, resulting in a cyclic relationship. They display a highly positive attitude towards English and English learning; however, they are mostly extrinsically motivated to learn English in their studies. By contrast, they exhibit intrinsic motivation to learn English incidentally in their pastime activities drawing on authentic language use which oftentimes involves the use of ELF. The respondents are characterized by a high level of integrative motivation to become indistinguishable from NESs in terms of speaking as well as by a desire to live in an English speaking country at some point in their life. With the exception of talking with NNEs, they perceive in-class discussions as well as conversations with English teachers and NESs as anxiety producing situations. Nevertheless, they do show some WTC in in-class discussions, whereas outside the classroom they exhibit a very high level of WTC in English in their leisure time activities which involve different modes of WTC such as speaking, reading, writing, and listening. The findings reveal that the participants experience English learning very differently in and outside the classroom. While in the classroom their self-concept is laden with negative factors such as anxiety, competition, the lack of intrinsic motivation, low perceived L2 proficiency and limited WTC, their identity construction outside the classroom is more positive including successful English use and high levels of WTC in their spare time activities coupled with intrinsic and integrative motivation. In these activities they use English to pursue non-linguistic goals, resulting in incidental language learning thus high perceived language aptitude, because language learning seems effortless to them.

Main Conclusions

The main findings of my inquiry on the participants' multilingual identity construction were in keeping with Kramsch's (2009) study of a similar kind. The data in my study revealed how the participants became MLS in the process of SLA by creating their subjective and creative meaning-making practices about their L2. The majority used the new language to identify with either NESs or a desired future version of themselves and they embraced the transformative potential of L2 learning. Only a few students resorted to their familiar L1 and its culture due to the threat that the L2 posed to the integrity of their identity. Exploring the identity construction of the participants led me to coining the concept of imagined L2 habitus that language learners may adopt and which refers to the learner's different ways of behaving and thinking enabled by the new language. By learning an L2, learners compare and contrast the differences between the ways of behaving and thinking of L1 and L2 speakers. Since language learners stand no chance of getting to know all speakers of the L2, they use their imagination to envisage how native and non-native L2 speakers may think and behave. Consequently, in L2 interactions language learners may adopt an imagined L2 habitus that they think approximates the habitus of L2 speakers or a hybrid L1 and L2 habitus relying on the real and imagined ways of behaving and thinking in both the L1 and the L2. Hence, language learners can construct and negotiate their identities in interactions with other L2 speakers relying on their imagined L2 habitus.

Drawing on Sussman's (2002) cultural identity model of the sojourn, I adopted her model in the context of SLA and labeled it the cultural identity model of language learning. Sussman focuses on changes in cultural identity construction during and after the sojourn referring to the sojourner's identity responses to culture shock and repatriation shock. However, findings in the present study showed that her cultural identity model works in the context of L2 learning, as well. Language learners often experience a disturbance or a crisis in their linguistic and cultural

identity while learning an L2. Since culture is interwoven in language learning (Kramsch, 1998), even EFL learners, who have never been exposed to an English speaking environment, but have incorporated in themselves aspects of the new culture and the new consciousness that comes with the new language (Lacan, 1997), can experience a disturbance in their identity using their imagination. They may no longer know who they are and in what ways they belong to the L1 and the L2 culture. When seeing the differences between the L1 and L2 culture in terms of ways of thinking and behaving, they may experience an additive, subtractive, or an affirmative identity response to the linguistic and cultural stimuli of L2 learning.

Many participants' ideal selves aimed to achieve native-like proficiency, which created a substantial gap between their ideal self and actual self. The magnitude of self-discrepancy should provide sufficient incentive for them to reduce this gap and attain their ideal self; however, the participants' successful language use outside the classroom that gave them a feeling of being in control and empowerment could offset the incentive afforded by the discrepancy between their actual and ideal self. Consequently, I detected substantial differences between the participants' language learning experiences in the classroom and outside the classroom. The participants' self-concept was more positive outside the classroom, whereas their in-class experiences were laden with more negative feelings resulting in the construction of a less positive linguistic identity.

Concerning the relationship between traditional motivational constructs and identity construction, I found that intrinsic and integrative motivation facilitate the transformative power of language learning and make learners MLSs by allowing them to create their own subjective associations about the L2, whereas extrinsic motivation makes language learning a less meaningful and less transformative experience. More meaningfully lived language learning experiences and the creation of creative and subjective meaning-making processes in and

through the L2 are also conducive to creating a more powerful and vivid image of the learner's ideal self, which promotes the learner's motivation to learn the L2.

The findings on the participants' IDs confirmed that IDs interact with one another in dynamic and complex ways. Similarly to Bailey's (1983) study, I found that self-perception with respect to perceived language proficiency level and perceived aptitude, perfectionism, and competitiveness form a cyclic relationship, feeding into one another at one level within the learner. Changes at this level then feed into the learner's language anxiety at the next level up, which affects their motivation to learn the language at the next level, which, then, shapes the learner's WTC in English. I envisage these IDs as vertically and horizontally interacting levels of a CDS which construct and shape the learner's identity as system-level behavior. There is a bi-directional link between the system and its levels, because the system responds to changes at the lower levels of the system as well as to stimuli coming from the environment in the form of interactions with other L2 speakers and in the form of contextual factors such as the school environment, curriculum, and the socio-cultural context of L2 learning. Therefore, I call for an understanding of identity construction as a complex dynamic system in which individual learner characteristics constitute the levels of the system that horizontally and vertically shape the system's behavior, that is, the identity construction of learners through and in the L2 they learn. Figure 1 shows a visual representation of Identity Construction as a Complex Dynamic System of Individual Differences.

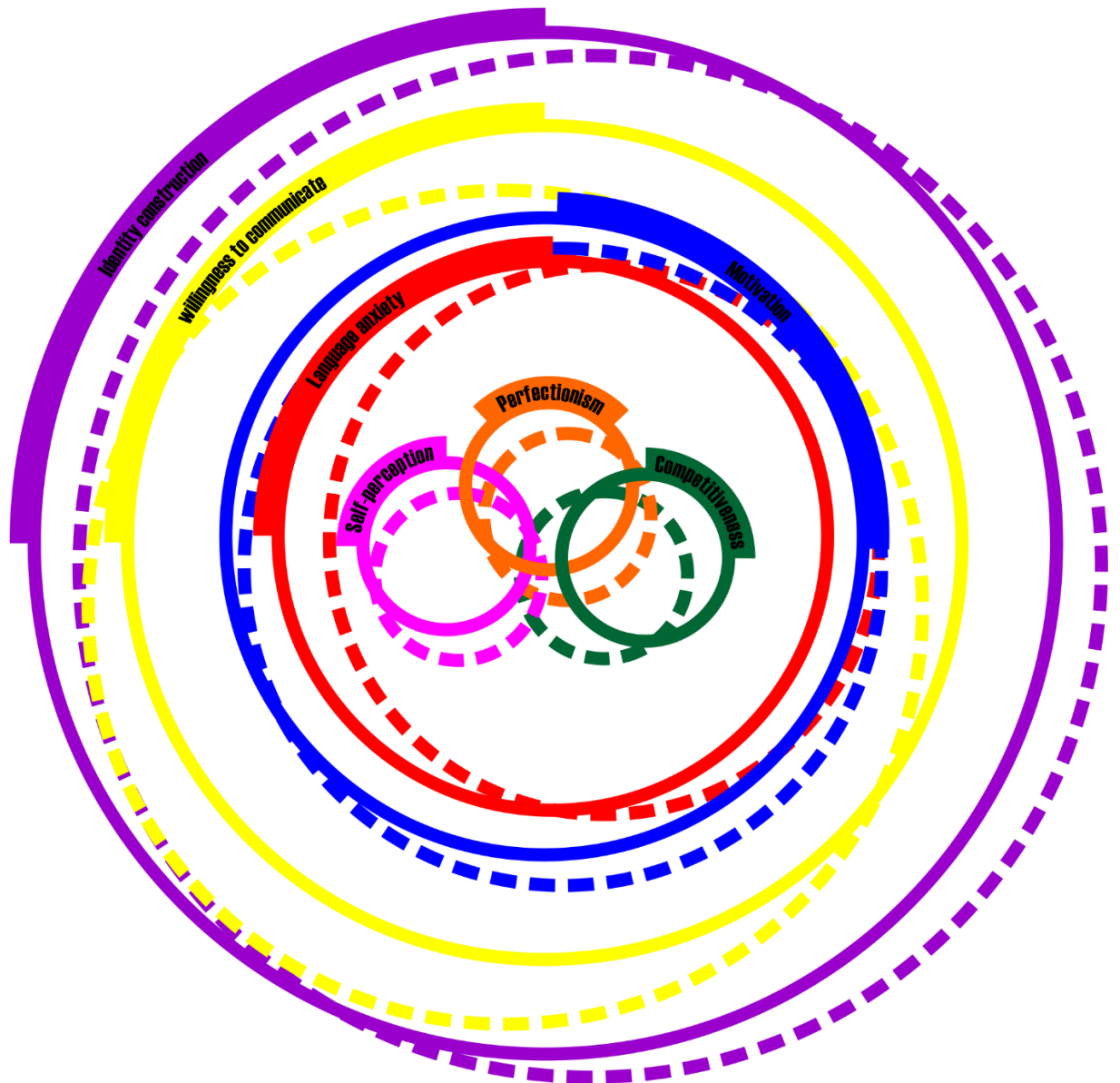


Figure 1. Identity Construction as a Complex Dynamic System of Individual Differences

The intermittent lines stand for potential trajectories of the levels and the system, and these potential trajectories of IDs are idiosyncratic and subject to change over time. Despite the versatility of such a complex system, patterns of system behavior may be detected, making the system stable and changeable at the same time.

I did not include affect as a separate factor or level in the figure, as language learning is an embodied experience and emotional responses are implicated at each level of the system. Other self-related concepts such as self-confidence, self-worth, self-efficacy, or learner-beliefs are inherently part of the learner's identity construction. I did not include age in this

representation, because the system temporally evolves and age is not a stable factor in this conceptualization. The system emerges from past and present experiences and the future projections of the learner; thus, the learner's age-related experiences are inherently part of the system. Finally, I did not include another key construct, aptitude in this system, as studies (MacIntyre, Noels & Clément, 1997; Tóth, 2007) have pointed out that L2 learners' self-perception about their language aptitude is more influential than their actual aptitude. I believe that the success of language learning is not determined by the learner's innate abilities that in language learning are often associated with language aptitude. Instead, I argue in line with Kramsch (2009), that language learning can be more or less meaningfully lived and can be more or less transformative for the learner, which may be a life-changing experience irrespective of proficiency level or language learning aptitude. Language learners use their imagination to create their subjective experiences of success, failure, and transformation. The subjective, non-conventional, and creative use of the L2 denoting the second type of symbolic language use by learners (Kramsch, 2009) constitutes and shapes learners' learning behavior as well as their attitudes, thoughts, ideas, beliefs, feelings, and emotions about the L2, its culture and the people speaking the language as well as about learning the L2.

The complex system I described above is a chaotic system that moves like a double pendula, because it is a highly idiosyncratic system: some of the IDs can move up and down between levels and can interact with one another at random. The system can change smoothly and gradually or suddenly and drastically. Initial conditions are crucial in determining the system's behavior at a later time. Furthermore, this complex and dynamic framework of both individual differences and identity construction can explain why experiencing the same conditions in language learning may result in differences in IDs and identity construction and why different learning conditions and experiences may converge to a certain pattern of IDs or

identity construction. Despite the idiosyncratic experiences of the participants in my study, I detected patterns of behavior and experiences in the datasets.

Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this study entail several pedagogical implications. Since it was based on classroom research, the topics raised in the study were awareness-raising for the predominantly first-year students. Furthermore, exploring the identity construction of learners that we teach is also beneficial, as it casts light on other aspects of learners such as their motivation, LA, WTC, perfectionism, or competitiveness. Similarly, the study of IDs should also focus on learners' identity construction, as the two are interrelated. The findings of such an inquiry can help teachers to better their teaching practice by meeting the specific needs of their learners. Teachers have a key role in creating a favorable atmosphere in the classroom that facilitates learning; therefore, nurturing learners' positive identity construction by paying attention to their needs promotes L2 learning. Teachers can also benefit a lot from exploring their learners' identity, as such an endeavor requires self-reflection by them as L2 learners, L2 speakers, and L2 teachers. By establishing a relaxed atmosphere in which the voices of students can be heard, teachers and learners can feel more motivated to participate in the language learning process.

Furthermore, nurturing L2 learners' positive self-image is of high importance, as it can trigger the transformative potential of L2 learning and a desire for self-fulfillment through the L2. This claim is corroborated by my findings that intrinsic and integrative motivation are linked to experiencing L2 learning more meaningfully and in a more transformative way. These two motivational orientations are more effective in motivating learners in the long-run to learn the L2 and to develop their language proficiency. Moreover, I found that the participants held a more favorable self-image outside the classroom than in the classroom due to their involvement in authentic and engaging out-of-class activities using English. Therefore, it is beneficial for teachers to incorporate activities in their teaching practice that draw on authentic

language use, since these activities better engage learners. By doing so, learners' imagined communities can be acknowledged and nurtured, which may provide further incentive for them to participate in L2 learning. Learners' investment in L2 learning is also an investment in their linguistic and cultural identity, for they wish to gain various resources such as a better job, a higher salary, international friendship, or English speaking entertainment or hobbies and so forth in return for their investment in L2 learning.

Finally, teachers and learners should be aware of the benefits of using and teaching English as a lingua franca in and beyond the classroom to better conform to the reality of English use in the world nowadays. To avoid the split or the struggle between learners' identity construction in the classroom and outside the classroom, teachers can highlight the potential of using ELF in the classroom. If English learners feel empowered by their ability to use English successfully instead of feeling inferior to NESs, they can generate a more favorable English identity for themselves and can rid themselves of the pressure of having to conform to the native speaker norm. If learners can accept the local diversity involved in ELF use, they can avoid passing negative or derogatory judgments on themselves and other NNEs, thus avoiding the further spread of prejudice about the language skills and the competence of NNEs.

Limitations and Future Directions for Research

Despite the multidisciplinary approach used in the dissertation and the careful design of instruments, the present study is limited in many ways. First of all, the rich textual data I gathered with the help of the structured speaking task would have allowed for an even more comprehensive analysis of the data with regard to the participants' linguistic profile and their parents' language learning background. However, adding another chapter would have exceeded the recommended length of a doctoral dissertation; therefore, I only discussed the participants' language learning background in relation to the constructs included in my research questions. Furthermore, based on the vast data elicited by the three instruments I could have discussed the

participants' motivational self-system in much greater depth; however, the research questions did not focus on the ideal self or the ought-to self; therefore, I only addressed these self-constructs at the intersection of the various approaches I synthesized. Moreover, the rich textual data provided insights into the participants' cultural identity construction which I discussed in relation to their linguistic identity construction in the process of SLA, since my research questions only addressed the students' multilingual identity construction.

Second, despite the numerical data that I presented and discussed and thus I labelled my study a mixed methods inquiry, the quantitative part of the dissertation is limited. The number of the participants (N=42) is small to make generalizations about the findings. At a later time, a larger-scale quantitative survey investigating the participants' individual differences and linguistic identity construction would be useful to compare the findings.

Third, despite the fact that I drew on CDST and that I envisage IDs and identity construction as a complex dynamic system, I did not investigate the constructs under study from a CDST approach. Since my study was not longitudinal, it did not allow me to detect temporal changes in the system, which is an important property of CDSs. Nevertheless, I was able to explore in the data the interconnected, complex, and dynamic nature of IDs and identity construction that also responded to other systems (i.e. other L2 learners/speakers) in the environment as well as contextual factors. To make this inquiry longitudinal, the study could be replicated in the near future involving participants enrolled at UP to explore the quantity, quality, and the intensity of the changes the participants have experienced in the past three years. It would not be possible to involve all respondents of the present study in this future project, as some of the students have graduated or dropped out. However, the majority of the participants are fourth-year students in the five- or six-year teacher education program; therefore, I meet them in other courses that I teach. This second-phase of the present study would involve fewer participants and would focus on changes in the constructs I explored now.

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- Fekete, A. (2018). *Exploring Hungarian English majors' identity construction from multiple perspectives*. Manuscript submitted for publication.

The candidate's conference presentations in the field of identity research and individual differences research

- Fekete, A. (2013, November) Two Hungarian EFL teachers' reflections on multilingualism, multiculturalism and identity construction, Szentágotthai János Transdisciplinary Conference and Student Competition, Pécs, Hungary. I was awarded an 'Outstanding Presentation' certificate.
- Fekete, A. (2014, May). Hungarian high school students' attitudes towards native and non-native English varieties in listening comprehension tests. University of Zagreb Round Table Conference 2014: Empirical Studies in English Applied Linguistics, Zagreb, Croatia.
- Fekete, A. (2015, June). ELF teachers and learners' reflections on their multilingualism and identity construction. University of Pécs Round Table Conference 2015: Empirical studies in English applied linguistics, Pécs, Hungary.
- Fekete, A. (2015, July). "I prefer speaking English as I feel limited using my mother tongue". Cutting Edges: Languages, Standards and Politics Conference, Canterbury, UK.
- Fekete, A. (2017, June). Individual differences in linguistic identity construction in a Hungarian Context. University of Pécs Round Table Conference 2017: Empirical studies in English applied linguistics. Pécs, Hungary.
- Fekete, A. (2018, June). Exploring Hungarian English majors' identity construction. University of Zagreb Round Table Conference 2014: Empirical Studies in English Applied Linguistics, Zagreb, Croatia.