

**DOCTORAL DISSERTATION**

**Exploring L2 teachers' knowledge of their impact:**

**Working towards a theoretical model based on pre-service  
and in-service L2 teachers' reflective-narrative accounts**

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## Abstract

The research in this dissertation is exploratory in nature: it aims to explore the underlying knowledge that L2 teachers rely on when engaged in and reflecting upon L2 learning-teaching as an inherently relational activity, in which the teacher's impact fundamentally shapes students' engagement in learning and in the activity itself. In line with this aim, the dissertation positions L2 teachers' knowledge of their impact (LTKI) as a construct to be used for framing the knowledge that allows L2 teachers to make their classroom impact a favourable one, to engage in 'relating' as a specific and regular classroom activity, and thereby to increase the effectiveness of their teaching.

Regarding its theoretical focus, the dissertation looks primarily into the historical and paradigmatic roots of how L2 teachers' knowledge is conceptualised today, as well as into the growing amount of research that seeks to understand the relational processes involved in L2 learning-teaching and the ways in which L2 teachers make sense of these processes. Concurrently, the theoretical chapters (Chapters 1-3) draw attention to the conceptual and terminological disparity that now characterises research into L2 teachers' sense-making about their roles and impact in L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity, and present LTKI as a more fitting conceptual focus for such research. In setting up this research agenda, the theoretical chapters also lay out the rationale for using L2 teachers' reflective-narrative accounts as a means to explore and conceptualise the knowledge they relied on while carrying out the reflective activity, and introduce grounded theory as an analytical framework for doing such exploratory work in the qualitative research tradition.

The empirical part of the dissertation (Chapters 4-6) comprises three separate but conceptually intertwined qualitative studies, in which the recursive analysis of reflective-narrative data gradually led to a better understanding of the LTKI construct. In each study, the exploration of key conceptual units is underpinned by data excerpts drawn from different groups of participants, including Hungarian in-service L2 teachers (n=22) as well as Austrian and Hungarian L2 learners (n=24) in Chapter 4, Hungarian (n=12+18) and Turkish (n=17) pre-service EFL teachers in Chapter 5, and another group of Hungarian in-service L2 teachers (n=15) in Chapter 6. Crucially, despite the participants and their reflective tasks being different in the three studies, the presented results allow for a better understanding of eight conceptual units (i.e. domains) that are thought to form part of LTKI as a larger underlying construct.

Based on the exploration of these eight conceptual domains from a complex dynamic systems perspective, the dissertation contends that if LTKI is to be studied and understood as a specific area of L2 teachers' knowledge, it ought to be studied with a simultaneous focus on the various conceptual domains that seem to interact in complex ways to make that area of knowledge a coherent and operational one (Woods & Çakır, 2011). As of these conceptual outcomes, it is concluded that LTKI should be understood as a composite of propositional and procedural knowledge and as a conceptual tool (Freeman & Johnson, 2005) that L2 teachers (at any level of professional development) operationalise when engaged in L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity, and also when engaged in reflective-narrative activities that require them to draw upon this area of knowledge.



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### **List of acronyms and abbreviations**

CDST	Complex dynamic systems theory
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
EFL	English as a foreign language
ICT	Information and communications technology
L2	Second or foreign language (predominantly used in the latter sense throughout the dissertation)
LTKI	L2 teachers' knowledge of their impact
SLA	Second language acquisition
TEFL/TESOL	Teaching English as a foreign language/Teaching English to speakers of other languages

## Introduction

“Not only the students, but the teacher himself/herself too will enjoy the benefits of these characteristics. The teacher and the students play in the same team and they can score a goal only together. The team leader is always the teacher and he/she is responsible for the goal or ending in failure.”

(Teacher 4, from the study in Chapter 6)

In a research project reported later in the dissertation, I asked Hungarian in-service L2 teachers to explain to me what they think are those characteristics of an L2 teacher that will definitely influence their students' engagement in learning, their motivations, and their attitudes towards the L2 learning-teaching process. The reflective accounts formulated in response to my cue—including the excerpt quoted above—led me to more than one important conclusions: firstly, that all of the involved L2 teachers could answer my question extensively and with the certainty of an experienced professional; secondly, that these extensive answers could all be fitted into a finite set of conceptual categories (or domains, as I will call them later); and thirdly, that the process of effective L2 instruction was often described in these accounts as a process of forging teacher-student relationships that are conducive to learning and, more importantly, to students' engagement in learning (Dörnyei, 2019). In essence, what these teachers expressed then was that they *knew* L2 learning-teaching to be an inherently relational process (Freeman, 2013, p. 128), and that they also *knew about* the ways in which certain teacher behaviours and characteristics impacted on students' engagement in and development through that process.

In situating this research and my earlier projects feeding into it (see below), I have studied the psychology of L2 learning-teaching extensively, and always with a focus on the L2 teacher's role and responsibility in relationship-building with students as an element of effective teaching. As of my interest in teacher-focused inquiry (and as such in the beliefs, cognitions, and sense-making of L2 teachers), I have often read case studies in which the reflective-narrative accounts of in-service or pre-service L2 teachers offered glimpses of 'the relational' and 'the affective' as key underlying components of teachers' reasoning and learning about L2 learning-teaching processes (e.g., Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997; Golombek & Johnson, 2004; Kubanyiova, 2009; Lugossy, 2006; Yuan & Lee, 2014), but I have found hardly any studies that would have explicitly sought to understand the interplay between the teacher-student relationship and learner motivation (for a recent exception, see Henry & Thorsen, 2018), or 'relating' as an activity in which L2 teachers often find themselves engaged either deliberately or unwittingly (for a recent exception,

see Mercer, 2018, p. 513). Even from my perspective as a teacher educator, the number of sources for instructing pre-service and in-service L2 teachers about classroom relationship-building and leadership turned out to be surprisingly low—some notable examples being the works of social-psychology offering principles and practices to L2 teachers as managers of classroom interpersonal dynamics (Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997; Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003; Ehrman & Dörnyei, 1998), the studies looking into teacher language (Denton, 2007) and the operation of classroom communication systems (Wubbels & Levy, 1993), and some explicit but brief reflections on teacher-student role relationships (Wright, 1990).

Crucially, however, it was also through these studies that I have developed an awareness for and a situatedness in sociocultural and social-constructivist approaches to L2 learning in general and to L2 teacher development in particular (Johnson, 2006, 2009; Lantolf, 2011), contending that a learner's or a teacher's acquisition of knowledge is always contingent upon the social interactions through which that knowledge was appropriated—the latter referring to a context-dependent process of simultaneous individual sense-making and interpersonal co-construction (see also Johnson, 2015). In turn, the proponents of these approaches also believe that due to the uniqueness of L2 learners' and teachers' personal-experiential knowledge as a product of subjective sense-making, the best way to look into complex teaching-related phenomena is through the perspectives of learners and teachers themselves, and by way of the thorough (and fundamentally qualitative) exploration of their reflective-narrative accounts (see Section 1.4). This, on the reverse, means that in social-constructivist research the skilful elicitation and analysis of L2 learners' and teachers' reflective-narrative accounts is thought to offer unique and relevant understandings of what L2 teachers know and do within the activity of 'L2 learning-teaching' and how this knowing and doing influences "what their students come to know and be able to do in the language classroom" (Freeman & Johnson, 2005, p. 76).

To continue on the same thread, I believe it is this social-constructivist framing of L2 learning-teaching as a joint activity of learners and teachers that has recently initiated a more general and highly needed turn within SLA and TEFL/TESOL research towards the study of L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity (Mercer & Gkonou, 2017), setting researchers up to the challenge of framing teacher-student relationships—with a focus on the nature and dynamics of 'relating' as a complex interpersonal activity—as the units of analysis (Mercer, 2018). From what I have so far learnt about this emerging research tradition, it seems clear that teacher-focused inquiry after the 'relational turn' will focus on the three fundamental questions which Freeman and Johnson (2005, p. 80) put forward and studied in tandem: (1) How do the conceptual tools of L2 teachers arise and

how are they developed over time and through practice? (2) How do L2 teachers blend physical and conceptual tools into activity in the flux of classroom situations? (3) How do students see and experience these tools?

Admittedly, in view of the few available studies probing into this type of analysis and theorising (e.g., Freeman & Johnson, 2005; Henry & Thorsen, 2019), it is not yet clear whether the three questions can be separated from one another if L2 learning-teaching is to be studied within the inherently complex framework of relational research. What seems certain, though, is that this framing of L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity has brought along a growing interest in the knowledge and skills that L2 teachers employ (and appropriate) in ‘relating’ as a classroom interpersonal activity (e.g., Gkonou & Mercer, 2018; Mercer & Gkonou, 2017), thus giving momentum to both the theoretical-methodological framework I am setting up in the first part of the dissertation (Chapters 1-3) and the empirical studies through which I aim to explore a specific area of L2 teachers’ knowledge (Chapters 4-6).

More specifically, since the central underlying assumption of my exploratory work is that L2 teachers rely on a specialised body of knowledge (i.e. L2 teachers’ knowledge of their impact; henceforth LTKI) when reasoning about and acting upon their own interpersonal impact within L2 learning-teaching (see Section 2.3), in the first three chapters I frame my research and argue for its relevance by reviewing current conceptualisations of L2 teachers’ knowledge (Chapter 1) and of L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity (Chapter 2), and by setting up a theoretical-methodological framework for my grounded-theory project in which LTKI as a theoretical construct is examined through the reflective-narrative accounts of pre-service and in-service L2 teachers primarily (Chapter 3). Then, on the basis of this multi-faceted theoretical-methodological framework, I present the three separate but conceptually intertwined qualitative studies (Chapters 4-6) through which my exploration of the LTKI construct has been carried out thus far. Considering that the latter part of my work involved a multi-phased analytical process and a focus on teaching-related concepts in various research areas, in Table 1 I am offering an introductory, structured overview of the three empirical studies that form the body of my dissertation in terms of the exploratory work presented therein.

**Table 1**

*Overview of the three qualitative studies as parts of my grounded-theory project and presented in the empirical chapters of the dissertation*

	<b>Participants and type of data</b>	<b>Research questions</b>	<b>Main outcomes</b>
<b>Study 1</b> (2014-2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 Austrian university-level EFL learners</li> <li>• 14 Hungarian university-level EFL learners</li> <li>• 22 Hungarian in-service L2 teachers</li> </ul> <p><i>Type of data:</i> reflective-narrative texts (essay format)</p>	<b>Phase 1:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the characteristics that L2 learners and in-service L2 teachers attribute to demotivating L2 teachers?</li> <li>• To what extent are learners' and teachers' beliefs and attributions similar or different from each other?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring the concept of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation from the perspective of L2 learners and teachers</li> </ul>
		<b>Phase 2:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can the conceptual categories of the study be used for exploratory work on the LTKI construct?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying four conceptual domains as components of LTKI</li> <li>• Framing the relationship of the components as a complex dynamic system</li> </ul>
<b>Study 2</b> (2016-2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12+18 Hungarian pre-service EFL teachers (two groups)</li> <li>• 17 Turkish pre-service EFL teachers</li> </ul> <p><i>Type of data:</i> short reflective-narrative statements (reflective template)</p>	<b>Phase 1:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the teaching-related beliefs and dispositions that characterise pre-service EFL teachers in an early phase of teacher education?</li> <li>• To what extent are the expressed beliefs and dispositions similar or different in the three examined groups?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing an overview of salient themes and categories in pre-service EFL teachers' teaching-related conceptions</li> </ul>
		<b>Phase 2:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what ways are the salient conceptual domains identified in the study related to the emerging LTKI construct?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying five other conceptual domains as components of LTKI</li> <li>• Proposing a provisional model of LTKI</li> </ul>
<b>Study 3</b> (2017-2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 Hungarian in-service L2 teachers</li> </ul> <p><i>Type of data:</i> reflective-narrative texts (essay format)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What insights can be gained about the LTKI construct if in-service L2 teachers are asked to reflect specifically on the impact they have on students' learning?</li> <li>• What does the analysis of their reflective-narrative accounts reveal about the conceptual domains represented in the provisional model of LTKI?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-examining the identified conceptual domains and their relationship</li> <li>• Finalising a tentative model of LTKI</li> </ul>

In view of the outline above and the quote at the beginning, a personal remark with which to close my introduction is that the prolonged exploratory work presented in the dissertation has provided a fertile ground for professional development and conceptual growth both to me as a researcher and L2 teacher educator and to the pre-service and in-service L2 teachers participating in my projects. This, I believe, is a fundamental outcome in teacher-focused inquiry which seeks to turn research into a process of shared understanding and sense-making (Section 1.4.2), and to engage the participants in continued reflection about the accumulated results, thus raising their awareness to the complexity of key teaching-related phenomena (e.g., LTKI and the forging of conducive teacher-learner relationships) and creating space for their conceptions and/or classroom actions to change in response to these stimuli (e.g., Johnson, 2015; Kiely, 2014; Yuan & Lee, 2014). As the example of Teacher 4 demonstrates (see quote above), participation in guided reflective activities does indeed help L2 teachers to an increased awareness for pivotal but often implicit aspects of L2 learning-teaching, and to an appreciation of that awareness as a tool for making their own and other teachers' teaching more effective.



# **Chapter 1 – Conceptualisations of L2 teachers’ knowledge: A review of theory, research, and policy**

## **1.1 Introduction**

As the research and theories in this and the other chapters show, defining the roles, tasks, and knowledge base of L2 teachers is a complex and transient endeavour—much more so than it is for teachers of other subjects and disciplines. This statement holds true in spite of the fact that our views, for a while, have been fairly stable and generalised regarding the roles and knowledge base of L2 learners, who are described in a recent review by Van den Branden (2016, p. 164) as “active agents who, through the performance of tasks, develop implicit and explicit second language knowledge and gradually become more proficient in comprehending and producing the target language for meaningful purposes.” Still, Brosh (1996, p. 125) is right in pointing out that:

Language teaching differs in essence from teaching other subject matters, especially in terms of the nature of the process, where the means of instruction is also the subject of instruction. Unlike other subjects, it is influenced by social, political, psychological, and practical values that are beyond the control of the teacher and language planners.

In addition to the complex interplay of these factors on the level of individuals as well as learner groups, the field of L2 learning and teaching is one that has most consistently been shaped and reshaped by changing demographics, policy initiatives, and technology (Graddol, 2006; McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008) throughout the past decades. Apart from the need to adapt flexibly to such changes, the profession has also been affected by a phenomenal growth of knowledge about the nature of L2 learning and teaching, resulting not only in a growing understanding of what successful L2 teaching requires (McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008, p. 136), but also in a substantially more complex system of expectations and publicly established standards regarding L2 teachers’ roles, knowledge, and capacities in general (p. 140).

As the construct of ‘L2 teachers’ knowledge’ is central to my dissertation, in Chapter 1 I review the research and theories that underlie our current understanding of the construct and other related concepts, including the now pervasive ideal called ‘reflective teaching’ (Schön, 1983, 1987). As a point of departure, in Section 1.2 I define basic terms such as L2 teachers’ knowledge, skills, competences, beliefs, and cognitions: these are fundamental in the framing of this and the other chapters. Then, using this theoretical basis, I provide a historical overview on the conceptualisation and policy-based regulation of L2 teachers’ roles, tasks, and knowledge, which is essential for understanding current standards of effective L2 teaching in general, and in Hungary, my primary research context, in particular. Finally, as a bridge to the upcoming chapters, I begin to describe the so called

'social turn' in educational and SLA research, which has brought along new understandings in the epistemology of L2 learning-teaching as well as L2 teacher development, and in researching further uncharted domains of L2 teachers' knowledge, including LTKI as the central concept that is explored in this dissertation.

## **1.2 A historical overview on the conceptualisation and policy-based regulation of L2 teachers' roles, tasks, and knowledge**

As a starting point to understanding a construct as complex as 'L2 teachers' knowledge,' in this section I provide an overview on major historical and conceptual phases leading to the emergence of 'teacher knowledge' as "an umbrella term to cover teachers' theoretical and practical knowledge as well as their dispositions, beliefs, and values" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, pp. 21-22). In doing so, I follow the overlapping timelines outlined by Gitomer and Zisk (2015) and McDiarmid and Clevenger-Bright (2008), and supplement them with definitions of key terms such as knowledge (types as well as dimensions), skills, competences, beliefs and dispositions, and cognitions—each fundamental in the framing of this and the other chapters. Apart from representing 'teacher knowledge' in its gradually emerging complexity, the section aims to provide a basis for the subsequent discussion on current standards and policies regarding effective L2 teaching (Section 1.3; see also Horwitz, 2000; Schulz, 2000), and on recent developments in the conceptualisation of L2 teachers' knowledge as a personally constructed, context-dependent, and socially mediated entity (Section 1.4).

### **1.2.1 Phase 1: The L2 teacher as educated professional**

For the earliest and longest phase in the history of L2 teaching (lasting until the 1970s), the teacher was consensually viewed as 'an educated professional' who "holds knowledge and, primarily through lecture and instructional materials, transmits content to students (e.g., Goodlad, 1984)" (Gitomer & Zisk, 2015, p. 7). Accordingly, the requisite knowledge of the professional teacher consisted of (1) a general knowledge of current social problems, history and social studies, science, fine arts, literature, and mathematics, (2) a set of specific communication skills, and (3) professional knowledge (Gitomer & Zisk, 2015, p. 10). The latter term, according to (Gitomer & Zisk, 2015, p. 10) refers to "knowledge of education and social policy, child development and educational psychology, guidance, individual and group analysis, and either elementary or secondary school methods" (see also McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008). In the case of L2 teachers, this set was supplemented by professional knowledge about fundamental

concepts of language, language learning, and language teaching (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 24).

Apparent from the above description is a fundamental and well-known distinction between two types of knowledge working in tandem in the act of teaching: propositional and procedural. According to Bloom's (1956) long-standing conceptualisation, propositional knowledge refers to the recall of information from memory; the types of recalled information range from specific facts to principles, structures, theories, or methods and processes (p. 201), as reflected in all three components above. In contrast, procedural knowledge refers to knowledge manifest in appropriate and relevant action in particular situations (pp. 203 & 205), i.e. something the individual *can do* as a result of possessing the appropriate knowledge (Marzano & Kendall, 2007)—as reflected, in part, in the notions of 'communication skills' and 'professional knowledge' above. In teaching situations, the recall of stored knowledge and information is most often followed by some resultative action and interaction, thus it is the appropriate mixture of propositional and procedural knowledge that allows teachers to create and sustain "a classroom environment in which desired learning outcomes are made possible" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 29; see also Wubbels & Levy, 1993).

Until the cognitive revolution of the 1980s (Section 1.2.2), the relationship between propositional and procedural knowledge was seen as a straightforward one in teaching and teacher education. In this phase, teachers were typically regarded as 'passive technicians' who acquire a battery of knowledge during their pre-service years, and then execute teaching based on this prescribed set of schemes, principles, and procedures (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, pp. 8-9). In the case of context-specific learning and teaching problems, teachers were supposed to "turn once again to the established professional knowledge base and search for a formula to fix it by themselves" (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 9). As a later development of this early phase, publicly established standards for effective teaching started to emerge in the 1970s, in line with a tendency to measure the teacher's success and effectiveness in terms of students' achievement on tests of subject-specific knowledge (Falus, 2001; Kumaravadivelu, 2003). This positivist/postpositivist mentality—still prevalent in some educational contexts—was "often manifest as extensive checklists of skills against which the classroom performances of beginning teachers were judged (Hall, 1981)" (McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008, p. 139), and began to be challenged only recently by the sociocultural theories discussed later on in the dissertation.

### **1.2.2 Phase 2: The L2 teacher as a professional mediator of content knowledge**

Contrary to the long-standing conceptualisations presented in Section 1.2.1, the 1980s brought along new and more complex understandings of L2 teachers' knowledge, rooted in two major trends emerging in this period. The first of these was an emphatic re-appreciation of teachers' practical knowledge (Gitomer & Zisk, 2015), a concept taken up by educational theorists such as Elbaz (1983), Schön (1983, 1987), Shulman (1986/1994), and Zeichner and Liston (1987). In one of the first definitions of the term, Elbaz (1983), for instance, claimed that "practical knowledge encompasses first-hand experience of students' learning styles, interests, needs, strengths and difficulties, and a repertoire of instructional techniques and classroom management skills" (Elbaz, 1983, p. 5; cited in Gitomer & Zisk, 2015, p. 19). While some of these facets had already been part of earlier conceptualisations, a more revolutionary way of argumentation was put forward by Schön (1983, 1987) and Zeichner and Liston (1987), who said that practical knowledge and thinking do not depend on the situation-specific application of theoretical knowledge and logical arguments, but rather refer to the substantive and context-dependent knowledge that teachers construct from their own experiences to be able to recognize, assess, and solve pedagogical problems (as summarised in Falus, 2001, p. 24).

A fourth critical thinker of this phase was Shulman (1986/1994), who started to use the term 'pedagogical content knowledge' to draw attention to the question of "*how* teachers transform their content knowledge into lessons and are able to teach the content that they know to those who do not yet understand it" (Gitomer & Zisk, 2015, p. 18; my emphasis). To be more specific, Shulman (1986/1994) distinguished subject knowledge from pedagogical content knowledge, curricular knowledge, and a so called 'domain-general pedagogical knowledge'—the latter including propositional knowledge of the learning-teaching process, educational and learning aims, child development, learners' personalities and individual differences, classroom management, teaching methods, classroom assessment, the role of the teacher, the ideal teacher-learner relationship, and the relations between school and society (Falus, 2003, p. 94; Gitomer & Zisk, 2015, p. 14; Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 22). Rather than diminishing the importance of subject knowledge, which was found to positively correlate with how much teachers rely on learners' constructive, active engagement and problem solving (Falus, 2003), these advancements have permanently broadened our understanding of and expectations regarding L2 teachers' roles and knowledge.

A second trend contributing to this immense conceptual expansion was the rapid advancement of cognitive sciences starting in the 1980s, resulting in a more complex view of general human knowledge and cognitive operations. As a most notable contribution to the field, Marzano and Kendall's (2007, pp. 11-13) model represents human knowledge

as a multi-dimensional entity, in which the cognitive dimension is supplemented by and subordinate to metacognition as well as the self-system. As the primal level of the hierarchical model, the self-system is seen as the root of any kind of motivation, a composite of cognitive and emotional impulses (Damasio, 1999) determining if the individual is to engage in a specific (cognitive) task (Marzano & Kendall, 2007, p. 19). Upon activation (or engagement) the realization of specific cognitive operations is preceded by metacognitive processing, whereby task-specific demands are assessed and goals are established, and the outcomes of this process determine “the type and level of cognitive processing that occurs” (p. 18). Clearly, this multi-dimensional view of knowledge has had crucial implications for research on teacher cognition: while the integrated self-system presupposes that teachers’ cognitive operations are necessarily influenced by affective factors, the underlying metacognitive dimension implies some awareness and control over one’s cognitive processes, emotions and motivations (Papaleontiou-Louca, 2003), and also an ability to externalize these processes, to some degree, through various semiotic means (see Section 3.2.3).

### **1.2.3 Phase 3: The L2 teacher as ‘reflective practitioner’**

As part of the cognitive revolution introduced in Section 1.2.2, the 1980s also gave way to a growing body of research exploring L2 teacher cognition, thus leading to further conceptual and methodological renewal. In a concise summary of the period, McDiarmid and Clevenger-Bright (2008, p. 139) describe these developments as follows:

Some teacher researchers explored the ‘interior’ lives of teachers—their decision- and sense-making, thinking, and learning processes as well as their knowledge and dispositions (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986; Lampert, 1985). Teacher education programs incorporated formal opportunities for preservice teachers to ‘reflect,’ to make manifest—for themselves and others—their interpretations of what they were experiencing in classrooms, and to take a critical stand toward their assumptions and actions (Calderhead & Gates, 1993; Schön, 1984, 1990; Zeichner & Liston, 1996).

Since then, the developments described here have become trends in both research and L2 teacher education (Bailey & Springer, 2013; Korthagen, 2011). More specifically, teacher educators around the globe have recognized that “making tacit knowledge explicit by reflection is a necessary step in order for fundamental change to occur in teacher behaviour” (Lugossy, 2006, p. 339), and that for teachers to become ‘reflective practitioners,’ they need to acquire both “the skill and attitude of making one’s own actions, feelings, experiences the objects of one’s thinking” (Kelchtermans, 2009, p. 267). Additionally, as a corollary of the ‘reflective movement,’ teaching has increasingly been viewed as intentional action, and, as Bartlett (1990, p. 203) remarked, to improve it “we must accept that it does not involve some modification of behaviour by externally

imposed directions or requirements, but that it requires deliberation and analysis of our ideas about teaching as a form of action based on our changed understandings.”

Apart from these insights into the nature of teaching and teacher development, the new research on L2 teacher cognition brought about invaluable findings about the types and the formation of teacher knowledge, too. This research, on the one hand, positioned teacher knowledge as experiential and personal, i.e. formed through and shaped by the individual’s “observations, experiences, and interpretations that span a long period before, during, and after formal teacher education programs” (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 32). Reaching back to Deweyan theories of teaching and Vygotskian sociocultural theory (Chapter 2), Clandinin and Connelly’s (1987) notion of ‘personal practical knowledge’ went against the traditional separation of knowledge from knower, and initiated a paradigm shift by acknowledging that a teacher’s knowledge is always subjective, context-dependent, emotionally and morally loaded, and formed dynamically through reflective and narrative activity (as summarized in Golombek, 2009, pp. 155-156).

On the other hand, researchers of the new paradigm also claimed that the formation of a teacher’s ‘personal practical knowledge’ is inseparable from the teacher’s dispositions (i.e. beliefs, attitudes, values, and commitments), among which ‘beliefs’ emerged as a particularly productive concept in the study of L2 teacher cognition (see Kalaja & Barcelos, 2003). Traditionally seen as distinct from knowledge (Falus, 2003; Woods, 2003), beliefs can be best described as dynamic mental constructs rooted in both theoretical and experiential knowledge (Barcelos, 2008; Kalaja, Barcelos, Aro, & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2015; Woods & Çakır, 2011) and as “evaluative propositions which teachers hold consciously or unconsciously and which they accept as true while recognising that other teachers may hold alternative beliefs on the same issue” (Basturkmen, 2012, p. 282). Besides being used by individuals “as a filtering mechanism through which new encounters and experiences are screened, interpreted, understood, and absorbed”, beliefs are known to “govern one’s thoughts, words, and actions” (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 60), thus having an (often implicit) impact on teaching practice. Due to a substantial amount of empirical evidence for these claims (e.g., Basturkmen, 2012; Farrell, 2011; Kubanyiova, 2009; Yuan & Lee, 2014), critically reflecting on and contrasting students’ and teachers’ beliefs have by now become standard elements in both educational research and policy.

In sum, the major outcome of the new research tradition was the gradual re-conceptualisation of L2 teacher cognition as “the complex, practically oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts and beliefs that language teachers draw on in their work” (Borg, 2006, p. 272), which undoubtedly increased the complexity of our earlier notion of teacher knowledge, too. More

specifically, teacher knowledge did not only become “an umbrella term to cover teachers’ theoretical and practical knowledge as well as their dispositions, beliefs, and values” (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, pp. 21-22), but some researchers also argued that the dimensions making up teacher knowledge are inseparable in acts of teaching as well as in L2 teacher development (e.g., Borg, 2006, p. 35; Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 23; Szesztay, 2004; Woods, 2003; Woods & Çakır, 2011). In turn, this composite view resulted in the widespread adoption of the term ‘competence’ to refer to “*an integrated body of knowledge, skills, and attitudes*” (Korthagen, 2004, p. 80; original emphasis) that L2 teachers draw on for managing processes, actions, and interactions in and outside the classroom. As a key element of current thinking about L2 teachers’ knowledge, the concept of competence is further elaborated in Section 1.2.4, in which I look at some of the most recent developments in the field.

#### **1.2.4 Phase 4: The L2 teacher as ‘knowledge-rich’ practitioner**

In the current era of rapid social, geopolitical, and technological transformations (from the 1990s onwards), the widespread integration of the ‘competence view’ into L2 teacher education and assessment can be seen as a most practical strategy for keeping up with existing and newly emerging standards of effective L2 teaching. From a conceptual perspective, the key innovation in the ‘competence view’ was that the earlier notion of L2 teacher knowledge, which used to function as a singular concept subsuming all the theoretical, practical, and dispositional ‘knowledge’ a teacher had (Section 1.2.3), could be thereafter divided up into separate competence areas, each denoting a distinct body of knowledge, skills, and dispositions. In other words, while the underlying construct of knowledge remained effectively the same, the new framework could be flexibly adapted to changing social, political, or technological demands by simply expanding the range of L2 teachers’ requisite competences—the most recent additions (based on Borg & Edmett, 2018) being the integration of information and communications technology (ICT) and 21st-century skills into lessons (Chu, Reynolds, Tavares, Notari, & Lee, 2017), the use of multilingual approaches and inclusive practices (García & Wei, 2014; Howard & Aleman, 2008; McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008), and the management of financial and personal resources in light of educational policies and practice (Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016). These emerging competence areas, which have once again increased the complexity of “what teachers were expected to know, be able to do, and care about” (McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008, p. 140), will be further discussed in Section 1.3.

In contrast with the positivist/postpositivist undertones of the ‘competence view,’ manifest in the division of L2 teacher knowledge into distinctly and uniformly attainable components, the new research on teacher cognition (Section 1.2.3) has been building up

to a more autonomous image of L2 teachers as constructors of their own knowledge and, as some researchers called it, their ‘personal practical theories’ (e.g., Levin & He, 2008; Korthagen, 2011). Taking on the earlier notion of ‘personal practical knowledge,’ researchers in this tradition have argued that fundamental changes in our understanding of L2 teachers’ knowledge and how it relates to classroom learning-teaching processes can only happen through closer study of the personal meaning-making of practicing L2 teachers (see Section 1.4), including the pedagogical schemes, routines, and tacit knowledge which are formed through the interaction of theoretical knowledge and practical experience, and which do not lend themselves easily to explicit explanation (Feryok, 2018; Kumaravadivelu, 2012). Clearly, this approach to understanding L2 teacher knowledge—also taken up in this dissertation—seems to contradict the ideas postulated by the ‘competence view.’ In my view, however, the two approaches should be seen as complementary to each other, both feeding into the nascent idea of the L2 teacher as ‘knowledge-rich’ practitioner (Gitomer & Zisk, 2015, pp. 30-31).

Finally, a third noteworthy pillar of the recent conceptual expansion is the metaphorical construction of L2 teachers as ‘transformative intellectuals’ (Kumaravadivelu, 2003), who not only strive for educational advancement, but also “maximize sociopolitical awareness among their learners using consciousness-raising, problem-posing activities,” and thereby frame pedagogy as “a means for transforming life in and outside the classroom” (p. 14). Although not central to the earlier conceptualisations of L2 teacher roles and knowledge, the metaphor is actually rooted in a long-standing debate about the necessity of a social-reconstructionist agenda in L2 teaching (McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008, p. 137) and signals a re-appreciation of Zeichner and Liston’s (1987) original view of reflective teaching as a means of assessing the origins, purposes and consequences of the teacher’s work on a wider social, ideological, as well as personal level. More important though for my investigation of LTKI, this view also draws attention to the moral dimension of reflective teaching (see Chapter 2), prompting L2 teachers to consider “what is educationally in the best interest of the students” (Kelchtermans, 2009, p. 268) as well as “the social, ethical consequences of what they do” (Akbari, 2007, p. 197). As a further crucial step in the conceptualisation of L2 teachers’ requisite roles, tasks and knowledge, in Section 1.3 I expand the framework outlined so far with a review of current public policies and standards of effective L2 teaching in Hungary and beyond.

### **1.3 Hungarian standards of effective L2 teaching on a European scale: An introduction to the primary context of the research**

Shifting the focus from the general to the more specific, in this section I build on the previously established conceptual framework to provide an overview of current



standards of effective L2 teaching in Hungary with an outlook to the wider European context, too. The reason for my special focus on Hungarian standards and policy is twofold. Firstly, as most of my research participants were from this country, their socialization, teacher development, and teaching practice were undoubtedly tied to the particulars of the Hungarian educational context, as suggested by theories on the experiential nature of L2 teachers' knowledge and dispositions (see Sections 1.2.2 & 1.2.3). Secondly, as part of its initiation into the European Union, Hungary has only recently brought its career model for state-employed L2 teachers on level with other European models; these reforms have provided fuel for much scholarly work that allows for a state-of-the-art insight into national and international trends alike.

That being said, in the first part of the section I describe those features of the Hungarian educational context that are most likely to have impinged upon the cognitions, dispositions, attitudes, values, motivations, and experiences of the participating teachers and students in considerable ways. Then, in the second part, as an extension to Section 1.2, I examine how current standards of effective L2 teaching are defined in Hungary's educational policy in relation to the wider European context and the conceptual framework outlined so far. The role of this contextual background in the participants' construction of themselves as L2 teachers and learners, and thus in the framing of my research, is further elaborated in Section 1.4.

### **1.3.1 Key contextual factors influencing the L2 teaching profession in Hungary**

Although research on L2 teachers' knowledge, development and education has always been extensive and up-to-date in the Hungarian context (see Medgyes & Nikolov, 2014), the development of an appropriate career model for L2 teachers has long been hindered by the economic and socio-political circumstances and aftermath of the 1990s and the 2000s. In large-scale observation studies (e.g., Dombi, Nikolov, Ottó, & Öveges, 2009; Nikolov, 2002) and educational reports (e.g., Balázs, Kocsis, & Vágó, 2011) of the period, L2 teachers (and teachers in general) are most typically described as disillusioned, overworked and underpaid, the educational system as ineffective (as indicated by the country's rank on European scales of average mathematical, L1 reading, and L2 competence), and the teaching profession as unattractive for potential teacher candidates (Balázs et al., 2011, p. 306). While the primal source of these conditions was the economic neglect of the educational sector and the lack of a well-regulated career model for Hungarian state-employed teachers (Szondi & Cziráne Kóházi-Kis, 2014), public pressure and views on the teaching profession were no less inhibitory during this period. In the Balázs et al. (2011) report, for instance, a representative sample of Hungarians were asked in which areas of education they thought the country should invest more money,

and the majority opted for school and classroom renovations, modern technological equipment of schools, and support for talented students, whereas the least supported areas included teacher education and teachers' salaries (pp. 64-65). At the same time, most respondents of the survey emphasized that they expected the Hungarian educational system to continuously react to social and economic changes in innovative ways (p. 66)—a goal that seemed hard to reach without appropriate reforms.

As for EFL teachers in particular, the quality of their work has long been a perennial issue amidst the country's manoeuvres to enhance the average L2 proficiency of its population (Kontra, 2016; Medgyes & Nikolov, 2014). While the working conditions of EFL teachers were reported as satisfactory—with an average number of 73 students for one teacher, whom they normally taught in small and largely homogeneous groups (Balázs et al., 2011, pp. 240-241)—the results of other observation studies (Dombi et al., 2009; Nikolov, 2002) and reports (Sági & Varga, 2011) drew attention to several limiting factors in the evaluation, long-term professional development, and general working context of this teacher population. Firstly, despite teachers' need for objective and balanced summative and formative assessment that are known to support professional development (Borg & Edmett, 2018), in Hungary the assessment of teachers' performance was (and often still is) based on school-internal observation scales and procedures focusing, most typically, on subject knowledge, lesson planning and conduct, and teaching methods, and disregarding factors such as the quality of the teacher-student relationship and the feedback of students and parents (Sági & Varga, 2011, pp. 312-313). Secondly, besides other shortcomings of the previous long-standing career model (Falus, 2009, p. 364), effective teaching performance was rarely and inconsistently honoured with any kind of gratification, such as promotion or participation in additional teacher development courses (Sági & Varga, 2011, p. 315). Adding to this the tendency of Hungarian students to be motivated by instrumental rather than intrinsic or integrative dispositions (Balázs et al., 2011, p. 237), it is easy to see how context-related factors spiralled down to and diminished teachers' motivation, their perceived autonomy and self-efficacy (Szócs, 2016), their collaboration with colleagues (Medgyes & Nikolov, 2014, p. 515), or their willingness to engage in reflective, research-based teaching (Falus, 2009, p. 362).

A recent turning point for the educational sector, whose comprehensive effects are not yet to be seen, came with the 2011 acceptance and 2013 initiation of a new career model for Hungarian state-employed teachers (Szondi & Cziráne Kőházi-Kis, 2014). In essence, the function of the new model was to establish (1) a performance-based system of promotion based on British and Romanian models, and (2) a more transparent and well-regulated career structure consisting of five thoroughly defined categories of teaching expertise for teachers of all subject areas (Szondi & Cziráne Kőházi-Kis, 2014, p. 445). As

a corollary of these sanctions, the model was also meant to ensure both the transparency of pre-service and in-service teacher education and compliance with European standards regarding the criterion-based, cyclically repeated evaluation of schools, principals and teacher effectiveness (Szondi & Cziráne Kóházi-Kis, 2014, p. 447). For the latter end, the evaluation and qualification of practicing L2 teachers also became more complex, now comprising components such as the teacher's self-reflection(s) and portfolio, observation of the teacher's classes by external observers (including documentation and artefacts), the principal's written evaluation of the teacher's effectiveness, and the feedback of students and parents (Szondi & Cziráne Kóházi-Kis, 2014, p. 448). As an interim conclusion, it can be said that despite putting the pressure of additional responsibilities and accountability on Hungarian teachers, the new career model has the potential to help practicing L2 teachers to more opportunities for formal and informal learning—including funded in-service training courses and foreign exchange programmes (Szondi, 2016, p. 617)—and to bring the competences of most of the teacher population on level with the European standards (see Sections 1.3.2 & 1.3.3).

### **1.3.2 Hungary's policy for and standards of effective L2 teaching**

In light of the conceptual framework outlined in Section 1.2, the most notable feature of Hungary's policy for effective L2 teaching is that it draws on both the 'competence view' and the earlier, singular notion of L2 teacher knowledge in which propositional knowledge works in tandem with procedural knowledge. The latter constituent, referred to as 'pedagogical knowledge' in the policy, consists of a mixture of propositional and procedural knowledge components, which teacher candidates in all subject areas must possess and master in order to qualify as a teacher in Hungary. Together with subject knowledge, the standard 'pedagogical knowledge' of a qualified teacher in Hungary, based on Varga-Estefán (2011, p. 2), consists of:

1. Thorough knowledge of the subject;
2. Knowledge of human development and learning;
3. Adaptation of education to individual requirements;
4. Application of several teaching and educational strategies;
5. Motivational and learning organisational skills;
6. Communication skills;
7. Planning skills;
8. Proper appreciation of knowledge;
9. Professional devotion and responsibility;
10. Cooperative attitudes and skills.

Considering the larger trends discussed in Section 1.2, three observations are in order here. Firstly, the components above seem to coincide most with the conceptualisation of teachers as professional mediators of content knowledge, who possess both subject knowledge and the skills necessary for passing that knowledge on to a certain population of students. Secondly, as additional elements, a focus on learner motivation and an underlying awareness of the learner-teacher relationship are apparent in the list—a thread that will be picked up again in Chapter 2. Thirdly, and perhaps because the criteria on the list are not followed by more specific descriptions, an explicit focus on the reflective and ongoing nature of teacher development seems to be missing from the above characterisation of ‘pedagogical knowledge.’

Complementary to these criteria, another more recent policy-based reference point for Hungarian teacher education and evaluation is a set of nine competences to be possessed by teachers of all subject areas. These key competences are defined by Varga-Estefán (2011, p. 2) and Falus (2009, p. 367) as follows:

1. Development of student personality;
2. Support and development of the establishment of learning groups and communities;
3. Ability to plan the pedagogical process;
4. Development of the culture, intelligence and skills of students;
5. Development of the competencies laying the foundations for life-long learning;
6. Organisation and direction of the learning process;
7. Application of the numerous tools of pedagogical evaluation;
8. Cooperation and communication among professionals;
9. Self-instruction and teaching, dedication to further professional development.

Partly overlapping with the characterisation of ‘pedagogical knowledge,’ the latter list reflects a more complex perspectivisation of learning-teaching and the psycho-social development of both students and teachers, which explains why the possession of these competences, along with the teacher’s competency in reflective teaching and action research, has to be demonstrated through the portfolios that teacher candidates officially submit upon finishing their teacher education courses (see Hollósi & Szabó, 2009). Although for L2 teachers the Ministry of Education (2016) has issued further specification of requisite knowledge and competences, the two lists of criteria above can be seen as a comprehensive summary of what qualified teachers in Hungary are expected to know, be able to do, and care about. Before comparing these criteria with the most recent European standards of effective L2 teaching, let us also address the Hungarian specifications concerning the teaching of foreign languages in general, and EFL in particular.

Unlike in the case of general ‘pedagogical knowledge’ (discussed above), the policy for EFL teachers makes an explicit distinction between theoretical and practical-methodological knowledge components. As for theoretical knowledge (Ministry of Education, 2016, pp. 18-19), the EFL teacher is supposed to be familiar with the linguistic systems (phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic), the grammar, and the varieties of the English language; the classical, contemporary, and regional culture(s) and artefacts bound to the English language; theories of learning, teaching, and acquisition of first and second languages; individual differences characterizing language learners (including age, aptitude, motivation, and anxiety), and theories necessary for implementing communicative, task-based, project-based, and drama pedagogies, and work forms such as cooperative and autonomous learning, as well as frontal teaching.

In addition to these, the practical-methodological components (Ministry of Education, 2016, p. 19) require a familiarity with teaching and assessment in EFL—based on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001)—in vocational and grammar schools, as well as in adult education; techniques and methods of differentiated lesson and curriculum planning, organisation, and management; preparation and application of teaching materials and technological tools; and appropriate, context-sensitive, and high-level use of the target language. Regardless of the candidate’s choice of educational institution and course type (Varga-Estefán, 2011), the EFL teacher is thus required to possess a battery of subject-specific theoretical and practical-methodological knowledge, a standard set of ‘pedagogical knowledge’, and a standard set of (partly overlapping) competences, each of the latter representing a further specifiable set of knowledge, skills, and dispositions (see Section 1.2.3). For further reference, let us now compare the Hungarian standards of effective L2 (especially EFL) teaching with a recent report (Borg & Edmett, 2018) of more general European standards.

### **1.3.3 Comparing Hungarian and European standards of effective L2 teaching**

As the summary in Table 1.1 shows, the comparison of Hungarian and European standards of effective L2 teaching has revealed both similarities and differences among the components demarcating the requisite knowledge and competences of qualified L2 teachers. While the similarities (i.e. components that can be fairly brought into direct correspondence across Hungarian and European standards) clearly outweigh the differences, some knowledge components and competences are more specifically characterised and more emphatically present in Hungarian policy (Category 1 in Table 1.1). Such components are, for instance, the ones concerning lesson management, understanding learners, or taking responsibility for professional development. Even more interesting are, however, the components which cannot be brought into direct

correspondence across Hungarian and European standards (Category 2 in Table 1.1). My grouping of the general European components in Category 2 indicates that some of these newly emerging (see Section 1.2.4) competence areas seem to be related to each other, and although they are less emphatically represented in the current Hungarian policy, it can be presumed that these competences are already being exercised by many practicing L2 teachers in Hungary, and that this gap will be shortly filled by a national revision of standards and of the National Core Curriculum. As a closing to Section 1.3, I define these three (technically six) emerging competence areas in a bit more detail.

**Table 1.1**

*Comparison of Hungarian and European standards of effective L2 teaching*

	<b>Standard EFL teacher knowledge &amp; competences in Hungary</b> (Ministry of Education, 2016; Varga-Estefán, 2011)	<b>Standard EFL teacher competences in Europe</b> (Borg & Edmett, 2018)
Category 1: Direct correspondence	• Thorough knowledge of the subject	• Knowing the subject
	• Ability to plan the pedagogical process	• Planning lessons and courses
	• Organisation and direction of the learning process (including motivational skills and the application of several teaching and educational strategies)	• Managing the lesson
	• Knowledge of human development and learning • Proper appreciation of knowledge • Adaptation of education to individual requirements	• Understanding learners
	• Application of numerous tools of pedagogical evaluation	• Assessing learning
	• Self-instruction and teaching, dedication to further professional development • Cooperation and communication among professionals	• Taking responsibility for professional development
Category 2: Less direct or partial correspondence	• Development of pupil/student personality as well as learning groups and communities	• Using inclusive practices • Using multilingual approaches
	• Development of the culture, intelligence and skills of pupils/students • Development of the competencies laying the foundations for life-long learning	• Promoting 21st-century skills • Integrating ICT
		• Understanding educational policies and practice • Managing resources

First in line and responding to a need resulting from the ever-increasing demographical and cultural diversification of society (Graddol, 2006), the use of inclusive practices and

multilingual learning-teaching approaches has been around for decades in some educational contexts (Howard & Aleman, 2008) and is now emerging as a general competence area for L2 teachers in Europe, too. In short, what this requires of L2 teachers is not only to develop a critical awareness for the socio-political situatedness of their work (Hawkins & Norton, 2009), but also to get to know and integrate the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of their students into the teaching of L2s in innovative ways (García & Wei, 2014), thereby promoting the values, beliefs and practices necessary for diverse populations to function as communities and for individuals to think and behave in democratic and culturally responsive ways (McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008, p. 141). Second, also connected to this view of teachers as ‘transformative intellectuals’ (Section 1.2.4), L2 teachers in Europe are also increasingly required to have the capacity for managing social, cultural, material, financial, and personal resources in light of changing educational policies and practice, and thus, as Kubanyiova and Crookes (2016, pp. 127-128) add, “to develop institutional alliances, develop connections with parents, network with the community, train in leadership skills...and engage in fundraising.” In other words, while the primary concern for L2 teachers is still “creating and sustaining a classroom environment in which desired learning outcomes are made possible” (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 29), the competences underlying this task are expanding in range, pushing teachers to also continually think about how they can “adapt, innovate, and survive in the face of political, economic, and other realities that they must face” (Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016, p. 117).

Third, and similarly a result of changes in the wider social, cultural, economic, and technological context, L2 teaching today seems to go beyond its earlier scope (e.g., Larsen-Freeman, 2018; Van den Branden, 2016) and require from teachers a familiarity with new, ICT-based learning platforms and new kinds of skills and competences necessary for the conduct of students’ social and professional lives (Chu et al., 2017). On these grounds, Chu et al. (2017, p. 110) talk about a paradigm shift “from a knowledge-oriented curriculum to one that stresses more the activities and practices that bring about knowledge acquisition,” and draw attention to the importance of concepts such as innovative thinking, digital literacies, or life and career skills—together referred to as ‘21-st century skills’ (p. 8). To promote these skills, they argue, and to substantiate life-long learning, teachers must be able to:

engage students in self-directed strategies, to organize activities that delegate learning decisions to students and monitor their progress, to facilitate learning activities such as collective problem solving, and to guide students in thinking about complex problems by giving them feedback following assessment. (Chu et al., 2017, p. 110)

What this example also shows is that an L2 teacher’s possession of these and the previously listed competences will ultimately manifest itself in a series of theoretically

unified classroom actions and behaviours (Korthagen, 2004, p. 80), which teachers learn to perform and synchronize gradually (Borg & Edmett, 2018, p. 4) based on the knowledge, skills and dispositions they have acquired through various forms of learning (Borg, 2003; Woods & Çakır, 2011). However, while the separation and detailed specification of the various competences and of corresponding capacities and behaviours is helpful in making the assessment and the development of L2 teachers more tangible (Borg & Edmett, 2018), there is now a growing amount of research recognising that the quality and effectiveness of L2 teaching is not simply a function of the competences that L2 teachers possesses, but also of how they *act out* their competences in the mediational spaces created through their interactions with students in particular micro- and macro-contexts (Cross, 2010; see also Chapter 2). With reference to the notions of personal practical knowledge and theories presented earlier, the latter argument implies that researching theory- and policy-based constructs of L2 teacher knowledge in light of the classroom experiences and the personal meaning-making of practicing L2 teachers may result in a fuller understanding of how effective L2 learning-teaching is brought about and acted out within the complexity of classroom reality. The rationale of such research is what I start to explore in more detail in Section 1.4.

#### **1.4 Situating the current research in relation to the construct of L2 teacher knowledge**

In Chapter 1 I have so far argued that in the conceptualisation of L2 teachers' roles, tasks and knowledge one can rely on two complementary but characteristically different approaches. In the first of these approaches, the requisite knowledge and competences of L2 teachers are understood in light of the policies and standards set up by educational researchers, policy-makers, and the demands of society at large. This view, providing the basic framework for teacher education programmes and assessment tools around the globe (Borg & Edmett, 2018), focuses on teacher knowledge as a set of separable and uniformly attainable competences, which teachers acquire in incremental levels and then use as tools for creating what is generally known to be effective L2 teaching. In the second approach, L2 teachers' knowledge is understood as a product of the personal meaning-making of practicing L2 teachers. It is seen as a subjectively formed entity, which is always contingent upon policy—as “the genesis of teacher activity within the cultural-historic domain (i.e., societal views on the value, nature, and expectations of education, schooling, and languages)” (Cross, 2010, p. 441)—as well as other psycho-social and situational factors that affect the quality and outcomes of L2 learning-teaching. This view, in turn, presupposes that the personal practical knowledge and theories that L2 teachers construct for themselves can be studied by researchers and the teachers themselves



through various products of L2 teachers' reflective and narrative activity (Borg, 2006; Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 23). For this reason, the second approach, informed by the conceptual content of the first one as well, is a viable means of reaching the aim of my research.

More specifically, based on the above described conceptualisations of L2 teachers' knowledge and the steady revival of interest in the teacher-learner relationship as the pinnacle of effective L2 teaching (see Introduction & Chapter 2), a central argument to be put forward in the dissertation is that L2 teachers' knowledge of their own interpersonal impact in classroom learning-teaching should be recognised as a complex product of L2 teachers' personal meaning-making, and as a focus of teacher-focused inquiry. Informed, to a great extent, by the social psychology of classroom interpersonal dynamics (Ehrman & Dörnyei, 1998; Gkonou & Mercer, 2017, 2018) and by measurements of the teacher's impact on students' learning (Hattie, 2012), the research focus I propose is not cast on the teacher-learner relationship per se, nor on the measurement of L2 teachers' impact by external descriptors and criteria, but rather on L2 teachers' conceptions of their own impact on student learning and engagement. That being said, the construct I wish to outline is grounded in testimonies of L2 teachers' personal practical knowledge, and, as such, it is necessarily sedimented through the theory- and policy-based standards and discourses (see Clarke, 2008; Moore, 2004) introduced in the previous sections. In this section, though, my aim is to continue exploring the rationale of my approach first by digging more into the paradigmatic contrast between the competence-view and the personal-experiential view of L2 teachers' knowledge, and then by discussing some fundamental tenets of the latter approach.

#### **1.4.1 Contrasting the positivist/postpositivist and social-constructivist paradigms underlying the conceptualisation of L2 teachers' roles, tasks, and knowledge**

The first basic term to clarify, 'positivism', refers to "a scientific paradigm and worldview that assumes the existence of an objective and independent social reality 'out there' that can be researched empirically with standardized scientific instruments" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 9). Growing out of this basic concept, the 'postpositivist' paradigm suggests that the objective laws of social reality can only be described through the investigation of multiple individual perspectives (Creswell, 2007, p. 20), provided that the examined sample is large enough to draw generalizable facts from it. Another crucial idea that Creswell (2004) adds to this is that the knowledge that "develops through a postpositivist lens" always reflects "a deterministic philosophy in which causes probably determine effects or outcomes" (p. 7). To reveal such cause-and-effect connections, the researcher's task is therefore to reduce phenomena into a small, discrete set of ideas (Creswell, 2004, p. 7),

which can be supported with empirical data and which usually aligns with some a priori theories (Creswell, 2007, p. 20). Connecting this with the ‘competence view’ presented earlier, it is easy to see that the idea of the teacher possessing a specific set of competences (the cause) and this leading straightforwardly to effective L2 learning-teaching (the effect) is still a pervasive one in the field—as of a research tradition that has mostly sought to “identify patterns of good teaching and has traditionally focused on what effective teachers do (teaching behaviors/processes) that leads to student achievement (test scores/product)” (Johnson, 2009, p. 7).

Whereas these positivist/postpositivist views still provide an indispensable base for planning and supervising education today, our growing knowledge about the nature of L2 learning and teaching has lately given rise to an alternative paradigm postulating that the complexity of learning-teaching processes and outcomes cannot be reduced, by any means, to universal and pre-programmed cause-effect relationships. Instead, the principle that underlies all research stemming from this paradigm, as discussed here and in the upcoming chapters, is what Johnson (2009, p. 2) captured by claiming that:

how an individual learns something, what is learned, and how it is used will depend on the sum of the individual’s prior experiences, the sociocultural contexts in which the learning takes place, and what the individual wants, needs, and/or is expected to do with that knowledge.

The researcher’s main task, in this sense, is not to represent learning-teaching as the interaction of constant, predictable, separable, and depersonalized variables, but to look at it through the emic perspectives of a few selected students or teachers, and to seek understanding by exploring and describing “the dynamic complexity of personal meaning-making in social context” (Ushioda, 2009, p. 217). Even though the conversion to these principles in research and theorizing did not happen from one day to the next (Dörnyei, 2007), in recent years the field has clearly been shaped and characterised by a growing interest in “the personal accounts and narratives of the experiences of language teachers, learners, and others, often across a broader span of time, space, languages, and experience” (Duff, 2010, p. 7; see also Medgyes & Nikolov, 2014, p. 529) and a growing susceptibility to the qualitative methodologies by which the emic perspectives of students and teachers can be captured, analysed, and used for further theorizing and conceptual work (Benson, Chik, Gao, Huang, & Wang, 2009; Borg, 2006).

Clearly, this slow but steady change of perspective—often labelled as ‘the social turn’ in SLA research (Ortega, 2011)—has resulted in a more complex understanding of L2 learning-teaching, and of L2 teachers and learners (Van den Branden, 2016) as active, cognizing agents, who construct their own meanings and knowledge of the world through their participation in particular learning and teaching activities in particular contexts

(Feryok, 2012) and their reflection on these experiences (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 21). In a comprehensive summary of this system of views, Cross (2010) goes on to suggest that we look at L2 teaching as a 'sociocultural activity' (see also Chapter 2), and thus creates a phenomenology which he describes as:

a framework that fuses the dialectic between thinking and doing with the socially and culturally constructed contexts in which teachers—as thinking, historical, social, and culturally constituted subjects—find themselves engaged through the 'activity' of teaching language. (Cross, 2010, p. 438)

In this sense, Cross's phenomenology confirms our earlier supposition that L2 teachers' personal practical knowledge is, indeed, contingent upon both (1) the institutionalised standards and discourses to which most teachers are exposed in the micro- and macro-contexts of their socialisation (e.g., Borg & Edmett, 2018; Moore, 2004) and (2) the personal-experiential impulses they encounter during learning and teaching. Other than that, Cross's framework is also in line with empirical research showing consistently and in various contexts that L2 teachers' knowledge and dispositions are often formed and manifested through the reflective and narrative activities in which teachers are engaged (e.g., Borg, 2003; Dudás, 2006; Levin & He, 2008; Yuan & Lee, 2014), and thereby with studies emphasising the importance of dialogic reflective activity as a site of professional development within teachers' communities of practice (Chick, 2015; Johnson, 2009, 2015; Kumaravadivelu, 2012). Moving further along the same thread, I close this section with a discussion on the outcomes of L2 teachers' (dialogic) reflective activity, making them relevant for both researchers and the teachers themselves.

#### **1.4.2 Research as shared understanding in the social-constructivist paradigm**

Although Chapter 3 provides a more detailed account on the methodology underlying my research, it is perhaps interesting to point out here how the qualitative methodologies of the social-constructivist paradigm have changed 'understanding through research' as a privilege of the researcher into a joint enterprise offering self-understanding and a space for professional growth for L2 teachers and learners through the reflective and narrative activities that such research entails. To start with a rationale for researchers investigating L2 teachers' knowledge and dispositions, numerous studies (e.g., Akbari, 2007; Bartlett, 1990; Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997; Johnson, 2009; Yuan & Lee, 2014) have suggested that by participating in various reflective and narrative activities (often in formal, supervised educational settings), L2 teachers are able to "display both their lived experiences and their understandings of these" (Barkhuizen & Wette, 2008, p. 374), thus providing researchers a chance "to infer a possible underlying knowledge they might have used for reflection and action" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 23). On these grounds, the

understanding of learning and teaching processes through the emic perspectives of L2 teachers and learners have become a priority for many educational researchers (Borg, 2006), prompting Johnson (2009), for instance, to describe the agenda of teacher-focused inquiry as follows:

Rather than attempting to predict what teachers do or should do, interpretative research is interested in uncovering what they already know and are able to do, and how they make sense of their work within the contexts in which they teach. In that sense, interpretative research focuses on what teachers know, honors what they know, and helps to clarify and resolve the dilemmas they face. (Johnson, 2009, p. 9)

Apart from expressing an appreciation for teachers' personal practical knowledge and theories, Johnson's notion also underlines that research in the social-constructivist paradigm often becomes intertwined with the learning-teaching process, it is conducted by, with, and for teachers and learners (Kiely, 2014), and its results are always meant to inform classroom practice by shaping teachers' awareness and understandings in favourable ways (Johnson, 2015; Korthagen, 2011; Peacock, 2001; Schulz, 2000).

The idea that this type of research into teachers' cognitions and experience can and should also be a site of learning for in-service and pre-service teachers is supported by other scholars, too. Wright (1990), for instance, argues that "investigating learner-teacher roles is particularly important for pre-service teachers, as such investigations can reveal how theoretical, practical, and personal knowledge interact in the process of teaching" (p. 84). In a similar vein, Farrell (2013, p. 1071) suggests that expert teachers are able to combine pedagogical content knowledge and subject matter knowledge in a way that makes them successful at negotiating classroom events; therefore, their reflections on their practice should be made available for novice teachers to learn from. Other teachers' reflective accounts, in this sense, are not only a prominent source of theoretical and procedural knowledge (Section 1.2.1), but they also help L2 teachers to acquire the metadiscourse of their field (Akbari, 2007, p. 204; Calderhead & Shorrocks, 1997; Kumaravadivelu, 2012). Based on similar considerations, Fairbanks et al. (2010, p. 161) also emphasize that "teacher educators must develop teachers' self-knowledge and sense of agency in addition to developing standard forms of professional knowledge."

To reach this goal, Johnson (2009, p. 15) suggests that teacher educators need to "examine existing mediational tools and spaces while also creating alternative ones through which teachers may externalize their current understandings of concepts and then reconceptualize and recontextualize them," thereby constructing their own learning with the assistance of colleagues, researchers, or teacher educators (see also Chick, 2015; Johnson, 2015; Walsh & Mann, 2015). In line with the agenda laid out in Section 1.4.2, my research on LTKI was also meant to foster both the understanding of L2 teachers' emic

perspectives about their impact in classroom learning-teaching and the opening up of mediational spaces for continued reflective dialogue and knowledge construction with the participants.

## **1.5 Conclusion**

In Chapter 1, my aim has been to pull together various strings of theory, research, and policy in order to arrive at a comprehensive and current understanding of roles, tasks, and knowledge attributed to L2 teachers on both global and local scales—the latter referring to Hungary as the primary context of my empirical research. Following an overview of key concepts and developmental phases, I have outlined the rationale and basic principles of an emerging social-constructivist paradigm, which aims to transform our understanding of the teaching-learning process as well as the roles and knowledge of L2 teachers and learners by exploring “the dynamic complexity of personal meaning-making in social context” (Ushioda, 2009, p. 217).

Besides laying down this theoretical framework for the dissertation, I have already made reference to an emerging line of research examining the ways in which the quality and dynamics of teacher-learner classroom relationships impinge upon the effectiveness of L2 learning and teaching (e.g., Gkonou & Mercer, 2017, 2018), as well as upon other key variables such as learner and teacher motivation, engagement, and cognitive development. Although few in number, the studies conceptualising effective learning-teaching as an inherently relational activity are, according to Mercer and Gkonou (2017), indicators of an ongoing ‘relational turn’ in SLA and TEFL/TESOL research, in the frame of which “relationships need to be more often the focus of research and the unit of analysis” (p. 110). Of particular relevance to the dissertation are the studies attempting to pin down what forms of underlying knowledge L2 teachers bring to forging relationships with students that are conducive to L2 learning. Situated in this field of studies, and embedded in a qualitative, grounded-theoretical framework (Chapter 3), my research aims to propose an alternative construct to refer to L2 teachers’ knowledge about their own interpersonal impact in classroom learning-teaching, and to frame LTKI as a specific area of L2 teacher knowledge and a relevant focus for teacher-related inquiry after the relational turn. In line with this objective, the rationale of my approach is explored in more detail in Chapter 2.

## **Chapter 2 – Framing L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity: Conceptual roots and current developments**

### **2.1 Introduction**

From an epistemological perspective, language education, along with educational systems in general, has undergone substantial changes in the last three decades. During this period, mainstream psychology's earlier notion of knowledge as a stable entity bounded within and transmitted across individuals (Johnson, 2009; Kramersch, 2002) has been increasingly challenged by the cognitive sciences and the sociocultural theories of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which started to reconceptualise knowledge as "a set of understandings inextricably associated with specific contexts" (Gitomer & Zisk, 2015, p. 18). Rooted firmly in the work of the Soviet educational psychologist Vygotsky (1978), these new epistemologies see cognitive development as "an interactive process, mediated by culture, context, language, and social interaction" (Johnson, 2009, p. 1). Learning, in this sense, resides not only in "having" but also in "doing," i.e. in the activities and interactions through which humans construct meanings collectively (Walsh, 2011, p. 49).

In L2 education, the growing influence of these epistemologies led to the creation and gradual adoption of pedagogies labelled as 'progressive', 'humanistic', or 'learner-centred' (Breen, 1999, p. 48), and this process has been accelerated by the prominence of communicative approaches to L2 teaching (Kramersch, 2002) as well as global geopolitical transformations (Graddol, 2006). This meant, on the one hand, that SLA theorists' predominant focus on the cognitive processes associated with linguistic input and output was challenged and spread out to *how* language is used in particular social contexts (Kramersch, 2002, pp. 1-2), bearing implications for both the content and methodology of L2 instruction. On the other hand, it became widely recognized that the language users of today's ethnically and culturally diverse societies are constantly required to deal with differences in abilities, styles, preferences, and cultural traditions (Cogo, 2012; Graddol, 2006; Kramersch, 2002, p. 4). As a combined effect of these trends, the ways in which L2 knowledge is constructed and mediated in specific macro- and micro-contexts has become a central area of interest for educators and decision-makers alike, indicating a turn away from the earlier positivist/postpositivist paradigm in which "the outcomes or products from learning are seen as far more important than the felt experience of the process" (Breen, 1999, p. 49).

In line with the conceptual developments described so far, my aim in Chapter 2 is to provide insights into the empirical and theoretical work that explains why the teacher-student relationship and the teacher's impact in classroom learning-teaching are

increasingly seen as key factors influencing the effectiveness of L2 learning-teaching. To substantiate both the rationale and the theoretical background for the upcoming sections and chapters, in Section 2.2 I explore the origins of the current ‘relational turn’ in SLA and educational research (Mercer & Gkonou, 2017; Section 2.3) by looking into theories of sociocultural approaches in education (Section 2.2.1), interpersonal neurobiology (Section 2.2.2), learner-teacher autonomy (Section 2.2.3), the psychology of identity- and self-construction (Section 2.2.4), and ecological perspectives on SLA as a complex dynamic system (Section 2.2.5). After setting up this multi-stranded theoretical framework (Atkinson, 2011, p. 159), in Section 2.3 I first reflect on the surge of conceptual work that is now invested into framing L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity, and then argue for my research on LTKI as a relevant component of this conceptual expansion.

## **2.2 Early conceptualisations of L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity**

### **2.2.1 Sociocultural perspectives on the teacher-learner relationship**

In an approach that claims all human learning is fundamentally shaped by the social, cultural, and historical context in which it takes place, human relationships and the agency of learners and teachers are indissociable from the learning process. Knowledge is not seen as something that is passed on from one person (i.e. the expert) to others (i.e. the non-experts), but as something that exists in the mediational spaces that individuals create together, and as something that will be internalized (i.e. made one’s own) differently by different individuals (Johnson, 2009, p. 116; see also Lantolf, 2011). In this sense, as Ortega (2011, p. 171) explains, “learning is not something that happens to people... but something people make happen through intentional social interaction and co-construction of reflected-upon knowledge.” In formal educational contexts, this process of active construal is achieved through the dialogue of teacher(s) and student(s). As Freeman (2013, p. 128) sums it up, “any process of professional learning involves both teacher and students (and/or others in the school community); it is inherently relational work.”

For our current purposes, the key assumption of the sociocultural approach is that all human learning is rooted in social experience, which, by definition, is mediated through the learner’s interaction with the teacher (and/or others in the school community). The first keyword that needs further examination here is experience, which Dörnyei (2019) has recently defined as “the perceived quality of learners’ engagement with various aspects of the language learning process” (p. 26). In contrast, Barcelos (2008, p. 37) defines experience as some sort of a transaction between the individual and his or her social, physical, historical, cultural environment. In transactions of knowledge and

expertise between individuals, each participant is expected to actively invest that which they currently have and gain something more from the transaction itself. This process, in turn, is realized through verbal, non-verbal, and other semiotic forms of “inter-action”, a second keyword, which in Atkinson’s (2011, p. 157) interpretation means “action with and between” individuals.

Let us not forget, though, that in an L2 educational framework ‘interaction’ is both a means and a goal of instruction (Brosh 1996), drawing attention to the inherent connection between what content is in the focus of instruction and how that content is being mediated. Although this is, again, an epistemological question, in SLA and in neurobiological research (see Section 2.2.2) it is now widely accepted that the *what* and the *how* are inseparable components in learning and in the joint activity that L2 learners and teachers co-construct through classroom interaction (Freeman & Johnson, 2005). Furthermore, the empirical evidence for those claims gave rise to theories about the inseparability of cognition, emotion, bodily states, and motivation for learning (Atkinson, 2011; Damasio, 1999; Dörnyei, 2010; Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015; Siegel, 2001), and about SLA as a process defined by dynamic interactions among cognitions, context, and experience (Borg, 2006, p. 275; Dörnyei, 2009).

To sum up, what all these arguments come down to is that in instructed SLA the outcomes of the learning process can be determined by what is mediated and how. While the former aspect has been widely studied since the beginnings of SLA research, most approaches discussed in Chapter 2 have just begun to compensate for our lack of understanding regarding the sociocultural (i.e. relational-experiential) dynamics of instructed SLA. Although the content of the chapter is indicative of a heightened interest and wide-spreading progress, several concepts and phenomena call for continuing empirical research. One of these is the sociocultural understanding of teacher and student learning within and beyond instructed SLA as a relationship of influence (Freeman & Johnson, 2005; Johnson, 2006), a concept which is meant to explain “how teachers’ professional learning influences their teaching, and, in turn, how that teaching influences their students’ learning” (Johnson, 2009, p. 116; see also Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015). Gaining a deeper understanding of this relationship is, according to Johnson (2009, p. 120), “an extremely important challenge for L2 teacher education.” To get a closer idea of how my dissertation contributes to this research area, let us now turn to some further empirical and theoretical work elucidating the nature and importance of the teacher-learner relationship.



### **2.2.2 Relationships and cognitive development: Insights from interpersonal neurobiology**

Interpersonal neurobiology is a relatively young branch of neuroscience focusing on the ways in which social relationships influence cognitive and brain development, and the main argument of the approach is that the structure of the human brain changes throughout the lifespan due to both bodily (neurophysiological) processes and social interactions (Siegel, 2001, p. 70). As Siegel (2001) further explains, the human experience of the individual mind depends on the flow of energy and information “within an individual or between two individuals” (p. 69), and the neural activation resulting from one’s social interactions is essential for the development of important mental functions “involving emotion, memory, behavior, and interpersonal relationships” (p. 73; see also Davis, 2003; Goleman, 2006, pp. 323-328; Mercer, 2019, p. 11). As claimed earlier, the dynamic interaction of these functions is also responsible for the felt experience and the outcomes of instructed SLA (Dörnyei, 2009).

Drawing on the results of attachment research, interpersonal neurobiologists (cf. Siegel, 2001) also argue that the importance of collaborative interpersonal interaction outcores that of excessive sensory stimulation in terms of healthy mental development; this statement is also underlined by the sociocultural approaches presented in Section 2.2.1. In contrast, Siegel (2001, p. 77) claims, “various forms of insecurity of attachment can be associated with emotional rigidity, difficulty in social relationships, impairments in attention, difficulty in understanding the minds of others, and risk in the face of stressful situations.” The lesson to draw from this, according to Siegel (2001, p. 78), is that the long-term maintenance of mental health in young individuals relies heavily on the development of attachments with caring, consistent, and reflective adults in addition to one’s parents.

Obviously, in formal instructional settings the role of the supportive adult must be taken on by the teacher(s) with whom students are in regular contact. This argument, based on neurobiological evidence, resonates perfectly with socio-psychological theories of classroom interpersonal dynamics (cf. Ehrman & Dörnyei, 1998; discussed in more detail in Section 2.3) and the views of motivation researcher Brophy (2010), who claims that “along with family members and close friends, teachers are ‘significant others’ in the lives of their students, and thus in a position to influence the students’ motivational development” (p. 15). Apparently then, the insights from interpersonal neurobiology align well with social psychologists’ and TEFL/TESOL researchers’ evidence for the L2 teacher’s role in forging a conducive teacher-learner relationship (see contributions from the Hungarian context in Galántai & Csizér, 2009; Kormos & Csizér, 2005), prompting me further to conduct exploratory work on LTKI.

### **2.2.3 Learner-teacher autonomy as a relationship of influence**

The term 'autonomy' refers, in general, to the experience of initiation and regulation of behaviour by the self (Noels, 2009, p. 302), and to nourish it as a skill or capacity in learners is an imperative that has been present in practically all approaches to instructed SLA since the 1970s (Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Regarded as a factor of particular relevance to L2 learning, learner autonomy has been associated with numerous other segments of classroom life, including motivation (Dörnyei, 1994a; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), group dynamics (Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997; Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003), assessment (Benson, 2010; Hung, Samuelson, & Chen, 2016), and, in turn, with teacher development as well (Johnson, 2009; Kalaja et al., 2015). In parallel with its emerging importance, the concept has been reclaimed by sociocultural theories as interdependent and socially constructed, and the autonomous individual is now generally viewed "as a creative product and also producer of his social context" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 123).

For our social-constructivist framework, the most relevant development in autonomy research is likely to be La Ganza's (2008) theory of the 'dynamic interrelational space' as a measure of autonomy-inducing learner-teacher relationships. To quote La Ganza (2008, p. 65), this theory suggests that:

It is not sufficient to define learner autonomy as the learner's taking control, or taking responsibility, or knowing how to exercise learning strategies, or being self-directed: the extent to which the learner can realize these achievements depends upon his or her relationship with the teacher.

To experience oneself as autonomous, Kumaravadivelu (2003) adds, both teachers and learners must understand that their sense of autonomy results from a complex process of interacting with one's self and with others in the joint activity that L2 learning-teaching entails. Also, to create experiences of autonomous learning, students must learn how to use the teacher and the environment as a resource, and the teacher, in turn, must learn how to communicate to each learner that "he or she is concerned for the learner's educative well-being in the learning process: that he or she has the learner 'in mind'" (La Ganza, 2008, p. 66).

In line with some earlier arguments, the interaction between teacher and learner emerges again as a key to constructing "interrelational climates conducive to the learner's [and the teacher's] greater independence" (La Ganza, 2008, p. 70; square brackets mine). However, as we are talking about a 'relationship of influence' (Freeman & Johnson, 2005), the success of such interactions also depends on what teachers think they can gain from the transaction; whether they are desirous of greater learner autonomy and whether their

own sense of autonomy is strengthened in the process. This supposition, along with many others presented in Chapter 1, draws attention to the teacher's control over various aspects of classroom life, and also to the fact that teachers' sense of autonomy (Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2015a; Szócs, 2016) and self-efficacy (Wyatt, 2013) are equally important determinants of learning outcomes.

#### **2.2.4 Relationality in learners' and teachers' construals of self and identity**

As essential components of a person's psyche, self and identity are bound to affect and be affected by any form of human learning in complex and individually different ways (Kramsch, 2009). To separate the two terms, Mercer (2012, p. 12) explains that:

Learner identities are learners' sense of self as a language learner or user in relation to a particular linguistic community or learning context, whereas a learner's self-concept refers to their general sense of competence and related evaluative beliefs about themselves as a language learner, not just in respect to a specific setting.

In instructed SLA, where both context and community are fundamental and frequently changing variables, identity seems to be a more relevant research focus (see Fekete, 2018); however, as the two components are inextricably related, any discussion of identity will necessarily provide information about the self, too. What is more important for our discussion is the fact that both identity and self are currently considered as socially constructed and mediated concepts (Clarke, 2008; Johnson, 2006; Ushioda, 2009), similarly to knowledge and learner-teacher autonomy (see Sections 2.2.1 & 2.2.3).

This social-contextual aspect is also captured by Norton (1997), who says that identity formation consists of "people's understanding of their relationship to the world, the construction of that identity across time and space, and people's understanding of their possibilities for the future" (Norton, 1997, p. 410; cited in Kalaja et al., 2015, p. 18). Kumaravadivelu (2012) supports this idea, and adds that identity formation "is conditioned by several factors including inherited traditions such as ethnicity, external exigencies such as history, ideological constructs such as power, and individual markers such as agency" (p. 57). Furthermore, he points out that postmodernism sees identity "as fragmented, not unified; multiple, not singular; expansive, not bounded" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 6). It is probably needless to say how important these notions are for instructed SLA, where contextual, intrapersonal, and interpersonal factors converge in innumerable ways and result in particular identity-challenging or supporting learning experiences for students and teachers alike; this is clearly demonstrated, for instance, in Calderhead and Shorrock's (1997) longitudinal case studies or Gu and Benson's (2015) interview study on pre-service EFL teachers' construals of professional identities.

To continue this line of argumentation, a concept that certainly deserves a second thought is the temporality of identity formation. What the concept extrapolates is, firstly, that identity formation is not only influenced by one's present actions and interactions in a particular socio-cultural context, but also by one's awareness for individually relevant past experiences and projections of potential future experiences (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015, p. 87; see also Kubanyiova, 2009). Barcelos (2003b, p. 174) expresses roughly the same idea when saying that "everything that we experience takes up something from the past and modifies the quality of future experiences." Secondly, and more importantly, this understanding of temporality presupposes a relational aspect to self and identity, because in recollections and projections of past and future experiences the individual is normally situated in a particular socio-cultural context rather than separated from it (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 59). In another summary of the same idea, Ho (2005, p. 359) eloquently argues that "experience of what one did, felt and thought, and how one interacted with other people and the world provides the basis for experiencing oneself, for being aware of oneself, and for constructing oneself in talk."

Besides drawing attention to the joint dynamics of self, experience, cognition and affect, Ho's (2005) argument brings to surface two further elements of relational identity formation: languaging and inter-action (Atkinson, 2011, p. 157). To clarify the latter term first, inter-action in identity formation means that one's perception of self and identity is not only shaped by one's actions in a given socio-cultural context, but also by how these actions are seen and acted upon by others in the same context (Freeman, 2013, p. 130). Teachers, for instance, are known to construct their professional role identities from the different roles they enact, the different professional activities they participate in, as well as from how others (e.g., students, colleagues, policy-makers, or a wider social circle) see these roles and activities (Farrell, 2011, p. 55)—a finding reiterated in numerous related studies (e.g., Kalaja et al., 2015, p. 210; Kubanyiova, 2009, p. 325; Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 58; Moore, 2004).

The other emerging key term, languaging, comes from the idea of "constructing oneself in talk" (see, e.g., Kramsch, 2009) and has often been used by researchers of teacher cognition and beliefs (e.g., Aragão, 2011; Borg, 2006; Ho, 2005; Kalaja & Barcelos, 2003). The essence of the term, in Clarke's (2008) interpretation, is that identities as well as the interpersonal realities surrounding individuals "are co-constructed through statements and utterances that achieve the dual discursive ends of construing social events *and* social actors" (p. 136, original emphasis). Conversely, as Richards (2006, cited in Ushioda, 2009, p. 223) claims, we should not understand identity as a singular concept, but as a sum of 'situated identities' (rooted in the socio-cultural context), 'discourse identities' (rooted in

the interaction itself), and ‘transportable identities’ (rooted in the personal characteristics of the individual in interaction) (see also Clarke, 2008, p. 39).

These claims contain fundamental implications for empirical research as well, because if we accept that social events and social actors are constructed through the discourse produced, in our case, by students and teachers, then written and spoken texts produced by students and teachers must also be accepted as legitimate data for examining their beliefs, motivations, identities, and other psychological attributes (Kramsch, 2009). As we will see in Section 3.2.3, this argument is firmly supported by the advocates of both narrative research (e.g., Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014; Webster & Mertova, 2007) and reflective learning-teaching (e.g., Johnson, 2009; Kumaravadivelu, 2003, 2012), each conducting conceptual work on the basis of discourse that students and teachers produced to organize and make sense of their lives and experiences in relation to the social, historical, cultural, and political contexts in which they find themselves (Cross, 2010; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005).

### **2.2.5 Relationality in ecological theories of SLA**

In line with the approaches introduced so far, the teacher-learner relationship plays a crucial role in ecological theories of SLA, which frame the interaction of L2 learners, teachers, and their environment “as between parts of a living organism” (Kramsch, 2002, p. 3). Clearly, this idea is a radical one, because, as Lugossy (2008, p. 18) explains, what the ecology metaphor implies is that:

Contrary to the traditional separation between language acquisition and language socialization, the ecological framework proposes a non-dychotomizing view of psychological and social aspects of language development: it treats the relationship between them as a complex and symbiotic one.

Apart from drawing attention once again to the inseparability of cognitive and social factors in the activity of learning-teaching (Freeman & Johnson, 2005), the quote above also hints at the potential integration of ecological theories with the conceptualisation of cognition, emotion, context, experience, identity and other individual differences as parts of a complex dynamic system (e.g., Damasio, 1999; Dörnyei, 2009, 2010; Larsen-Freeman, 2002); this framing is often used in the study of L2 teacher cognition as well (Borg, 2006; Feryok, 2010). In short, the theory of complex dynamic systems claims that in the study of human psychology, of SLA, or of the classroom interactions of learners and teachers for that matter (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 103), our aim should not be to delve into one potentially salient variable at a time, but rather to explore constellations of multiple, interrelated components of a larger system, in which the system’s (momentary) character is contingent upon the unique interaction of its multiple components (Mercer, 2018, p. 510),

and in which “a change in any internal or external component of the developing system affects the others, often in unanticipated, nonlinear ways” (Larsen-Freeman, 2018, p. 59).

Clearly, this change of perspective offered by the adjoining of ecological and complexity theories has gradually required a fundamentally different approach not only to SLA and classroom phenomena, but also to students and teachers themselves. Students, in this sense, started to be seen “in terms of their dialectical, or mutually constitutive, relationship to the social world rather than as constellations of particular cognitive styles, affective orientations, and personality types” (Morita, 2012, p. 26). At the same time, teaching and teacher development have also been increasingly seen as dynamic, situated, and inherently complex processes; this was claimed early on by Williams and Burden (1997), who suggested that “teachers’ actions in the classroom and their interactions with their learners will mirror, either implicitly or explicitly, their own beliefs about learning, their views of the world, their self-views, and their attitudes towards their subject and their learners” (pp. 206-207).

Thus, in contrast with the focus and methodology of the positivist/postpositivist paradigm introduced earlier, the emergence of ecological and complexity theories has set a new agenda for research exploring the complex dynamics of L2 learning-teaching, including classroom interpersonal dynamics as well. Such an agenda was put forward, among others, by motivation researcher Ema Ushioda (2009, p. 220) who has called for:

a focus on the interaction between this self-reflective intentional agent [the learner and/or teacher], and the fluid and complex system of social relations, activities, experiences and multiple micro- and macro-contexts in which the person is embedded, moves, and is inherently part of. My argument is that we need to take a relational (rather than linear) view of these multiple contextual elements, and view motivation as an organic process that emerges through the complex system of interrelations. (square brackets mine)

Similarly, ecological theorists (cf. Kramsch, 2002) have always been advocating a research approach which is fundamentally qualitative and phenomenological in nature, i.e. one which “strives to understand the world from the phenomena of local experience as seen from the perspective of participants in relation to others’ perceptions and experiences, and in locally contingent contexts, not through pre-established objective categories” (p. 9). Besides this idea of examining phenomena from multiple participant perspectives, another notion to take on from Kramsch (2002) into my research is that the theoretical constructs established in this type of research are necessarily value-free: the salience of the examined phenomena is always weighed by individuals in relation to other “more” or “less” salient phenomena, based on the individual’s subjective value systems (p. 11). This way, the research process and its outcomes can also be situated in what Freeman (2013, p. 128) calls “a social fabric of sense-making.”

### **2.3 Situating research on LTKI in relation to current conceptualisations of L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity**

If there is a connection to be made between the theoretical content of Section 2.2 and the components of L2 teachers' knowledge discussed in Chapter 1, then some obvious questions to put forward at this point are: Which domains of their knowledge do L2 teachers operationalise when managing classroom interpersonal processes and when reflecting on their own roles and impact in the framework of L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity? What kind of competence do L2 teachers need to possess to be able to create and sustain the interpersonal mediational spaces in which effective learning-teaching interactions can take place?

Interestingly, and despite a long-standing regard for the teacher-learner relationship and the teacher's control over classroom interpersonal processes as key contributors to effective L2 learning-teaching (e.g., Williams & Burden, 1997; Wright, 1990; Wubbels & Levy, 1993), the amount of research on the questions above has, until recently, been fairly limited. A few exceptions to this statement are works conceived under the aegis of social psychology; the most notable examples are Goleman's (1995, 2006) comprehensive reviews on emotional and social intelligence, which have lately been used as reference points in some teacher-focused inquiry (Gkonou & Mercer, 2018), and Dörnyei's reviews on interpersonal- and group dynamics within the framework of L2 education (Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997; Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003; Ehrman & Dörnyei, 1998). While the latter three publications have certainly provided a much-needed instructional package for L2 teacher education on fundamental social-psychological concepts such as group norms and characteristics, classroom climate, classroom interpersonal dynamics, and L2 teachers' role(s) as managers of conducive classroom environments and leaders of learner groups, they offered little empirical evidence for practicing L2 teachers having an awareness of these concepts and for that awareness or knowledge being a coherent and measurable construct.

Another viable alternative for answering the questions above is to rely on Goleman's (1995, 2006) concepts of emotional and social intelligence, which refer to "an individual's abilities in understanding and managing their own emotions as well as their interpersonal relationships" (Mercer & Gkonou, 2017, p. 103). Although the use of these terms is still indicative of a blurred conceptual boundary among 'intelligence', 'ability', 'competence' and 'skill' (see Mercer & Gkonou, 2017), the studies built on this conceptual framework have treated socio-emotional (i.e. a merging of social and emotional) intelligence as a measurable construct, and also as an identifiable personal trait (Dewaele, Gkonou, & Mercer, 2018) explaining why some L2 teachers are better at regulating the intra- and

interpersonal aspects of their teaching, and thereby creating a classroom environment that is more conducive to learning (Gkonou & Mercer, 2017). Nevertheless, while the instrument devised in these studies may help us identify socio-emotional intelligence as a specific ability or competence that can be developed in L2 teachers, conceptual work after the relational turn will need to examine ‘relating’ as a classroom activity through the emic perspectives of L2 teachers and learners as well (Mercer, 2018).

With regard to that rationale (cf. Section 1.4), studies conducted with experienced L2 teachers have recently shown that teachers do construe and rely on relational concepts when reflecting on teaching processes and experiences in general (Farrell, 2015) or relationship building as an element of their teaching in particular (Gkonou & Mercer, 2017, 2018). Apart from drawing attention to the participants’ awareness for L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity (Feryok, 2012), a major outcome of such research is, arguably, the emergence of concepts to be refined and contested through further research—see, for instance, the framing of ‘relational beliefs’ by Gkonou and Mercer (2018) as a concept that subsumes L2 teachers’ conceptions of their own roles, responsibilities, and techniques in forging teacher-learner relationships that are conducive to learning.

A further pillar of the current conceptual expansion is motivation researchers’ renewed attention to the dynamics of the teacher-learner relationship as a key determinant of classroom L2 learning motivation. Again, while various characteristics and practices of L2 teachers have long been known to be directly related to L2 learning motivation and demotivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; for more detail see Chapter 4), the focus of some empirical research has only recently turned towards the in-depth, contextually embedded exploration of motivation as an emergent phenomenon depending on the quality of classroom interactions between, primarily, teachers and students. In this sense, while still supporting the idea that motivating learners is something that most L2 teachers do strategically (e.g., Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Brophy, 2010), motivation research after the relational turn has also acknowledged that motivating is, in fact, “an intensely interactive process, where motivating lessons emerge (sometimes surprisingly) from the coming together and intense mutual engagement from moment to moment of teacher and learners” (Lamb, 2017, p. 312; see also Henry & Thorsen, 2019, p. 48; Kálmán, 2018).

In turn, this emergent line of research has also drawn attention to the possibility of enhancing L2 learners’ ‘engagement’ (Dörnyei, 2019; Mercer, 2019) by prompting L2 teachers to develop in themselves key qualities such as ‘empathy’ and ‘responsiveness’ (Henry & Thorsen, 2019). This, for instance, can be done by engaging L2 teachers in an activity of ‘perspective-taking’, which in Warren’s (2018) interpretation means “adopting the social perspectives of others as an act and process of knowing,” and thereby



prompting teachers to “obtain (and reason with) new knowledge of students and the sociocultural context where she or he will teach” (p. 169). What makes these conceptual perspectives important is, I believe, that they complement the notions of socio-emotional intelligence and relational beliefs (Gkonou & Mercer, 2018) with an additional emphasis on the procedural, action-oriented demands of classroom intra- and interpersonal processes, and on ‘relating’ as “an active, ongoing process” rather than a fixed state of affairs (Mercer, 2018, p. 513). At the same time, since procedural knowledge is known to often be “used” by individuals in unconscious ways (i.e. without being reflected upon; see Bloom, 1956; Feryok, 2018), it seems indispensable for teacher-focused inquiry to also presuppose and explore the propositional type of knowledge that complements procedural knowledge when L2 teachers reason about or are engaged in relating as a regular classroom activity.

Thus, in setting the rationale of the dissertation (see also Section 1.4), a central consideration to make is that besides the procedural type of knowledge that L2 teachers rely on while engaged simultaneously in an activity of teaching and an activity of ‘relating’ (Feryok, 2012), research after the relational turn should also look into the propositional type of knowledge that L2 teachers appropriate when making sense of the impact they have on classroom learning-teaching, and focus on this knowledge construct instead of alternative concepts such as relational beliefs, abilities, or intelligence (e.g., Henry & Thorsen, 2019; Gkonou & Mercer, 2018). This research focus is, arguably, a viable response to Mercer’s (2018) concern, who in setting the agenda for research after the relational turn stated that research is still unclear regarding the degree of L2 teachers’ conscious influence on the relational aspects of their teaching (p. 509), while also acknowledging that “as reflective, sentient, agentic human beings, we are able to actively construct and subjectively think on a meta level about the relationships in our world in complex and, at times, unpredictable ways” (p. 513). Based on these claims, what I propose is a focus on L2 teachers’ knowledge of their own impact (i.e. LTKI) on students’ engagement within the framework of L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity (Freeman & Johnson, 2005), which they are thought to construe through both formal study and personal-experiential learning, and be able to express in a propositional form through reflection. As a closing of the chapter, the conceptual basis for this research focus is explored in more detail in Section 2.3.1.

### **2.3.1 Conceptualising LTKI as a specific area of L2 teachers’ propositional knowledge**

As a starting point to elaborating the conceptual basis for LTKI, it is important to take note of Hattie’s (2012) fundamental contribution in making ‘L2 teachers’ knowledge of their

impact' a legitimate focus for TEFL/TESOL research, but also of the fact that Hattie has not explicitly used the term 'knowledge' for identifying the related cognitions of L2 teachers that he so often referred to in his seminal work. To be more specific, Hattie's (2012) references to what I termed 'L2 teachers' knowledge of their impact' were made by way of describing a 'mind frame' within which teachers "ask themselves about the effect they are having on student learning" and "use evidence-based methods to inform, change, and sustain these evaluation beliefs about their effect" (p. 14). In the same study, the aforementioned 'mind frame' is also described as follows:

There is no recipe, no professional development set of worksheets, no new teaching method, and no band-aid remedy. It is a way of thinking: 'My role, as teacher, is to evaluate the effect I have on my students.' It is to 'know thy impact', it is to understand this impact, and it is to act on this knowing and understanding. (Hattie, 2012, p. 19)

As in the case of defining socio-emotional intelligence above, the use of alternative terms with similar denotations (i.e. 'mind frame', 'knowing', 'evaluation beliefs') in Hattie's description indicates a blurring of boundaries while trying to grasp a central underlying concept within the framework of teacher cognition. It is for avoiding this conceptual ambiguity that my dissertation frames LTKI as a specific area of L2 teachers' knowledge, acquired through both formal study and learning-teaching experiences, and fit to be studied through the products of L2 teachers' reflective activity (Kumaravadivelu, 2012).

In this sense, my investigation bears much resemblance to Woods and Çakır's (2011) study, whose stated aim was to conduct research on one specific area of L2 teacher knowledge, and in doing so make a distinction between "knowledge which is explicit and theoretical (verbally articulated), and knowledge which is implicit and embedded in practice (gained experientially and used automatically, like one's mother tongue)" (p. 383). However, while the focus of analysis in Woods and Çakır's (2011) study (as well as in mine) was on the former, propositional type of knowledge, a central assumption of theirs was that L2 teachers' reflective accounts are, in fact, a product of these two types of knowledge in interaction, and that to some extent the latter, procedural type of knowledge can also be "brought to consciousness through verbalization" (p. 385). In a line of argumentation similar to this, Shulman (1994) claimed that "when we ask about the wisdom of practice, the accumulated lore of teaching experience, we tend to find such knowledge stored in the form of propositions as well" (p. 131). Thus, even though the interaction of propositional and procedural knowledge is regarded by researchers of L2 teacher cognition as a particularly complex one (Feryok, 2018, p. 108), the reflective accounts of L2 teachers, if properly elicited, are thought to provide insights into a well-integrated body of conceptual and personal-experiential knowledge known as praxis (p. 109; see also Lantolf & Poehner, 2010), thereby corroborating our earlier claims that certain areas of L2 teacher knowledge can be best explored through the products of L2

teachers' personal meaning-making (Section 1.4). Based on this conceptualisation, investigating LTKI as a specific area of L2 teachers' knowledge means investigating a body of knowledge which teachers have accumulated through a process of sense-making embedded both in formal study and in learning-teaching experience, and which can be studied in the form of propositions once brought to light through reflective-narrative activity.

On these grounds, a final conceptual question to address in this section concerns the distinction between 'knowledge' and 'beliefs', and why the term 'knowledge' is thought to better describe the construct that is explored in the dissertation. In doing so, I need to draw once again on the work of Woods and Çakır (2011), who referred to knowledge and beliefs as the two ends of a continuum rather than as separable concepts, and argued, in line with other researchers of L2 teacher cognition (e.g., Borg, 2006, p. 35; Feryok, 2018, p. 108), that in the process of teaching practice "teachers' use of knowledge structures is not distinguishable from their use of belief structures" (p. 384). Similarly, in a more comprehensive discussion on the origins of one's knowledge and beliefs, Woods (2003, p. 205) eschewed the traditional distinction by claiming that "an individual's knowledge is seen as being structured and constructed over time through social interactions, as are his or her beliefs," thus forming a statement which also resonates with the sociocultural theories presented in Section 2.2.1.

In this sense, while it might be contended that the separation of beliefs and knowledge is an artificial one in teacher-focused inquiry (Borg, 2006), it must also be acknowledged that much research within the social-constructivist paradigm has used the term 'knowledge' when exploring the cognitions that underlie teachers' actions and reflections (e.g., Johnson, 2015; Szesztay, 2004). In such research, it is often claimed that the products of L2 teachers' reflective-narrative activity can allow for exploring "a possible underlying knowledge they [i.e. teachers] might have used for reflection and action" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 23; square brackets mine). The methodological considerations of designing such research are discussed further in Chapter 3.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

Building on the previously outlined constructs of and approaches to studying L2 teacher knowledge (Chapter 1), the dual aim of Chapter 2 was to explore the origins and most recent developments of conceptual work focusing on L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity, and to establish a research agenda in which LTKI (standing for 'L2 teachers' knowledge of their impact) is to be studied, through the products of L2 teachers' guided reflective activity (Borg, 2006; Woods & Çakır, 2011), as a specific area of L2 teachers'

knowledge. As a response to the conceptual disparity characterising research on the cognitions that L2 teachers rely on when acting upon and reasoning about their impact on students' engagement (Dörnyei, 2019), my aim has been to frame LTKI as a body of knowledge which comes about through the sense-making that accompanies L2 teachers' engagement in formal study and with learning-teaching experience.

Underlying this research agenda are, most importantly, a number of recent studies demonstrating that L2 teachers do construe and rely on relational concepts while engaged simultaneously in an activity of teaching and an activity of 'relating' (Feryok, 2012; Henry & Thorsen, 2019) and when reflecting on the relational aspects of their teaching (Farrell, 2015; Gkonou & Mercer, 2017, 2018), thus hinting at the existence of knowledge structures that can only be explored through the personal meaning-making of practicing L2 teachers. The focus of LTKI research, however, is not cast on what L2 teachers know about the relational aspects of classroom learning-teaching in general, but on what they know about their own impact that comes about when teachers and learners work together in the classroom to construct meanings collectively (Hattie, 2012; Kramsch, 2009, p. 70; Walsh, 2011, p. 49). Having established both a rationale and a conceptual framework for such research, in Chapter 3 I turn to the methodological background of the three consecutive qualitative studies through which I explored the LTKI construct.

## **Chapter 3 – Working towards a theoretical model of L2 teachers’ knowledge of their impact: The methodological framework of a grounded-theory project**

### **3.1 Introduction**

Having previously defined the focus and aim of my research, in Chapter 3 I am turning to the aspect that has so far received less attention: the methodological framework of my exploratory work on the LTKI construct. Drawing on my earlier reference to the value of qualitative research methods in exploring teaching-related phenomena from teachers’ and learners’ perspectives (Sections 1.4.1 & 1.4.2), in the first section of the chapter I lay out the rationale of situating my research entirely in the qualitative research tradition (Section 3.2), and then narrow my focus to ‘grounded theory’ as an analytical framework typically used in qualitative research that aims to explore newly emerging concepts in a given field (Section 3.2.1). As part of this introductory section, I also reflect on the necessity of seeing phenomena from multiple participants’ perspectives within a grounded-theory project (Section 3.2.2), and introduce reflective-narrative writing as the medium that I found the most ideal for collecting the empirical data of my three qualitative studies (Section 3.2.3).

Once this theoretical-methodological basis is set, the chapter continues with a more concrete focus on the data collection instruments and procedures of my exploratory studies (Section 3.3), and the main analytical stages of my grounded-theory project (Section 3.4). The purpose of these sections, conversely, is to provide an overview of how the analytical procedures and outcomes of the three studies (Chapters 4-6) were built on and intertwined with one another to finally result in a better understanding of LTKI as an underlying construct, and how these results allowed for a tentative model of LTKI to be put forward. By way of setting up this methodological framework, the chapter is also hoped to illustrate my familiarity with the use of qualitative research methods in research on motivation/demotivation (cf. Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015), on L2 learner and teacher beliefs and cognitions (cf. Basturkmen, 2012; Borg, 2006; Kalaja & Barcelos, 2003; Kalaja et al., 2015), and on L2 teachers’ knowledge specifically (e.g., Gitomer & Zisk, 2015; Woods, 2003; Woods & Çakır, 2011)—with each of these being integrated into the other chapters rather than discussed in this chapter separately.

### **3.2 Creating a methodological framework for qualitative research on the LTKI construct within the social-constructivist paradigm**

To start with a reason for my predominant focus on the qualitative research tradition, it can be said that the ends and the means in the social-constructivist paradigm are largely

the same as in qualitative research in general. This should be apparent if we juxtapose social-constructivists' purpose to explore "the dynamic complexity of personal meaning-making in social context" (Ushioda, 2009, p. 217) and qualitative researchers' striving to understand phenomena through the lens of human perception and understanding (Stake, 2010, pp. 11-14). Rather than being the same, though, these ideas seem to complement each other and thereby call for a focus on both the process and the outcome of subjective meaning-making in teacher-focused inquiry (cp. Lugossy, 2008, p. 22). In my understanding, the 'outcome' aspect occupies a more emphatic position in general qualitative research, which focuses on "the *meanings* people attach to experience and the realities they construct to make sense of the world" (Hood, 2009, p. 81; original emphasis) and also "the subjective opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 38). Although far from the positivist/postpositivist ideas of an objective social reality driven by dissociable cause-and-effect processes (Section 1.4.1), the subjective perspectives and realities examined in qualitative research are often represented as static constructions, ultimately used as tools for understanding phenomena. This dominant interest in phenomena and theory-building is also emphasized by Dörnyei (2007, p. 126), who claims that the primary goal of qualitative research is "to find individuals who can provide rich and varied insights into the phenomenon under investigation so as to maximize what we can learn."

In turn, research embedded in the social-constructivist paradigm seems to put more emphasis on the 'process' aspect, visible in its focus on relationality and the dynamic and complex nature of subjective meaning-making embedded in social, historical, and cultural contexts. While the existing meanings and values of individuals are as much parts of the inquiry as in general qualitative research, social constructivists acknowledge that "these meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meanings into a few categories or ideas" (Creswell, 2007, p. 20). This complexity, according to Stake (2010), is further toned by an inherent relational element, as the reality of personal experience and the reality of group and societal relationships "exist simultaneously and separately within every human activity" (p. 18). A combined approach, therefore, needs to maintain a focus on subjective meanings and experiences but also acknowledge that these meanings are "not simply imprinted on individuals but are formed through interaction with others...and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives" (Creswell, 2007, p. 21). In essence, what I seek in my research is a double focus: one strand being the investigation of the LTKI construct through, primarily, L2 teachers' perspectives, and the other being the representation of individuals' meaning-making in reflective activities in particular and in the process of learning-teaching in general. In the following subsections I elaborate on the narrower methodological framework of this research approach.

### **3.2.1 Grounded theory as a framework for model-building in the qualitative research tradition**

Rather than referring to a concrete theory of a concrete phenomenon, the term ‘grounded theory’ is used by qualitative researchers to describe a framework of inquiry in which new theoretical insights are generated on the basis of qualitative empirical data (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 259). More precisely, the purpose of grounded theory is to generate theoretical insights that are “‘grounded’ in data that has been systematically collected from participants who *have experienced* the process being studied, and then methodically analyzed by the researcher” (Croker, 2009, p. 17; my emphasis); this makes grounded theory particularly relevant for theory-building in unexplored conceptual areas. For an inquiry to qualify as grounded theory, its results must articulate “a coherent, contextualized explanation (rather than merely a contextual description) of an issue, possibly also outlining a (tentative) model or framework” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 260), and also “help explain practice or provide a framework for further research” (Creswell, 2007, p. 63). To meet these criteria, the researcher is expected to strictly and consistently follow a sequence of analytical procedures, in which the three main stages are ‘open coding’, ‘axial coding’, and ‘selective coding’. The three terms are explained in more detail in the remainder of this subsection, and later discussed in relation to my research in Section 3.4.

The first stage of a grounded theory project, open coding, is about analysing the qualitative data one has collected and assigning conceptual categories to the salient data segments (Creswell, 2007; Dörnyei, 2007). This is, in essence, the first step in any kind of qualitative content analysis (see Barkhuizen & Wette, 2008; Hacker & Barkhuizen, 2008; Hood, 2009). In more practical terms, the data (typically a collection of texts), at this stage, is broken up into chunks that fit into the emerging categories. The length of these chunks, according to Dörnyei (2007, pp. 260-261), varies between a long phrase, a line, a sentence, or even a short paragraph; this notion will be important in view of the units of analysis in my three empirical studies. To set an example, Dörnyei (2007) has also collected some analytical questions for coding, such as: What is this piece of data an example of? What do the data segments actually mean? What are the underlying principles of these actions/statements? After answering these questions, the researcher may move on to the stage of ‘axial coding’.

In the process of axial coding, three interpretive-analytical decisions must be made. First, the researcher needs to identify a core category or phenomenon, one that is “of particular conceptual interest because it seems central to the process being studied in the grounded theory project” (Creswell, 2007, p. 160). Second, the researcher must return to the dataset and see how the other salient categories relate to the emerging central phenomenon.

While mapping the interrelationships between the various categories (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 261), the researcher often needs to reanalyse or reorganise the data (Creswell, 2007, p. 64); in my case, this process was governed by the emerging LTKI concept. Finally, a third decision to make is whether to collect more data that can illuminate the central phenomenon or to settle with reanalysing the existing dataset (Creswell, 2007, p. 161). On these grounds, I opted for collecting more data for exploring LTKI in a separate study (see Chapter 6) before moving on to the stage of ‘selective coding’.

In the final analytical stage (selective coding), the researcher is expected to refine the examined concepts and describe the interrelationships between them—these, according to Dörnyei (2007), can be “causal conditions, consequences, and similarities as well as contextual, procedural, or strategic interdependence” (p. 261),—then possibly organise the results into a theoretical model (see also Creswell, 2007, p. 161). In doing so, the researcher ought to explain how the salient conceptual categories that had emerged from the data may form part of the phenomenon or construct under study, and how the results fit into the theoretical and conceptual framework set up on the basis of secondary research (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 261). To enhance the reliability of the coding and analysis of the available data, the researcher is also advised to collaborate with other experts in framing the emerging construct (Nunan & Bailey, 2009, pp. 429-430); the lack of such procedures is discussed later as a major limitation of my grounded-theory project. As a final suggestion regarding the insights gained from a grounded-theory project, Creswell (2007, p. 63) points out that the established model or theory should ideally be grounded in “the views of a large number of participants;” this is an issue I take on in the following subsection.

### **3.2.2 Comparing multiple perspectives in qualitative research**

Although Creswell’s (2007) statement above may seem, at first sight, to contradict the general view of qualitative research as in-depth understanding of phenomena through a selected few cases (Dörnyei, 2007), the necessity of comparing and contrasting multiple perspectives is also emphasized by scholars as an aspect of qualitative inquiry. What is most important to acknowledge here is that the ultimate purpose of qualitative research (in fact, any form of research) is to gain a better understanding of a general phenomenon through particular cases, provided that the accumulated data is sufficient for drawing general conclusions about the examined phenomenon. In other words, while the researcher’s aim might be to frame and understand cases (including individuals) in their complexity, one can hardly overlook how one particular case (or individual) is similar to or different from other cases; this, by the way, is in strong co-dependence with the sociocultural situatedness of human learning, development, and functioning (as discussed



in Chapter 2). In some cases, and especially if the aim is the exploration of a salient underlying construct, representativeness and the comparison of views must be deliberately sought by the researcher because, as Stake (2010, p. 450) argues, “nothing is more important than making a representative selection of cases.”

To continue this line of argumentation, Stake (2010) also claims that in qualitative research “it is important to have data gathered by people with different psychological dispositions,” as each individual perspective can add something different to the understanding of the examined phenomenon (p. 53). Clearly, this claim leads us back again to the social-constructivist paradigm, in which the relevance of a theory or concept is determined, primarily, by its salience in teachers’ and students’ conceptions and construals of learning-teaching experiences (Johnson, 2006; Wright, 1990). Another voice raised for the representation of participants’ emic (or insider) perspectives is Freeman’s (2013), who argues that:

Making sense of any human activity, from a classroom lesson to district-mandated reform, is largely a function of one’s perspective, which is a function of one’s role or position in the activity or event. (...) Blending these distinct viewpoints brings a fuller, more operational understanding of the phenomenon. (p. 124)

Naturally, in my research on LTKI, the most important perspectives are those of L2 teachers and learners, both as individual cases and in relation to one another. This mentality also prevails in the concept of the ‘collective case study’ (Stake, 2005), within which different cases (here: individual perspectives) are compared “to see how their experiences are similar or different, for the benefit of a broader group of cases” (Hood, 2009, p. 70). Resonating with an earlier claim presented in this section, Hood’s (2009) statement also implies that even in case-study research “the results may be extended to other cases where the particulars are similar” (p. 73). For this to happen, however, the research not only has to align with methodological conventions but also gain the reader’s approval (Creswell, 2007; Dörnyei, 2007; Hood, 2009; Stake, 2010); this is a criterion that seems easier to meet through a grounded-theory framework.

### **3.2.3 Reflective writing as a source of qualitative data and a tool for individuals’ sense-making**

Having discussed the most important theoretical-analytical principles of my research on LTKI, in this section I turn to two more technical questions: how can qualitative research yield valid insights into the subjective worlds and sense-making processes of L2 learners and teachers, and why is reflective writing seen as a central mediational tool in such research? To arrive at the currently most relevant answers to these questions, one needs to start out with Kalaja’s (1995, p. 196) early realisation that the analysis of learners’ and

teachers' "stretches of talk" or "pieces of writing" about various aspects of SLA is a viable means of learning about their conceptions, dispositions, and experiences. As a symbolic statement of research on beliefs (Kramsch, 2003) and on the discursive construction of learners' and teachers' identities (Kalaja et al., 2015), Kalaja's (1995) observation is fundamental in understanding how the conceptions, dispositions, and experiences of individuals are often processed, expressed, and transmitted through language (Aragão, 2011; Barcelos, 2003a, 2008; Woods & Çakır, 2011) and through the stories that individuals choose to tell about themselves (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Since these ideas are central to how the data were collected for the dissertation, in the following paragraphs I provide further theoretical support for the above claims on a deeper conceptual level, and thereby frame reflective writing as a research instrument as well as a tool that is often used by individuals for learning, sense-making, and reflection.

Starting with the latter idea, I need to draw attention to a number of scholars who have long seen writing not only as a product of one's learning, but rather as an activity that embodies learning (Porter, Goldstein, Leatherman, & Conrad, 1990) and becoming (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). More specifically, Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) argue that the writing act itself can usually "evoke new questions about the self and the subject, remind us that our work is grounded, contextual, and rhizomatic, and demystify the research/writing process and help others to do the same" (p. 965). This, on the one hand, ties in well with the purposes and ends associated with reflective learning-teaching in the social-constructivist paradigm and in researching L2 teachers' knowledge as well. Bartlett (1990), for instance, was among the first scholars to point out that:

In writing, we begin not only to observe, but we take the first step in reflecting *on* and *about* our practice. (...) Our writing will be about our routine and conscious actions in the classroom; conversations with pupils; critical incidents in a lesson; our personal lives as teachers; our beliefs about teaching; events outside the classroom that we think influence our teaching; our views about language teaching and learning. (pp. 209-210; original emphasis)

In a similar vein, advocates of narrative inquiry as a research method argue that linguistic structure offers a plausible way to express and organize complex psychological states and processes (László, 2004, p. 337), and to construct and document both the outer environment of communication and action, and the inner one of thought and intent (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 16; see also Barkhuizen et al., 2014).

Upon closer look, one can surely see that the latter statements also strike fundamental epistemological chords, some of which have already been picked up in Chapter 2. Firstly, the claims above imply that both narrative and linguistic activity plays a crucial role in human learning, sense-making, and psycho-social functioning (Webster & Mertova, 2007), and, more importantly, that "one's self-understanding only appears in the act of

'telling' (or in the act of explicit self-reflection and as such 'telling oneself')" (Kelchtermans, 2009, p. 261). This is, in essence, what Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) also mean by the aphorism: "thought happens in writing" (p. 970). Secondly, the above statements also suggest that both narrative and reflective writing, as acts of 'telling', can help individuals (1) connect phenomena and infuse them with interpretation (Johnson, 2006), (2) organise their experiences and connect them into a unified identity (Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2015a, 2015b), (3) display their experiences and their understandings of these (Barkhuizen & Wette, 2008), and, ideally, (4) develop an attitude for continuous engagement in reflective activity (Dutra & Mello, 2008). What is also important to see is that the products of most reflective-narrative activity are inherently complex, and this can make it difficult to filter out and observe the underlying knowledge that L2 teachers relied on while engaged in a given reflective-narrative activity (Borg, 2006; Kumaravadivelu, 2012; Szesztay, 2004). It is for this reason that the role of researchers and teacher educators is paramount in framing L2 teachers' reflective-narrative activity in a way that it makes manifest the construct to be studied, and provides a basis for relevant understandings to be developed from multiple subjective accounts.

Thirdly, and also implied in Richardson and St. Pierre's (2005, p. 965) statement above, reflective-narrative writing should be seen not only "as a solitary pursuit but as discourse among people with shared interests" (Porter et al., 1990, p. 227). Connecting this with our discussion in Section 1.4.2, it is easy to see how reflective-narrative writing fits into a larger "social fabric of sense-making" (Freeman, 2013, p. 128) and into the communal development of in-service and pre-service teachers (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 93). In this sense, engagement in the professional discourse of their field is particularly important for L2 teachers because, as Richardson and St. Pierre (2005, p. 961) summarise, "what something means to individuals is dependent on the discourses available to them." Additionally, Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) also point it out that once individuals gain mastery of the discursive tools of their profession (Moore, 2004), they can use writing as a form of deliberation from the meanings received from and created by others, and thus become critical and reflective agents capable of constructing their own learning-teaching. With all this in mind, it should be easy to see why I relied so extensively on reflective-narrative writing as a research method in each empirical study presented later in the dissertation.

### **3.3 A description of the data collection instruments in three qualitative studies**

Connected tightly to what has been said about reflective writing as a research method and the aim and focus of my research (Sections 2.3 & 2.4), this section serves to introduce four reflective tasks that I designed for my coursework at university with students, pre-service

and in-service teachers studying in English Studies or TEFL/TESOL programs. The tasks were used, concurrently, as data collection instruments for empirical research that focused primarily on L2 teachers' knowledge, beliefs, dispositions, and learning-teaching experiences, and rather than being closely related in topic and focus, they reflect a gradual progression of interest building up, through various analytical phases (Section 3.4), to my current focus on LTKI. That being said, some similarities among the four reflective tasks can be observed in terms of the techniques used for data elicitation and a common underlying focus on L2 teachers' roles and impact within L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity (see Chapter 2).

Out of the four reflective tasks, the first two were the most closely related in both design and focus, as they were parts of one study comparing L2 learners' and in-service L2 teachers' conceptions of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation (see Farkas, 2014, 2016a; and Table 1 below). Considering that the study looked into a highly specific and scarcely researched concept, I found it indispensable to use data collection instruments that would generate exploratory qualitative data with a possibility for comparing multiple participant perspectives. On these grounds, the first reflective task (see Appendix A or Figure 3.1 below), designed for university-level EFL learners, required each participant to write a short reflective-narrative text entitled '*The most demotivating language teacher ever*', without any further restrictions on style, format, or content.


Task: I am interested in finding out more about what trainee teachers and language learners think makes a demotivating teacher.

Please write a short text entitled: "**The most demotivating language teacher ever.**" You can focus on a real language teacher or an imagined person. The important thing is to make clear in your story what it is that makes this teacher such a bad, demotivating language teacher in your eyes.

As I am interested in the detailed descriptions of such teachers, it would be great if you could write at least 1 page (300 words). Feel free to write longer if you have more ideas to share. 😊

When to submit: [deadline].

Where to submit: in class or via e-mail.



**Figure 3.1.** Reflective writing task designed for university-level EFL learners in Study 1

In light of the reflective-narrative data gained this way and my awareness for the complete lack of empirical research on in-service L2 teachers' beliefs about the phenomenon of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation (Farkas, 2016a), I continued the research project by designing a similar but more structured reflective writing task (see Appendix B or Figure 3.2) for Hungarian in-service L2 teachers, with whom I worked

together in a TEFL/TESOL course at university. As it is apparent from Figure 3.2, this second task was more specific than the first in that it asked the participating L2 teachers to describe at least five characteristics of a demotivating L2 teacher, and also prompted them to think about teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation from the perspective of the students they had been teaching. Due to this simultaneous focus on perspective-taking (Warren, 2018) and expressing conceptions about an L2 teacher's (demotivating) impact on students, the reflective-narrative texts gathered in this phase were found to be highly relevant to my exploratory work on LTKI later (see Chapter 4).

**Part 1: Characterize a demotivating language teacher from students' perspective**

In this part, please think about students similar to the ones you teach and try to put yourself into their shoes. Write a short text about a language teacher whom you think students find absolutely demotivating. The title of your text could be:


*The most demotivating language teacher for students*

Please list **5 reasons** why students think that the teacher you characterize is so demotivating.

As I am interested in the detailed descriptions of such teachers, please try to write at least 1 page (300 words). Feel free to write longer if you have more ideas to share. 😊

Where to submit: in class or via e-mail (Subject: demotivation)

When to submit: [deadline]



**Figure 3.2.** Reflective writing task designed for in-service L2 teachers in Study 1

Before the concept of LTKI was established as a viable research focus (Section 3.4), however, my professional coursework with Hungarian pre-service EFL teachers led me to embark on a second research project, in which another self-designed reflective instrument (see Appendix C or Figure 3.3 below) helped me gain an overview of salient teaching-related beliefs, dispositions, and experiences within the examined sample. The instrument, which I have since been referring to as a 'reflective template' (Farkas, 2016b, 2019), can be best described as a set of ten sentence-starters focusing on various teaching-related themes and prompting pre-service EFL teachers to formulate short, written reflective-narrative statements (Farkas, 2019, pp. 202-204), which in turn allow for the study of their experiences, dispositions, and most importantly their conceptions about the roles, responsibilities, and the knowledge of L2 teachers (see Chapter 5). As in the case of my previous research on teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation, the possibility of using some of the data from this study for exploratory work on LTKI became apparent after the study had been designed and conducted—this, however, is not

considered uncommon in a grounded-theory framework (Creswell, 2007, p. 161; Moustakas, 1994, p. 3).

1. If I think of a good language teacher, the first thing that comes to my mind is...
2. If I was working as a teacher, the most important thing I would teach my students is...
3. One thing I would never do as a teacher is...
4. If there's one thing that annoys a teacher, it is...
5. If I could give a piece of advice to my old language teacher, it would be to...
6. Besides the subject knowledge, a language teacher needs to know...
7. The job of a language teacher is *harder / easier*, because...
8. A teacher's personality is *also important / not so important*, because...
9. I once had a language teacher who...
10. The ideal teacher is...

**Figure 3.3.** Reflective template designed for pre-service L2 teachers in Study 2

As of the conceptual developments resulting from the two studies, the emergence of the provisional LTKI construct at this point of the research process called for further exploratory data to be collected from in-service L2 teachers, who were expected, due to the knowledge they had already developed through formal study and teaching experience, to provide further relevant insights into the construct under study. Conversely, in a fourth reflective writing task (see Appendix D or Figure 3.4), which was designed with a specific focus on LTKI as an emerging concept, I asked a group of Hungarian in-service L2 teachers (see details in Chapter 6) to reflect on and describe characteristics of L2 teachers that they know to have an influence (i.e. impact) on students' learning engagement, motivation, and attitudes to L2 learning.

**Concept: Language teacher influences**


To clarify this concept, please think about students similar to the ones you teach and try to put yourself into their shoes. Write a short text in which you list **five** characteristics of a language teacher that are likely to influence students' learning, motivation, or their attitudes to language learning. The title of your text could be:

*5 characteristics of a language teacher that will have an influence on students' learning*

As I am interested in the detailed descriptions of these characteristics, please explain how these can influence students' learning, or how they are related to your own teaching experience. Try to write at least 1 page (300 words). Feel free to write longer if you have more ideas to share. 😊

Where to submit: in class or via e-mail (Subject: Language teacher influences)

When to submit: [deadline]



**Figure 3.4.** Reflective writing task designed for in-service L2 teachers in Study 3

In line with the key assumption that fuels most research on L2 teachers' reflection and cognitions (Sections 1.2.3 & 1.4.2), the written products of this reflective activity were expected to give insights into LTKI as an underlying construct of L2 teachers' sense-making, and as an area of L2 teachers' knowledge that can be better understood through reflective-narrative data. To also provide an outline of the prolonged and cyclical analytical process through which the conceptual components of LTKI were identified and later integrated into a theoretical model, in Section 3.4 I continue to describe the major stages of my grounded-theory project.

### **3.4 Data analysis and model-building in a grounded-theory framework**

In the previous sections of this chapter, I have referred to model-building in a grounded-theory framework as a prolonged, cyclical, and emergent process, in which data collection and analysis occur simultaneously (Moustakas, 1994, p. 3) as the researcher progresses along three prescribed analytical stages. This kind of entanglement between data collection and analysis is considered normal in qualitative research (Creswell, 2007, p. 19; Dörnyei, 2007, p. 37) and captured perfectly by Hood (2009, p. 78) in the following statement:

In qualitative studies, data collection and analysis occur simultaneously and continuously, (...) the scope and direction of the inquiry emerges, and the boundaries of the case become clearer. It is also a cumulative process, whereby continual and recursive analysis of data adds shape and texture to the project and suggests direction for its own continuation.

It is by delving into this complex iterative process that the upcoming chapters (i.e. Chapters 4-6) can offer a fuller understanding of key concepts and their interrelationships within the LTKI construct. Before doing so, however, in this final preparatory section I aim to provide a structured overview of the major analytical stages in my grounded-theory project by connecting the general principles of Section 3.2 with the particulars of my own data collection and analysis. For a better illustration of my progression along various analytical stages in three qualitative studies, I ought to refer to Table 1 again (below) as a basis for the upcoming description.

**Table 1 (repeated)**

Overview of the three qualitative studies as parts of my grounded-theory project and presented in the empirical chapters of the dissertation

	<b>Participants and type of data</b>	<b>Research questions</b>	<b>Main outcomes</b>
<b>Study 1</b> (2014-2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 Austrian university-level EFL learners</li> <li>• 14 Hungarian university-level EFL learners</li> <li>• 22 Hungarian in-service L2 teachers</li> </ul> <p><i>Type of data:</i> reflective-narrative texts (essay format)</p>	<b>Phase 1:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the characteristics that L2 learners and in-service L2 teachers attribute to demotivating L2 teachers?</li> <li>• To what extent are learners' and teachers' beliefs and attributions similar or different from each other?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring the concept of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation from the perspective of L2 learners and teachers</li> </ul>
		<b>Phase 2:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can the conceptual categories of the study be used for exploratory work on the LTKI construct?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying four conceptual domains as components of LTKI</li> <li>• Framing the relationship of the components as a complex dynamic system</li> </ul>
<b>Study 2</b> (2016-2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12+18 Hungarian pre-service EFL teachers (two groups)</li> <li>• 17 Turkish pre-service EFL teachers</li> </ul> <p><i>Type of data:</i> short reflective-narrative statements (reflective template)</p>	<b>Phase 1:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the teaching-related beliefs and dispositions that characterise pre-service EFL teachers in an early phase of teacher education?</li> <li>• To what extent are the expressed beliefs and dispositions similar or different in the three examined groups?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing an overview of salient themes and categories in pre-service EFL teachers' teaching-related conceptions</li> </ul>
		<b>Phase 2:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what ways are the salient conceptual domains identified in the study related to the emerging LTKI construct?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying five other conceptual domains as components of LTKI</li> <li>• Proposing a provisional model of LTKI</li> </ul>
<b>Study 3</b> (2017-2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 Hungarian in-service L2 teachers</li> </ul> <p><i>Type of data:</i> reflective-narrative texts (essay format)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What insights can be gained about the LTKI construct if in-service L2 teachers are asked to reflect specifically on the impact they have on students' learning?</li> <li>• What does the analysis of their reflective-narrative accounts reveal about the conceptual domains represented in the provisional model of LTKI?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-examining the identified conceptual domains and their relationship</li> <li>• Finalising a tentative model of LTKI</li> </ul>



### **3.4.1 Stage 1: Open coding as a search for salient emerging themes**

With reference to the analytical phases outlined above and the principles of grounded theory described in Section 3.2.1, the first stage of my prolonged exploratory work involved the examination of qualitative data for salient themes related to concepts other than LTKI (i.e. the concept of LTKI emerged only later). In order of chronology, the first datasets to explore were L2 learners' and in-service L2 teachers' reflective-narrative texts about teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation (Study 1), and my first task as a researcher was to acquire the principles and practices of coding and categorising large amounts of qualitative data. In doing so, I used both instructional manuals (Creswell, 2004, 2007; Dörnyei, 2007; Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) and some outstanding examples illustrating the bottom-up process of identifying salient emerging themes in qualitative data and the top-down process of coding, labelling, and categorising novel or recurring themes related to the phenomenon under study (e.g., Barkhuizen & Wette, 2008; Hacker & Barkhuizen, 2008; Hood, 2009). As a major outcome of this analytical process (described more thoroughly in Chapter 4), the larger conceptual categories established in this phase (i.e. Phase 1 in Study 1) led me not only to a better understanding of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation from learners' and teachers' perspectives, but also to the subsequent framing of a specialised area of L2 teachers' knowledge (i.e. LTKI) that my teacher participants must have relied on while producing their reflective-narrative accounts.

Similarly, in the first analytical phase of my second study (see also Chapter 5), my initial aim was to investigate potentially salient themes and patterns in the teaching-related experiences and conceptions of pre-service EFL teachers rather than to work out the conceptual components of a larger underlying construct (Moustakas, 1994, p. 3). It was, however, at this point of the overall research process that I recognised the results of the two studies to be complementary in that the conceptions expressed by in-service L2 teachers (Study 1) and pre-service EFL teachers (Study 2) were inextricably related to what Hattie (2012) had called the teacher's impact on student learning, and thereby to an intertwined set of cognitions (Szesztay, 2004; Woods, 2003; Woods & Çakır, 2011) allowing L2 teachers to develop specialised knowledge about their own impact in the process of classroom learning-teaching. Crucially then, my realisation about the underlying knowledge construct (i.e. LTKI) was concurrent with the realisation that my data were relevant in exploring such a construct; this means that the emergence of LTKI as a viable research focus was the initial rather than the final step in my grounded-theory project (or, in other words, a step onto the stage of axial coding).

### **3.4.2 Stage 2: Axial coding as a process of identifying key underlying concepts**

To continue the same train of thought, for my research to qualify as a grounded-theory project, a first key realisation to make was that LTKI, which presented itself as a concept that is relevant to the study of both L2 teacher knowledge (Chapter 1) and L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity (Chapter 2), can be realistically explored on the basis of reflective-narrative accounts produced by in-service L2 teachers and pre-service EFL teachers (cf. Kumaravadivelu, 2012; Woods & Çakır, 2011; Yuan & Lee, 2014). Evidently, it was the same realisation that required both of my studies to be continued with a second analytical cycle (i.e. Phase 2 in Studies 1 & 2), in which the relevance of all previously identified themes and categories was re-examined in light of the emerging LTKI concept. Due to this dual focus, in two of the empirical chapters (i.e. Chapters 4 & 5) I present an integrated discussion of results drawn from the first and second analytical phases.

Concurrently to acknowledging the relevance of the existing datasets in developing an understanding of LTKI as a crucial underlying construct, I considered it a limitation of my research that Studies 1 and 2 had been designed without an awareness for LTKI as a focal concept, and therefore designed a third one in which the specialised framing of in-service L2 teachers' reflective activity (Section 3.3) allowed for an explicit rather than underlying focus on the LTKI construct. Despite this third study (i.e. Study 3) being of a smaller scale than the others, the additional data collected this way were essential in refining the conceptual outcomes gained from Studies 1 and 2, and in stepping onto the stage of selective coding, whereby the best possible understanding was meant to be reached regarding the components and their relationships in the emerging LTKI construct.

### **3.4.3 Stage 3: Selective coding as the final stage of the model-building process**

Considering the general principles of selective coding as the final stage in a grounded-theory project (Section 3.2.1), it must be emphasized once again that my analysis in Study 3 (see Chapter 6) was not expected to open up fundamentally new conceptual domains in relation to the LTKI construct, but to provide a more refined and thorough understanding of already identified domains as components that together make up the larger concept under study. In this sense, while selective coding has a considerable role in the necessary theoretical insights to be reached, it is the function of axial coding to work out the conceptual framework that is subsequently refined through further empirical and secondary research. Thus, from the empirical chapters of the dissertation it will be clear that a most decisive analytical step in my grounded-theory project was the putting forward of a provisional model of LTKI based on the framing of key conceptual domains emerging in Studies 1 and 2 (i.e. an outcome of axial coding primarily), which

subsequently allowed for a refined, tentative theoretical model to be proposed in Study 3 (i.e. an outcome of selective coding primarily).

Since LTKI itself is a construct that represents a specific area of L2 teachers' knowledge within L2 teachers' cognition, my references to 'key conceptual domains' are, in fact, references to the constituent parts of that knowledge. As it is explained in the chapters to come, the study of these components in interaction through in-service L2 teachers' and pre-service EFL teachers' reflective-narrative accounts is what allows for LTKI to be framed as an area of knowledge that L2 teachers rely on when acting in and reasoning about L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity. Whereas the boundaries and interrelationships of these conceptual domains are explored in great detail and by way of both empirical and theoretical support in the upcoming chapters, it is the integrated view of the LTKI construct in the theoretical model that will conclude the grounded-theory project in a way to provide a coherent conceptual framework for the continued study of L2 teachers' knowledge and of L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

In order to provide a clear methodological outline for the empirical work in the dissertation, in Chapter 3 I documented how the exploratory work on the emerging LTKI construct had been carried out; this involved explanations on the research being situated in the qualitative research tradition and within the social-constructivist paradigm (Section 3.2), on reflective writing being an ideal tool for eliciting relevant reflective-narrative data from different groups of participants (Sections 3.2.2 & 3.2.3), and on grounded theory being the most suitable analytical framework for building a theoretical model on the basis of exploratory qualitative data (Section 3.2.1). On these theoretical-methodological foundations I then built up an outline of the data collection procedures and the analytical stages of three empirical studies, thus providing an easier understanding of the prolonged conceptual work whereby the recursive analysis of diverse datasets and extensive secondary research finally resulted in a tentative model of LTKI to be proposed. While in Chapters 4-6 there is additional information about the participants and the analytical procedures of each study, the focus is hereupon shifted to the results of the conceptual work related to LTKI as a specific area of L2 teachers' knowledge.

## **Chapter 4 – Conceptualising LTKI through reflective-narrative accounts about teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation: A qualitative study focusing on the perspectives of L2 learners and in-service L2 teachers**

### **4.1 Introduction**

As a pillar of my exploratory work on the LTKI construct, the study presented in Chapter 4 aims to document how some early insights about the construct were gained through the analysis of reflective-narrative accounts produced by Hungarian in-service L2 teachers and by Hungarian and Austrian L2 learners. Since in Chapter 3 it was already mentioned that LTKI was only identified as an underlying construct after the data for this study had been collected and processed, it must be pointed out that the current chapter focuses on the results of two analytical phases in one study (as outlined in Table 1 earlier). In the first analytical phase, my aim was to learn more about the concept of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation with a focus on two research questions: What are the characteristics that L2 learners and in-service L2 teachers attribute to demotivating L2 teachers? To what extent are learners' and teachers' beliefs and attributions similar or different from each other? In the second analytical phase, after the concept of LTKI became manifest through subsequent research (see Chapter 3), my aim was to learn more about the LTKI construct itself by answering the research question: How can the conceptual categories of the study be used for exploratory work on the LTKI construct?

In forethought, it must also be noted that although this study was initially focusing only on demotivating factors (i.e. demotivators) as seen by L2 learners (see Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Farkas, 2014), it soon grew out of that category due to its specialised focus and data collection methods. Firstly, while most work in this line of research focused on demotivators in general (e.g., Falout, Elwood, & Hood, 2009; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009), my research, being concerned with teachers' impact on classroom L2 learning, focused more specifically on the demotivating characteristics and behaviours of L2 teachers themselves. Secondly, and in response to an obvious gap in this field, I aimed to examine the concept of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation from a different perspective as well: that of in-service L2 teachers (Farkas, 2016a, pp. 126-127). Thus, besides the Austrian (n=10) and Hungarian (n=14) L2 learners already involved, I recruited 22 Hungarian in-service L2 teachers for a reflective writing task requiring them to think about and characterise a demotivating L2 teacher from the perspective of the students they had been teaching; these data are central to the analysis in this chapter.

What makes the in-service L2 teachers' reflective-narrative texts highly relevant to the study of the LTKI construct is that these can be regarded, due to the framing of the writing

task, as the products of an activity of reflection and an activity of perspective-taking done simultaneously (Feryok, 2012; Warren, 2018). As already suggested in Section 2.3, by practicing such a joint activity of reflection and perspective-taking regularly (for recent empirical evidence see Henry & Thorsen, 2019; Kálmán, 2018; Gkonou & Mercer, 2017, 2018) L2 teachers develop, and possibly display, a specialised knowledge of students and the sociocultural context where they teach (Warren, 2018, p. 169), and more importantly of themselves and their impact as teachers (Hattie, 2012). In turn, the reflective-narrative products gained this way can help not only researchers in exploring concepts such as LTKI, but also teachers in understanding that “the way we know ourselves is related to the way we know, that is, perceive, construct, and make sense of others in our environment” (Kramsch, 2009, p. 70), and in raising their awareness for LTKI as an area of knowledge to be consciously developed and used in the process of teaching as well.

## **4.2 The study**

### **4.2.1 Participants and data collection**

The study presented in this chapter involved both L2 learners (n=24) and in-service L2 teachers (n=22) as participants, and both of these cohorts consisted of two subgroups. In order of chronology, the first (pilot) group to participate in the study were ten Austrian university students (two males and eight females) of an English Studies program, whose ages ranged from 22 to 25 years, and who had all learnt more than one foreign language already (3.4 on average). Shortly after piloting my data collection instrument (Appendix A) with this group, 14 Hungarian university students (five males and nine females) of another English Studies program (i.e. in a different context) were recruited as participants, whose ages ranged from 20 to 24 years, and who had previously learnt 2.3 foreign languages on average. For data collection, both groups were asked to complete the same reflective writing task (for rationale see Section 3.2.3), which required each student to produce a short reflective-narrative text entitled ‘*The most demotivating language teacher ever*’ without any further restrictions on style, format, or content. The 24 texts collected this way were all written in English and used for content analysis after asking for the consent of the authors. Since the current study is geared towards a comparison of learners’ and teachers’ perspectives, with a predominant focus on teachers’ reflective-narrative accounts actually, it was deemed appropriate to refer to the 24 students as one group in the rest of the chapter.

In a consecutive stage of the study, I had the opportunity to work with two groups of Hungarian in-service L2 teachers (11 members in each) doing post-graduate training in English at a Hungarian university, whom I asked to participate in a thought-provoking

research project by submitting a short reflective text entitled '*The most demotivating language teacher for students*' (Appendix B). In order to engage the participating teachers in an activity of in-depth reflection and an activity of perspective-taking at the same time (see Section 4.1), their writing task required them to describe a demotivating L2 teacher from the perspective of the students they had been teaching and to list at least five demotivating characteristics in their text. From the demographic data provided alongside the texts, it turned out that my sample involved L2 teachers from a wide variety of backgrounds: regarding the age-groups they were teaching, 17 reported teaching mostly children and/or teenagers and five reported teaching mostly adolescents and/or adults; regarding their own age, the range extended from 23 to 51 years (mean 33.15 years, SD 7.58); and regarding the L2s they were teaching, 18 were teaching EFL only, three were teaching EFL together with another L2, and one was teaching Russian only. For practical reasons the 22 teachers, who all gave their consent to their texts to be used anonymously for research, are referred to as one group in the study. In the sections to follow, all participants are referred to by their personal identification numbers (e.g., 'S12' referring to a particular student, and 'T12' referring to a particular in-service L2 teacher).

#### **4.2.2 Data analysis**

As in this chapter I present the results of two analytical phases, the procedures underlying the analytical phases are also presented in separate sections. With reference to the research questions put forward in Section 4.1, the analysis in the first phase was meant to provide a better understanding of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation from L2 learners' and in-service L2 teachers' perspectives, whereas in the second phase a more specific focus on LTKI as an underlying construct was sought. The particulars of the two analytical phases are described in more detail below.

##### **4.2.2.1 Phase 1: Exploring teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation**

In line with my stated aim to explore L2 learners' and teachers' conceptions of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation through their reflective-narrative texts, the two most important analytical decisions to make during this phase were (1) how to categorise the teacher characteristics and behaviours described in the texts, and (2) how to represent the content of the texts in structured datasets allowing for easier comparison within and across the two groups of participants. Regarding categorisation, my background research involved a search for studies in which (perceived) motivating/demotivating L2 teacher characteristics and behaviours—and not motivational strategies as in Brophy, 2010; Dörnyei, 2001; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998—were assigned to relevant conceptual categories.

In a synthesis of studies touching upon the question of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation (Falout & Falout, 2005; Falout et al., 2009; Gorham & Christophel, 1992; Nikolov, 2001; Oxford, 1998; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009; Zhang, 2009), I found that the three most consistently used conceptual categories, based on Dörnyei's (1994a) early conceptualisation of L2 learning motivation, were teaching methods, teaching style, and the teacher's personality—with competence or experience being added as a fourth category in some studies (e.g., Heitzmann, 2009; Lamb & Wedell, 2013). While many of the reviewed studies were unclear or inconsistent about what exactly these main categories subsumed, some of them (e.g., Heitzmann, 2009) provided further guidelines for categorisation by claiming that 'teaching style', for instance, subsumes aspects such as the pace of lessons, the teacher's attention to classroom discipline, or the teacher's attention to arousing learners' interest for the material (p. 212).

A further useful technique which I chose to integrate into my analytical process was the use of a 'coding template' for processing and organising qualitative data (for a practical illustration see Kálmán, 2015, 2018). Originating from Crabtree and Miller (1999) and also cited in Dörnyei (2007, p. 253), this technique allows the researcher to analyse large amounts of qualitative data by first compiling a set of pre-selected codes and potentially relevant categories based on the background literature of a field, and then processing the data based on these codes and categories (top-down analysis) while also allowing additional ones to emerge from the data itself (bottom-up analysis). Thus, in light of my synthesis of related studies, I started processing the data by assigning segments into three pre-defined main categories (teaching methods, teaching style, and the teacher's personality and experience), and created subcategories by using pre-selected codes borrowed from previous studies and adding new ones as they emerged from the data. To illustrate this process of content analysis, in Table 4.1 I present segments from a teacher's reflective text and the categories that these segments were put into.

**Table 4.1**

*Illustration of qualitative content analysis in the first research phase (selecting data segments, assigning codes and categories)*

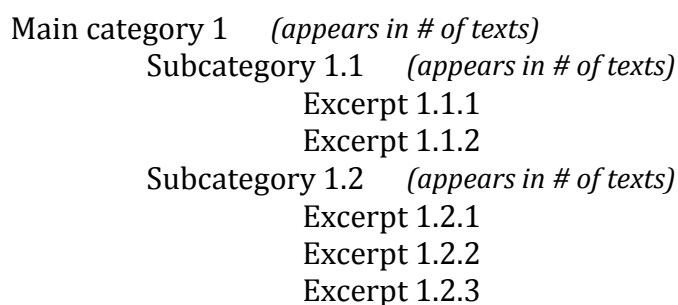
<b>Sample 1 (Excerpt, Teacher 4)</b>	<b>Main category</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>
<b>1.1</b> Even if a teacher is well qualified and confident it doesn't obviously mean that he or she can motivate their students. As I have already mentioned a lot depends on the teaching practice.	None	None
<b>1.2</b> For example, if a teacher talks too much and doesn't let the students share their opinions	• Teaching style	• Teacher talking time

<p><b>1.3</b> or treat the students as inferiors it can cause an ineffective, passive silence in the class and might result in failure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher's personality and experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Misuse of authority</li> <li>• Attitude / relationship with learners</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.4</b> Some of my students also complained about teachers (technical teachers) who didn't set up clear expectations so the students became insecure about the requirements. They mentioned some cases when some teachers didn't teach them anything during the lessons but unexpectedly asked them to complete a test or gave them an assignment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistent assessment</li> </ul>

What is immediately apparent from Table 4.1 is, firstly, that not all segments of the collected texts could be productively used for better understanding L2 learners' and teachers' conceptions of teacher-induced demotivation; thus, segments such as Excerpt 1.1 were excluded from further analysis. Secondly, the length of relevant data segments—which, according to Dörnyei (2007, pp. 260-261), can vary between a long phrase, a line, a sentence, or even a short paragraph—was often uneven depending on the amount of detail in which the participants described a particular aspect of the phenomenon under study. Thus, while Excerpt 1.4 represents a longer chunk of text related to the same subcategory of demotivators, in some other cases (i.e. Excerpts 1.2 & 1.3) one sentence would make reference to more than one category. Thirdly, it must be noted that some of the selected data segments (e.g., Excerpt 1.3) were considered for inclusion in more than one subcategory (some even across main categories), but I did not see such occurrences as hindrances to the quality of the analysis itself.

Subsequent to this type of content analysis on each text, another analytical decision to make was how to represent the categorised segments in structured datasets allowing for easier comparison within and across the two groups of participants. As a simple yet practical solution, the datasets I created consisted of a three-level category structure (Figure 4.1), in which the main categories, the subcategories, and the categorised data segments were stored on different levels of heading for easier handling. As the figure indicates, with each category I also recorded the number of the texts making reference to that particular demotivator, thus integrating a basic analysis of frequencies into a predominantly qualitative study. Having used the same type of data storage for both L2 learners' and teachers' texts, the two datasets provided a tangible framework for the comparative analysis of their conceptions of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation.





**Figure 4.1.** *Illustration of the three-level category structure used for organising and storing the analysed data*

#### **4.2.2.2 Phase 2: Exploring the LTKI construct**

In the second analytical phase of the study, I returned to the previously established datasets to explore how the salient themes and categories would feed into my exploratory work on the emerging LTKI construct. This process of re-examining and refining the earlier conceptual categories was guided by a thorough secondary research into the construct of L2 teachers' knowledge (Chapter 1) and into L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity (Chapter 2).

While the content of the established main- and subcategories remained largely intact during the second analytical phase, a number of changes on the conceptual level were issued. The most substantial of these was, arguably, the dissociation of a fourth main category (the teacher's professional communication) from the original three, and the re-examination of the earlier category structure due to this modification. Apart from the revision of previous codes and categories, in the second analytical phase I also investigated the relationship of the established categories to each other and to the emerging LTKI construct. The results of this conceptual work are described in Section 4.3.5, where I use the full-length reflective text of an in-service L2 teacher to illustrate the interrelationship of the identified conceptual domains within a 'complex dynamic systems' framework (Section 2.2.5). In presenting the results, I keep to the original sequence of the analytical phases: first the established conceptual categories are described, then their interrelationship and relevance to the emerging LTKI construct.

### **4.3 Results and discussion**

#### **4.3.1 Category 1: Teaching methods**

In line with the results of most studies focusing on L2 learning demotivation (see Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), many of the demotivators listed by the participants of this study were

related to the teaching methods of L2 teachers. As the aim of this section is to explore how this category was framed on the basis of learners' and teachers' understandings, what follows is a discussion of the most salient themes and categories related to the perceived teaching methods of demotivating L2 teachers. That being said, one cluster of demotivators identified in this main category was related to L2 teachers' selection of learning tasks and content in the first place, with frequent references to the perceived lack of varied and up-to-date tasks in L2 lessons (see Box 4.1).

<p>Theme 4.1.1 <i>(lack of varied tasks and teaching techniques)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “If he or she always uses the same methods and techniques and he or she is not open to try alternative and innovative ones to teach certain elements of language the lessons can easily become unexciting.” (T9)</li> <li>• “If a teacher sticks to the age-old techniques and uses them at every single lesson, it can turn out to be kind of a routine for both the teacher and the students.” (T22)</li> <li>• “Providing the same kind of tasks and structuring every single class in the same way can be incredibly boring and all it manages to do is that students quickly lose the interest they might have in language learning.” (S14)</li> <li>• “There is nothing wrong with classical materials but it should have been mixed up from time to time.” (S20)</li> </ul>
<p>Theme 4.1.2 <i>(lack of ICT-related tasks)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “[A teacher] who practises only an old methodology (e.g. merely the grammar-translating method and nothing else) and does not use the modern and what is more, the newest technologies.” (T8)</li> <li>• “Her/his lessons are not underpinned by any motivating tricks, visual or ICT support.” (T13)</li> </ul>
<p>Theme 4.1.3 <i>(lack of tasks supplementing the coursebook)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “His classes were boring and dry and were only about what was in the course books.” (T7)</li> <li>• “[The teacher] has been using the same material and the same books for years [and] he/she does not bring any supplementary material for the classes he/she teaches.” (T2)</li> </ul>

**Box 4.1.** *Data illustration of teaching methods (main category) and the lack of varied and up-to-date learning tasks (subcategory)*

As the list of themes in Box 4.1 indicates, due to the qualitative nature of the processed data it was not uncommon in the dataset to find subcategories established from a composite of views about the same underlying concept. Thus, concerning the lack of varied and up-to-date tasks in L2 lessons, some participants referred more generally to the teacher's dependence on routine tasks and lesson structures as a source of learner demotivation (Theme 4.1.1), while some indicated the root of this problem to be the teacher's omission of ICT-related tasks from L2 lessons (Theme 4.1.2; see also Marek & Wu, 2019), or the teacher's dependence on what some experts (e.g., Harmer, 2007; Thornbury, 2005) have called 'coursebook-defined practice' (Theme 4.1.3).

Regarding the same cluster of demotivators, further subcategories related to L2 teachers' selection of learning tasks and content were the excessive focus on grammar exercises and, in contrast, the lack of tasks requiring meaning-focused, authentic interaction, through which practical 'real-world L2 knowledge' can be acquired. A summary of the latter subcategory, in which the expressed ideas were very much in line with the principles of task-based and communicative approaches to L2 instruction (Nunan, 2013, 2015), is provided in Box 4.2.

<p>Theme 4.2.1 <i>(lack of tasks mediating applicable / real-world knowledge)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Students need to be able to connect what they are learning to the real world in order to process the new materials properly. They need to feel like they could really use what they have learned.” (S10)</li> <li>• “We were given a list of words we needed to learn but after the tests, we did not really know how to apply this newly received knowledge.” (S24)</li> <li>• “We barely ever talked. We learned language elements one by one but it did not feel like they were coming together because we did not apply them.” (S20)</li> <li>• “We never did any presentations or group work in class.” (S2)</li> <li>• “There was no communication in class (neither written nor oral).” (T7)</li> <li>• “If the topic of the lesson is not life-like and not interesting for the pupils, it can also lead to demotivation very quickly.” (T1)</li> </ul>
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**Box 4.2.** *Data illustration of teaching methods (main category) and the lack of tasks mediating applicable/real-world knowledge (subcategory)*

In addition to the multitude of aspects represented, again, within the same subcategory of demotivators (Box 4.2), in some cases the participants' criticism of lesson content resulted in the creation of less extensive yet noteworthy subcategories (e.g., low perceived task value, inappropriate learning materials, or the lack of challenging learning activities). More importantly, however, another salient cluster of demotivators (more to learners than to teachers though) was that of subcategories related to how the content of L2 lessons was explained and communicated by L2 teachers. Thus, two further salient categories, which I initially associated with teaching methods and later with the teacher's professional communication, were established from descriptions of L2 teachers' unclear explanations of learning content, and of the short-term goals and long-term aims of classroom activities (see examples of the latter subcategory in Box 4.3).

<p>Theme 4.3.1 <i>(short-term goals)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “An incompetent language teacher is disorganized and does not have good managing skills, his or her lessons lack structure thus the students don't know the goal of certain activities.” (T9)</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading in silence is “definitely demotivating as I would not see any purpose to it.” (S4)</li> <li>• “[The teacher] was obsessed with teaching an unnecessary number of words.” (T7)</li> </ul>
Theme 4.3.2 ( <i>long-term aims</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The most demotivating language teacher (...) fails to make them [students] feel like they can actually achieve something by acquiring the language.” (S14)</li> <li>• “If the students do not feel the essence and benefits of the language they study, (...) they are not likely to put enough effort in the leaning process.” (T6)</li> </ul>

**Box 4.3.** *Data illustration of teaching methods (main category) and unclear short-term and long-term learning aims (subcategory)*

While the problems outlined in Box 4.3 may be easily solved by L2 teachers paying more attention to goal-setting (e.g., Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998) and building learners’ visions of themselves as competent L2 users (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014), a more complex theme to emerge in learners’ accounts was the relation between teaching methods and learners’ sense of autonomy. Interestingly, the excerpts in Box 4.4 suggest that imbalance in perceived learner autonomy is a bidirectional phenomenon: whether it is a sense of too much or too little autonomy that learners had experienced in L2 classes, they regarded such experiences as sources of teacher-induced demotivation. Furthermore, what the results also seem to suggest, especially in light of recent studies demonstrating L2 teachers’ striving for autonomy-inducing teaching practices (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012; Szócs, 2015), is that learners’ sense of autonomy may not stem from the teacher’s methods and instructional practices per se, but from the lack of sufficient communication about learning processes and objectives between L2 teachers and their students (see also Section 4.3.4).

Theme 4.4.1 ( <i>too much learner autonomy</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “There are teachers who forget that students are still in the process of learning, that they need guidance.” (S3)</li> <li>• “The teacher’s statement was that we had to figure out what’s important in high school and university ourselves and we just get prepared for that.” (S1)</li> <li>• “Vigilance and willingness to work is important and if a student does not receive such guidance, then later on...they could become under-achievers.” (S23)</li> </ul>
Theme 4.4.2 ( <i>too little learner autonomy</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “It is important for teachers to allow their students to have arguments over a certain item...and integrate them into our teaching so they would not be passive absorbing brains sitting in the class.” (S21)</li> <li>• “A demotivating teacher...likes to listen to him/her all the time and is not interested in the pupil’s own ideas and opinions.” (S4)</li> </ul>

**Box 4.4.** *Data illustration of teaching methods (main category) and mistreatment of learner autonomy (subcategory)*

Finally, a third salient cluster of demotivators could be synthesized from subcategories focusing on L2 teachers’ demotivating methods and practices of assessment. In accordance with the results of demotivation studies conducted in Asia (e.g., Falout et al., 2009; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009), many learners referred, for instance, to poor exam results and insufficient exam preparation as teacher-induced factors of demotivation, and some also recounted negative experiences with excessive error correction (see quantified results at the end of this section). Additionally, as in the case of learner autonomy (Box 4.4) and learning aims (Box 4.3), both learners and teachers conceptualised ‘inconsistent assessment’ as a demotivator stemming either from the L2 teacher’s methods of assessment (Theme 4.5.1 in Box 4.5) or from inconsistencies in teacher-student communication regarding assessment (Theme 4.5.2 in Box 4.5).

<p>Theme 4.5.1 <i>(demotivating methods of assessment)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher “even tested knowledge in a test we haven’t learned before.” (S2)</li> <li>• “Whenever somebody made a mistake while speaking, she would make a note of it.” (S6)</li> <li>• “Some teachers didn’t teach anything during the lessons but unexpectedly asked them [students] to complete a test or gave them an assignment.” (T4)</li> </ul>
<p>Theme 4.5.2 <i>(inconsistent communication about assessment and/or requirements)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The teacher’s grading system wasn’t transparent. (...) We also didn’t know why we got a certain grade and how to improve our skills.” (S2)</li> <li>• “In case a teacher does not offer enough feedback or does not clarify the requirements, can be demotivating as well.” (T6)</li> <li>• “If the students do not know what the teacher expects from them, they can become confused and frustrated. They can feel that learning the language is plain useless, since there is no way to meet the unset requirements.” (T22)</li> </ul>

**Box 4.5.** *Data illustration of teaching methods (main category) and inconsistent assessment (subcategory)*

To close this section with a different outlook on the findings so far, Table 4.2 provides a summary of all the emerging subcategories related to teaching methods (Category 1), with indications of the number of L2 learners (S; n=24) and in-service L2 teachers (T; n=22) who referred to the given subcategory in their reflective-narrative text. Despite the relatively small size of the examined datasets, the frequency digits displayed below were thought to be relevant in the study of similarities and differences in learners’ and teachers’ understandings of what constitutes demotivating teaching methods in L2 education. It is, for instance, a notable outcome that even though in many cases the displayed frequency digits are lower in the teachers’ column, there are few subcategories where learner awareness of a certain demotivator is unmatched by some teacher awareness for the same

thematic content. Clearly, the conclusions drawn from the frequency digits in Table 4.2 ought not to be far-fetched. However, if all the subcategories emerging from the in-service teachers' reflective-narrative accounts are considered as elements and samples of an underlying knowledge construct, then the data are relevant in the exploration of that construct, as far as the particulars of the examined cohort of teachers make such theorising possible.

**Table 4.2**

*Summary of emerging subcategories related to teaching methods (main category) in learners' (n=24) and teachers' (n=22) reflective-narrative accounts*

Category 1: Teaching methods								
Similarly frequent			More frequent by students			More frequent by teachers		
	S	T		S	T		S	T
• lack of variety or up-to-date tasks/methods	9	13	• unclear learning aims	10	4	• lack of homework	0	1
• lack of expected tasks	10	6	• low perceived task value	6	2	• lack of testing	0	1
• lack of applicable / real-world knowledge	6	5	• excessive grammar instruction	6	3	• excessive testing	0	1
• lack of challenges	4	2	• unclear explanation of material	9	2	• excessive error correction	2	4
• inappropriate materials	3	4	• insufficient exam preparation	3	0	• overuse of the L2 in class	0	1
• inconsistent assessment	6	5	• poor exam results / grades	7	1			
			• mistreatment of learner autonomy	9	0			

#### 4.3.2 Category 2: Teaching style

In contrast with teaching methods being often used as a self-explanatory umbrella term for specific teaching practices (e.g., Larsen-Freeman, 2000), the difficulty in framing teaching style as an overarching category of demotivators was that the boundaries of this term are, to my best knowledge, rather poorly defined in the literature; this holds true even for studies where teaching style is regarded as a factor influencing L2 learning motivation (e.g., Dörnyei, 1994a; Lamb & Wedell, 2013). Whereas classifications of

different teaching styles (plural term) have repeatedly been put forward (see Ehrman & Dörnyei, 1998, pp. 213-215), specific descriptions of the components that make up an L2 teacher’s teaching style are hard to find. One exception to this claim though is Brosh’s (1996) study, in which he states that teaching style refers to the teacher’s personal style of communication, involving their ability to create conducive learning environments, respond to particular group dynamics, adapt their behaviour to meet students’ needs and preferences, arouse their interest, and maintain their attention (p. 127). In another study that was deemed relevant to my analysis, Heitzmann (2009) put forward similar ideas by claiming that teaching style subsumes aspects such as the pace of lessons, the teacher’s attention to classroom discipline, or the teacher’s attention to arousing learners’ interest for the material (p. 212). Additionally, a notion to return to in the upcoming section is Brosh’s (1996) proposition about the inseparability of teaching style from the teacher’s personality, which he explains (in brief) as follows: “Since thought, speech, and manners are a reflection of personality, teaching styles vary with the personality of each teacher” (p. 127).

As for the insights gained from learners’ and teachers’ reflective-narrative texts in this study, it was interesting to see, first of all, how some participants framed teaching style as a personal characteristic and others as a quality that teachers can shape through their actions. Examples of the former understanding were the frequent references to a boring, monotonous style as a personal characteristic of some L2 teachers (also in Gorham & Christophel, 1992; Zhang, 2007) and some references to an old-fashioned style (also in Nikolov, 2001), whereas the latter understanding was visible through learners’ comments about some L2 teachers being inattentive to arousing interest for the content of instruction (see Box 4.6).

<p>Theme 4.6.1 <i>(boring style framed as a personal characteristic)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Everybody knows properly trained, well-educated teachers who are extremely boring.” (S11)</li> <li>• “If the teacher speaks in a monotonous way or speaks too quietly, he or she is unable to maintain the students’ attention.” (T9)</li> <li>• “[A teacher] who does boring and apparently endless lessons and does not [strive] to improve and to change.” (T8)</li> <li>• “Her classes became so boring that it was hardly bearable even for those who loved the language.” (S13)</li> </ul>
<p>Theme 4.6.2 <i>(teaching style framed as action)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Students need to be willing to learn and most importantly they need to want to learn something, and it is the teacher’s responsibility to ensure that his/her methods are interesting and challenging as well.” (S10)</li> <li>• “A teacher needs to be a role-model and show his/her students why the subject he/she is teaching is worth spending time on.” (S7)</li> </ul>

- “[The teacher] doesn’t present the language in its best light (as a wonderful way of communicating with people from all around the world) but merely as a subject.” (S12)

**Box 4.6.** *Data illustration of teaching style (main category) framed as a personal characteristic (‘boring style’ as subcategory) or as a quality shaped through action (‘arousing interest’ as subcategory)*

In addition to the above framing of boring style as a personal characteristic, further salient subcategories for conceptualising demotivating teaching style were established in relation to the L2 teacher’s manner of speech. Although the number of references to these aspects were uneven in the two datasets (see frequency data at the end of the section), learners’ remarks about the inappropriate pace of L2 lessons (Theme 4.7.1 in Box 4.7) and teachers’ remarks about excessive (Theme 4.7.2) or incomprehensible teacher talk (Theme 4.7.3) were indicative of teacher talk as a valid source of teacher-induced demotivation (Falout & Falout, 2005), which may require more awareness and focused study from teachers in a variety of contexts (Denton, 2007).

Theme 4.7.1 <i>(T is inattentive to the pace of lessons)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The speed of their talk is also influential: if it’s too fast, it makes you give up making notes in order to avoid inflammation in your joints; if it’s too slow, you’re sure to end up in your ice cream castle (...) as you continue your dream you’ve started the night before.” (S17)</li> <li>• “He was talking really fast, so we could barely follow his words.” (S18)</li> </ul>
Theme 4.7.2 <i>(T talk is not comprehensible)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “If [the manner of the teacher’s presentation] is monotonous, boring, incoherent, and not logical enough, students may not get the point and become inattentive.” (T1)</li> <li>• “Teachers who speak higher or lower level of language can also demotivate their students [because] they are not able to comprehend the instructions or they could not follow the lesson.” (T16)</li> </ul>
Theme 4.7.3 <i>(T talks too much)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is demotivating if the teacher “speaks too much and does not let students get a word.” (T1)</li> <li>• It is demotivating “if a teacher talks too much and doesn’t let the students share their opinions.” (T4)</li> </ul>

**Box 4.7.** *Data illustration of teaching style (main category) and three subcategories related to teacher talk (‘pace of lessons’, ‘incomprehensible talk’, ‘too much teacher talk’)*

Moving further along the participants’ conceptions of teaching style, both learners and teachers pointed out that classroom discipline and classroom atmosphere in general (as teacher-controlled factors) can also be salient sources of L2 learning demotivation. The latter of these terms, classroom climate or atmosphere, is a contested one in the literature. In a succinct summary by Moore (2004, p. 98), for instance, it is stated that an ideal



classroom atmosphere is one in which standards of behaviour and discipline are set by the teacher, participation in classroom activities is high, fair treatment and emotional support are provided to each individual, clear learning objectives are regularly provided, and the environment is organised in a way that stimulates learning and interest. Similarly, in talking about the teacher’s impact on classroom learning-teaching, Hattie (2012) argues that optimal conditions for classroom learning involve “a climate in which error is welcomed, in which student questioning is high, in which engagement is the norm, and in which students can gain reputations as effective learners” (p. 26). In contrast with these notions, the L2 teacher’s habitual inattention to classroom discipline (Theme 4.8.2) and to the quality of the classroom atmosphere (Theme 4.8.1) emerged as frequently mentioned demotivators in my datasets (see Box 4.8).

<p>Theme 4.8.1 <i>(classroom atmosphere)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I believe that a teacher is also demotivating (...) if he cannot create a peaceful atmosphere, in which students are feeling good instead of feeling anxiety, or boredom.” (S15)</li> <li>• “The atmosphere of the classroom also matters to a great degree. If it is unpleasant (e.g. full of tension because of a rigid teacher), students might just opt for ‘survival’.” (T3)</li> <li>• “Lack of humor, fun and ability to create positive and pleasant atmosphere in the classroom also seems to be a demotivating characteristic.” (T11)</li> </ul>
<p>Theme 4.8.2 <i>(classroom discipline)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “It is also demotivating if the teacher isn’t consistent, doesn’t set the rules.” (S11)</li> <li>• “The lack of classroom management is another demotivating factor. If a teacher cannot control the students in the classroom, some students recognize this weakness and try to control the lesson.” (T11)</li> <li>• “Also, he could not discipline the class, so it literally was a disaster. And he did not care about it.” (S18)</li> </ul>

**Box 4.8.** *Data illustration of teaching style (main category) and two related subcategories (L2 teachers’ ‘lack of attention to classroom atmosphere’ and ‘lack of attention to classroom discipline’)*

Finally, and with regard to some earlier references to classroom motivation as a relational phenomenon (Section 2.3), one more frequently mentioned source of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation was the teacher’s lack of enthusiasm for teaching, either as a short-term condition or as a long-term disposition stemming from teacher demotivation or burnout (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, pp. 158-185). As in the case of classroom atmosphere, the issue of L2 teachers’ enthusiasm is known to be a complex and elusive one, but research has consistently shown its impact on the felt experience and the outcomes of the learning-teaching process (Ehrman & Dörnyei, 1998; Heitzmann, 2009; Nikolov, 2001; Stronge, 2007). A view that is often postulated in these studies is that effective teaching

“requires a love of the content, an ethical, caring stance deriving from the desire to instil in others a liking, or even love, of the discipline being taught, and a demonstration that the teacher is not only teaching, but also learning” (Hattie, 2012, pp. 16-17). In contrast, the results in Box 4.9 draw attention to the varying magnitudes of the same demotivator, or, in other words, the varying levels of L2 teachers’ negative dispositions towards their profession (also in Falout & Falout, 2005).

<p>Theme 4.9.1 <i>(T is not enthusiastic about teaching)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “If I can see on my teacher that coming into class is a chore for her/him, it will become a chore for me too and I will likely associate the target language with the negative feelings that the unpleasant classes awake in me.” (S14)</li> <li>• “A good teacher is curious about the world. A demotivating teacher is not creative and, among all, is not enthusiastic. I like to feel that the teacher truly enjoys what he does and is not a world-weary person.” (S15)</li> </ul>
<p>Theme 4.9.2 <i>(T is not devoted to teaching)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “If the teacher enters the classroom just to do his job and go home, students feel that.” (S3)</li> <li>• “If teachers are not passionate about teaching, they cannot challenge their students because there is no creativity in their teaching.” (T11)</li> <li>• “If s/he is not devoted, learners will observe it in a fragment of a second.” (T13)</li> </ul>
<p>Theme 4.9.3 <i>(T is burnt out or severely demotivated)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The teacher then might feel disillusioned and restricts him or herself to the bare minimum of what it takes to do his or her daily job.” (T3)</li> <li>• “If the teacher is burnt out, or has the symptoms of it, it can be demotivating for the students, because nobody likes being in the company of a miserable, depressed person.” (T12)</li> <li>• “[The] teacher seems so tired and is never in a good mood. She is nice, and knows what she’s talking about but there is no trace of fun.” (T5)</li> </ul>

**Box 4.9.** *Data illustration of teaching style (main category) and teachers’ lack of enthusiasm or being demotivated (subcategory)*

From a relational perspective, the choice of expressions in Theme 4.9.2 is particularly insightful, and draws attention to engagement and motivation as dispositions that are transferable across individuals (Henry & Thorsen, 2019; Kálmán, 2018) and emergent from the interaction that takes place between students and teacher in the process of learning-teaching (Dörnyei, 2019; Mercer, 2018). In contrast with references to the teacher’s lack of enthusiasm as a visible phenomenon (Theme 4.9.1), the conceptions drawn from personal-experiential knowledge and expressed in Theme 4.9.2 (i.e. ‘students feel that’, ‘in a fragment of a second’, ‘they cannot challenge their students’) shed light on a different form of transference and perception existing within classroom interpersonal contact. Putting this together with the rest of the results concerning teaching style, it seems appropriate to conclude that many of the emerging subcategories (e.g., Boxes 4.6,

4.7, 4.8, 4.9) refer to learners' and teachers' sense or perception of teaching style as something extrapolated from the short- and long-term interactional features of one's learning-teaching context. An observation similar to this, and crucial for my conceptual work, can be found in Mercer (2018), who argued that "the interaction of all the relationships in the classroom together generates emergent collective qualities such as group dynamics, rapport, trust and classroom atmosphere – all of which are known to be vitally important for effective teaching and ultimately successful learning" (p. 516). In closing the section, a summary of all the emerging subcategories related to teaching style is provided in Table 4.3, which draws attention, again, to the range of teacher-related demotivators that the participating L2 teachers were collectively aware of, and to the salience of all the subcategories with respect to the larger concept under study.

**Table 4.3**

*Summary of emerging subcategories related to teaching style (main category) in learners' (n=24) and teachers' (n=22) reflective-narrative accounts*

Category 2: Teaching style								
Similarly frequent			More frequent by students			More frequent by teachers		
	S	T		S	T		S	T
• boring / monotonous style	12	12	• inattentive to arousing interest	6	1	• teacher talk is not comprehensible	0	3
• old-fashioned style	3	3	• often straying from the subject	2	0	• teacher talking time ( <i>too much</i> )	0	2
• lack of enthusiasm / teacher demotivation	11	15	• inattentive to pace of lesson	2	0			
• inattentive to classroom atmosphere	2	3	• tardiness of teacher	3	0			
			• inattentive to group norms / classroom discipline	7	3			

#### 4.3.3 Category 3: The teacher's personality and experience

The third and last main category established in the first analytical phase of the study was for themes related to the personality and teaching experience of the demotivating L2 teacher; even though these two notions were separated from each other in a later

analytical phase. As in the case of teaching style, guidelines regarding the boundaries and the conceptual content of this third category were scarce in the reviewed literature. Although numerous studies confirmed that certain teacher personality traits are known to be more conducive to learning (e.g., Decker & Rimm-Kaufman, 2008; Lamb, 2017; Murray, Rushton, & Paunonen, 1990), research has been fairly unclear about what other components should fall into the category of personality when examined from the perspective of interpersonal impact. In a previously cited study, for instance, Brosh (1996) draws on Penner's (1992) work to come up the following lengthy, multi-componential definition of personality:

Personality is defined as the sum total of the individual's unique qualities. These qualities include: 1) physical appearance: dress, hair style, height, weight, age, general health, and neatness; 2) intelligence: natural abilities and acquired knowledge and aptitudes; 3) social capacity: adjustment to situations and interaction with others; 4) cultural qualities: speech and manners; and 5) psychological makeup: emotional stability and ability to cope with life problems, enthusiasm, ability to stimulate, inspire, and arouse positive reactions. (Penner, 1992; cited in Brosh, 1996, pp. 127-128)

Despite this understanding being a broad one, many components of the above definition corresponded, in fact, with the themes emerging from learners' and teachers' reflective-narrative texts and were used in framing both teaching style (e.g., 'speech and manners', 'enthusiasm', 'ability to stimulate, inspire, and arouse positive reactions') and the teacher's personality and experience as overarching categories of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation.

Thus, as a result of working with such a broad definition, in a first salient cluster of demotivators (Box 4.10) I grouped together themes in which the participants described certain personal characteristics of demotivating L2 teachers as if they were stable traits of personality (see Allport, 1927). Admittedly though, while in some cases (Themes 4.10.1, 4.10.2) the descriptions fitted well together with the mainstream psychological definition of personality and with the findings of other studies (Dörnyei, 1998; Gorham & Christophel, 1992; Nikolov, 2001), in other cases the emerging themes illustrated how some perceived teacher characteristics (Themes 4.10.3, 4.10.4) may have been mistaken for personality traits by the participants.

Theme 4.10.1 <i>(general personality traits)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Motivating someone has a lot to do with personality, so only a rude, boring or silly person would definitely make me demotivated." (S12)</li> <li>• "'Loser' teachers usually are not respected as much as their colleagues, they have weak personality, cannot communicate properly with students and they are irresolute." (S17)</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “A teacher who is overall negative (pessimistic, aggressive, incalculable, alienating or ignorant) does not have a good chance to involve students actively in classroom activities.” (T3)</li> <li>• “I don't think there's anything worse than an unfriendly, depressed, negative, hysterical, screaming and impatient teacher.” (T9)</li> </ul>
<p>Theme 4.10.2 <i>(physical appearance)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “First of all, the appearance of a teacher can be a determining factor: when a teacher looks neglected or wears old-fashioned worn clothes or glasses he or she can look funny and unrespectable.” (T4)</li> <li>• “As for her/his appearance, s/he is not well-groomed. I do not intend to detail it, but all her/his appearance is disappointing including her/his hair, clothing and so on.” (T13)</li> </ul>
<p>Theme 4.10.3 <i>(incompetent teacher)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I realized that the way my teacher tries to teach us has no sense, I constantly had a feeling that she has no idea what she wants, and how should she accomplish it.” (S13)</li> <li>• “[Some teachers] are anti-talents in presenting and imparting their knowledge – if they have any, – it can turn out they don't even have a solid knowledge of their own scope of duty.” (S17)</li> <li>• “It is very demotivating when the language teacher lacks professional language knowledge. As a consequence, he or she is probably uncertain, lacks confidence and thus loses face and authenticity. No one would like to learn from a teacher who is not the master of his or her subject.” (T9)</li> <li>• “[Our teacher] was undetermined [and uncertain] as well. She always seemed to me as if she was always afraid of students.” (T15)</li> </ul>
<p>Theme 4.10.4 <i>(inauthentic teacher)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “First of all he was not a real English teacher just someone who had to switch professions.” (T7)</li> <li>• “My French teacher bored my language group because she was a world-weary woman after her divorce. She never smiled or laughed.” (T15)</li> </ul>

**Box 4.10.** *Data illustration of the teacher's personality and experience (main category) and four subcategories representing trait-like teacher characteristics ('specific personality traits', 'physical appearance', 'incompetent teacher', 'inauthentic teacher')*

The rest of the emerging themes assigned to the category of personality and experience all gave insights into experiences and dispositions resulting from some L2 teachers' malpractices in creating and maintaining an appropriate teacher-student relationship. While in some demotivation studies (e.g., Falout & Falout, 2005; Oxford, 1998), and in motivation research increasingly (Henry & Thorsen, 2018; Kálmán, 2018; Lamb, 2017), the joint dynamics of L2 learning motivation and the teacher-student relationship have been treated as a separate category and field of study, my assumption in the first analytical phase of this study was that the demotivators to be presented here were rooted in the perceived trait-like, personality-related characteristics of L2 teachers. As illustration for this claim, two of the salient subcategories (Box 4.11) in the datasets involved themes of L2 teachers 'misusing their authority' (Theme 4.11.1) and 'embarrassing or humiliating students' (Theme 4.11.2) not necessarily as techniques to

make students work in discipline and obedience, but rather as unquestioned features of personality in some cases.

<p>Theme 4.11.1 (<i>misuse of authority</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “An overly self-confident teacher who visualizes himself or herself to be perfect and infallible, tends to think to be superior and [to] be the only one who knows about the language or any other things in life, talks to the students in an inappropriate way, treats them sardonically, [and also] criticizes or humiliates them.” (T8)</li> <li>• “[If the teacher is] very strict, insensitive and inflexible, (...) a student would never be so courageous as to voluntarily venture to talk in English.” (T6)</li> <li>• “The teacher used particularly unfair, (in some cases) cruel methods to punish us (not physically) together as a class or me personally.” (S22)</li> <li>• “He is very intolerant and impatient, he gets angry too easily and quickly. It is horrible if he is angry because he behaves very rude and he abases students. He shouts with us, curses and blusters. Most of us are really afraid of him.” (T19)</li> </ul>
<p>Theme 4.11.2 (<i>embarrassing students</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “A demotivating teacher is one who makes fun of my errors in public. This is a real humiliation and only creates tension between me and the teacher.” (S4)</li> <li>• “In addition, when classmates laughed at persons who made mistakes (...), the teacher didn’t do anything to avoid these degrading situations, [thus] these students lost their interest and motivation very quickly.” (T10)</li> </ul>

**Box 4.11.** *Data illustration of the teacher’s personality and experience (main category) and two subcategories related to ‘the teacher’s misuse of authority’ and ‘the teacher embarrassing or humiliating students’*

In connection with such experiences of intense emotional distress (Box 4.11), both learners and teachers referred, additionally, to the long-term demotivating effects of some L2 teachers’ condescending attitude to students’ efforts (Theme 4.12.1 in Box 4.12) as well as their developmental needs (Theme 4.12.2). Clearly, these descriptions are in sharp contrast with what ethical teaching involves and with the fundamental competence of effective teachers to treat all students (regardless of age, ethnicity, proficiency level, and context) with a caring, supportive attitude (see Stronge, 2007, pp. 24-26; Warren, 2018). In the same vein, many of the descriptions presented here contradict the idea that “in the right caring and idea-rich environment, the learner can...experiment (be right and wrong) with the content and the thinking about the content, and make connections across ideas” (Hattie, 2012, p. 16). In this regard, the results displayed in Box 4.12 serve, again, the function of awareness raising just as much as the exploration of the larger concept under study.

<p>Theme 4.12.1 <i>(students' effort not appreciated)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “When someone did not know the right answer to his question, the teacher thought the person was an idiot. Patience was unknown for him.” (S18)</li> <li>• “Not all student works can be correct, relevant or proper, but at least work was put into it and then the teacher would give praise for their work and results.” (S23)</li> <li>• It is demotivating if “the teacher, irrespective of my improvement, carries on criticising my work.” (S4)</li> <li>• “If a student puts a lot of energy into a homework, but the teacher forgets to check it, then the student will feel disappointed and demotivated later.” (T2)</li> </ul>
<p>Theme 4.12.2 <i>(indifference to student feedback and needs)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “A teacher who is not open to criticism or ideas of his/her students can be really demotivating.” (T22)</li> <li>• “She believed so strongly that she was pronouncing words correctly that she did not even listen to our objections, (...) she did not give us the freedom to question her accuracy.” (S21)</li> <li>• “He or she might ignore some students, does not appreciate students’ opinion on the topics in class or does not deal with problems students may have.” (T3)</li> </ul>

**Box 4.12.** Data illustration of the teacher’s personality and experience (main category) and two subcategories related to the teacher ‘not appreciating students’ effort’ and ‘being indifferent to student feedback and needs’

<p>Theme 4.13.1 <i>(negative attitude / relationship)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “[Some teachers] just simply hate younger generations because of their age.” (S17)</li> <li>• It is demotivating if a teacher “does not care about his/her students but only about himself/herself.” (S12)</li> <li>• “S/he always refuses to help her/his students and no positive feedback is given by her/him. (...) S/he does not inspire confidence. The student-teacher relationship is not suitable. It should be based on mutual acceptance and cooperation.” (T13)</li> <li>• “He or she might categorize students according to stereotypes or show favoritism, for example, disciplined students get better marks than talkative ones.” (T3)</li> <li>• “He started to be rude and he usually yelled at us. (...) The worst thing was that he called us pigs.” (S18)</li> </ul>
<p>Theme 4.13.2 <i>(overly friendly relationship)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “[W]hen the teacher shows much curiosity about every single student (even in terms of their private lives) – it is also very displeasing, as a teacher’s main goal should not be to make friends in class, but to motivate and teach learners.” (S19)</li> <li>• “He was a bit too interested in these side issues and often forgot to focus on the more important things a teacher has to do in school: teaching kids how to talk and write in English for example.” (S5)</li> </ul>

**Box 4.13.** Data illustration of the teacher’s personality and experience (main category) and aspects of the teacher’s inappropriate attitude/relationship with students (subcategory)

Finally, in contrast with the specificity of the demotivators described in Boxes 4.11 and 4.12, some of the participants' comments provided more general insights into the inappropriate practices and attitudes observable within teacher-student interactions (Box 4.13), indicating the sensitivity of both learners and teachers to the numerous micro-aspects that make up and shape the dynamics of classroom interpersonal processes. Most importantly, the themes in Box 4.13 and across this section corroborate the fact that attending to student engagement and the optimal functioning of teacher-student relationships seems to require from teachers a reliance on specialised knowledge of their own impact, and how it comes about in the activity of L2 learning-teaching. In this sense, the emerging themes and subcategories attributed to the L2 teacher's personality and experience (Table 4.4) can also be considered relevant to my exploratory work on the LTKI construct.

**Table 4.4**

*Summary of emerging subcategories related to the teacher's personality and experience (main category) in learners' (n=24) and teachers' (n=22) reflective-narrative accounts*

Category 3: The teacher's personality and experience								
Similarly frequent			More frequent by students			More frequent by teachers		
	S	T		S	T		S	T
• specific personality traits	10	10	• unrealistic teacher expectations	9	3	• indifference to student feedback/needs	3	7
• attitude / relationship w. students	10	8	• embarrassing or humiliating students	4	1	• inauthentic teacher ( <i>trait</i> )	0	7
• misuse of teacher's authority	10	10	• lack of cultural experience	1	0	• physical appearance	0	4
• students' effort not appreciated	6	7				• generation gap bw. students and teacher	0	1
• incompetent teacher ( <i>trait</i> )	9	8						

#### 4.3.4 Category 4: The teacher's professional communication

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, it was in the second analytical phase of the study that a fourth main category was established to subsume demotivators that were found to be related to the L2 teacher's professional communication rather than the previous categories. The rationale of this analytical decision was, on the one hand, the idea that even though the participants rarely attributed teacher-related demotivators to communicational mishaps directly, such communicational and interactional practices



(e.g., Wubbels & Levy, 1993) are known to underlie teachers' and learners' perceptions and construals of classroom experiences and phenomena both in situ and over time (Henry & Thorsen, 2019; Mercer, 2018). On the other hand, in motivation and demotivation research it is also not uncommon to acknowledge the impact that L2 teachers' communicational practices have on learner motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011); for a recent and thorough illustration it is worth noting Kálmán's (2015, p. 10) emphasis on various aspects of professional communication in framing teacher-induced L2 learning motivation.

Thus, in view of these insights drawn from secondary research, the recursive analysis of the data in this phase resulted in the framing of the teacher's professional communication as an additional category that is arguably relevant in understanding both teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation and LTKI as an underlying construct. For illustration on the relevance of this category, Box 4.14 shows data excerpts related to the L2 teacher's unclear or inappropriate feedback as a demotivator, which, for instance, did not fit into the three main categories established earlier. More specifically, the comments in Box 4.14 throw light on demotivators—including a lack of constructive feedback (S22), an excess of corrective feedback (S4), a perception of unrealistic positive feedback (T5), and a lack of conducive non-verbal feedback (T21)—which are different from the ones discussed earlier in that they seem to stem from communicative malpractices rather than from teachers' inability to provide clear and appropriate feedback (cf. Lee, Leong, & Song, 2016).

<p>Theme 4.14.1 <i>(T's unclear or inappropriate feedback)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Language classes I liked involved positive interacting, not one-sided monologues like ‘you are doing this the wrong way, do it like this’, and when I say ‘but why’ the answer should never be ‘because you’re wrong and it simply is like this’.” (S22)</li> <li>• “It was really demotivating to receive a correction and feedback that was longer than the entire text. As a result, I did not have the impression that I learned a lot because it was frustrating to see all the negative comments and improvements but never to get a positive feedback too.” (S4)</li> <li>• “[If the] teacher keeps telling me that [students are] so good at English, and [they] don’t feel it.” (T5)</li> <li>• “If the teacher does not encourage [a student], and simply has a ‘poker face’ when the kid, for instance, talks, he/she will feel more unsure than he/she felt before.” (T21)</li> </ul>
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**Box 4.14.** *Data illustration of the teacher's professional communication (main category) and unclear or inappropriate feedback (subcategory)*

In the case of other subcategories (many discussed in the previous sections), the participants' focus on the teacher's professional communication as an underlying factor was often less explicit, but arguably relevant in interpreting the thematic content involved. Thus, wherever the thematic content of new and/or earlier subcategories allowed for a given demotivator to be identified as a corollary of mishaps in the L2 teacher's professional communication, the subcategory was ascribed to the fourth emerging main category of the study (i.e. the teacher's professional communication). This way, the subcategories that were tentatively ascribed to the domain of professional communication (Table 4.5) outlined a clearer focus on macro-aspects such as overall communicative style (Wubbels & Levy, 1993) and numerous micro-aspects of professional communication (Walsh, 2011), including the comprehensible communication of learning objectives, content, and classroom norms (Denton, 2007; Ehrman & Dörnyei, 1998), the respectful, caring, and constructive communication of feedback (Moore, 2004; Stronge, 2007), and the maintenance of two-way negotiated interaction between teacher and students (e.g., Nunan, 2013, 2015).

**Table 4.5**

*Tentative summary of emerging subcategories related to the teacher's professional communication (main category) in learners' (n=24) and teachers' (n=22) reflective-narrative accounts*

Category 4: The teacher's professional communication								
Similarly frequent			More frequent by students			More frequent by teachers		
	S	T		S	T		S	T
• students' effort not appreciated	6	7	• lack of expected tasks	10	6	• indifference to student feedback/needs	3	7
• inconsistent assessment	6	5	• unclear learning aims	10	4	• teacher talk is not comprehensible	0	3
• unclear / inappropriate feedback	5	4	• unclear explanation of material	9	2	• teacher talking time ( <i>too much</i> )	0	2
• inattentive to classroom atmosphere	2	3	• mistreatment of learner autonomy	9	0			
			• inattentive to group norms / classroom discipline	7	3			

#### 4.3.5 Framing the four main conceptual domains as components of a complex dynamic system

The last major finding to report after the second analytical phase concerns the relationship of the established categories to one another and to the emerging LTKI construct. Although in this regard my conceptual work is somewhat speculative, my aim in this section is to demonstrate, through the reflective-narrative account of an in-service L2 teacher, how the processed data led me to frame the four main conceptual domains of the study as parts of a complex dynamic system. In doing so I am relying on previous conceptual work applying complex dynamic systems theory (CDST) to the study of L2 teacher cognition (Feryok, 2010), teacher-learner interaction (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 103), as well as EFL teacher motivation (Sampson, 2016). For instance, apart from the basic notions laid out in Section 2.2.5, a handy definition to work with here is Mitchell's (2009, p. 13) description of a complex dynamic system as one in which "large networks of components with no central control and simple rules of operation give rise to complex collective behaviour, sophisticated information processing, and adaptation via learning or evolution" (as cited in Sampson, 2016, p. 295). In what follows, the illustrative data provided in Table 4.6 is interpreted with the help of this definition.

**Table 4.6**

*Illustration of emerging categories in an in-service L2 teacher's full-length reflective text*

<b>Sample 2 (Full text, Teacher 10: female, aged 44, taught English and German to teenagers and adults for 14 years)</b>	<b>Main category</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>
<b>2.1</b> I remember one of my former German teachers we did not like and some of us even hated her and her subject German as well.	None	None
<b>2.2</b> She always taught German in the same way, after reading dialogues or texts we had to write the unknown words into the vocabulary book and learn them at home.	• Teaching methods	• Lack of variety or up-to-date tasks/methods
<b>2.3</b> We had to learn lots of words and expressions for the next day's lessons and 2 or 3 students were always chosen to do a vocabulary test every lesson.	• Teaching methods	• Excessive testing
<b>2.4</b> The teacher's expectations were too high and her lessons were very frustrating and stressful.	• Teacher's personality and experience	• Unrealistic teacher expectations
<b>2.5</b> Lessons were so monotonous, we never had any games and even the topics and lessons weren't interesting enough so we lost our motivation quickly.	• Teaching methods	• Lack of expected tasks
<b>2.6</b> Learning should be fun for students in order to become and stay motivated. If students don't have any fun in class, they won't enjoy the class very much.	• Teaching style	• T is inattentive to arousing interest

<b>2.7</b> We did lots of form-focused tasks and drills. If the types of tasks are always the same and tasks are boring, students will feel bored. Some inspiring, fun and exciting tasks would have aroused our interests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excessive grammar instruction</li> </ul>
<b>2.8</b> After the teacher's frequent error correction students didn't want to say anything because they didn't want to make more mistakes. Students felt bad about that and also frustrated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excessive error correction</li> </ul>
<b>2.9</b> In addition, when classmates laughed at persons who made mistakes and the teacher didn't do anything to avoid these degrading situations, these students lost their interest and motivation very quickly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher's personality and experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embarrassing or humiliating students</li> </ul>
<b>2.10</b> It's also important that the topic must be relevant to students' age. Too difficult tasks can also discourage them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher's personality and experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unrealistic teacher expectations</li> </ul>
<b>2.11</b> If the requirements are too high or the content is too much, students can't manage to follow the topic and as a consequence they become unmotivated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher's professional communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indifference to student feedback/needs</li> </ul>
<b>2.12</b> It could be a problem if the teacher doesn't recognise outstanding performance as a result students with outstanding achievements lose their interests and become unmotivated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher's personality and experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students' effort not appreciated</li> </ul>
<b>2.13</b> On the other hand, not getting enough support from the teacher can produce antipathy in students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher's professional communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indifference to student feedback/needs</li> </ul>
<b>2.14</b> To sum up, the teacher's inappropriate teaching techniques, her behaviour, boring tasks, amount of homework, boring and monotonous lessons, error correction and evaluating students badly can cause that students who used to love the subject become unmotivated.	Multiple	Multiple

To start with, if Mitchell's (2009) definition of a complex dynamic system is mapped onto the results of this study, it can be seen that L2 teachers' sense-making about their impact on students' motivation, engagement in, and attitudes towards L2 learning involves a reliance on various conceptual domains, which are likely to represent knowledge that has been developed through formal study and in personal-experiential ways (Woods & Çakır, 2011). Arguably, the reflective-narrative text in Table 4.6 (along with the samples in Appendix E) can be seen as a representation of such conceptual domains being drawn upon in the act of preparing the reflective-narrative account itself. In other words, and in line with what researchers of reflective teaching generally assume (e.g., Farrell, 2013; Kumaravadivelu, 2012; Yuan & Lee, 2014), the reflective-narrative text above is thought to provide an insight into the knowledge that T10 relied on while engaged in a reflective-

narrative act, and, in turn, into the conceptual domains (i.e. the main categories) that seem to form part of that knowledge.

What is particularly important to note here is that in the reflective-narrative account of T10 and of other teachers (see Appendix E) references to the four larger conceptual domains were made regularly, but not in fully predictable ways. This finding, in turn, seems to suggest that in observing the underlying knowledge that the L2 teachers must have relied on while engaged in the reflective activity, it is indispensable to focus on the various conceptual domains as the components from which the examined body of knowledge is made up of. In this regard, CDST is relevant in framing the observed body of knowledge in that it purports that the components of a complex dynamic system should be studied “as wholes rather than in parts,” since in interaction they may “support, compete, or have little to no effect (van Geert, 1993) or a conditional effect (van Geert, 2008) on each other, with these interactions leading to changing states” (Feryok, 2010, p. 273). Thus, based on what has been claimed so far, a crucial supposition to put forward here is that if LTKI is to be studied and understood as a specific area of L2 teachers’ knowledge, it ought to be studied with a simultaneous focus on the various conceptual domains that seem to interact in complex ways to make that area of knowledge a coherent and operational one (Woods & Çakır, 2011).

Arguably then, the contribution that this study can make to the exploration of LTKI as a specific area of L2 teachers’ knowledge is to identify four conceptual domains which, in interaction, form part of the knowledge construct being studied, and to offer descriptions of those conceptual domains based on the content of in-service L2 teachers’ reflective-narrative accounts. Again, a reference to CDST must be made in this regard, because in the framing of a complex dynamic system it is a fundamental step to identify and define, as far as the accumulated data make it possible, the components that the system is made up of (Mercer, 2018; Sampson, 2016). In this study, it is the emerging themes and subcategories that (to a certain extent) define teaching methods, teaching style, the teacher’s personality, and the teacher’s professional communication as conceptual domains that seem to form part of LTKI as an underlying knowledge construct, observable through the reflective-narrative accounts of in-service L2 teachers. While the defining of these conceptual domains may be further extended through empirical study or secondary research into teacher-induced motivation (e.g., Kálmán, 2015, 2016, 2018; Prodromou, 1992) or demotivation (Section 4.2.2.1), a tentative representation of the identified conceptual domains as parts of the LTKI construct may be put forward at this stage of my exploratory work (see Figure 4.2).



**Figure 4.2.** *Graphic illustration of the four main conceptual domains of Chapter 4 forming part of the complex dynamic system that LTKI entails*

With the previous strings pulled together, the graphic illustration in Figure 4.2 represents LTKI as a body of knowledge that comes about as L2 teachers develop understandings of their own interpersonal impact in light of the four salient domains identified thus far. Regarding the components that are currently represented as parts of the construct, it must be pointed out that, for instance, teaching style in this framing does not only refer to an L2 teacher knowing what teaching style consists of but also to knowing how his/her own teaching style impacts on students and on the learning-teaching interaction that comes about in the joint activity of L2 learning-teaching (Freeman & Johnson, 2005). It is the focus on the latter aspect that is believed to allow for the framing of LTKI as a specialised area of L2 teachers' knowledge, and of the reflective-narrative activity in which the teacher participants of this study were engaged as a means to gain insights into LTKI as an underlying construct.

Regarding the other components represented in Figure 4.2, a note must be taken of the conceptual outcomes of the study's second analytical phase, whereby 'the teacher's professional communication' was tentatively identified as a fourth relevant conceptual domain, and the notion of 'experience' was separated, concurrently, from the concept of 'teachers' personality'. Although the relevance of these conceptual changes must clearly be tested through further empirical research, based on secondary research and the thematic content of some identified subcategories (Section 4.3.4) it seemed appropriate to initiate a framing in which 'experience' is associated with the concept of professional communication (i.e. L2 teachers' experience at professional communication) rather than with the concept of personality.

Finally, regarding the use of a CDST framework in conceptualising the LTKI construct, it must be noted that the current results did not provide sufficient insight into the way in which LTKI is related to L2 teachers' classroom actions and practices, and the way in which the prominence of the identified conceptual domains may change over time within the system. These aspects, however, are thought to be crucial if L2 teacher cognition is to be studied in a CDST framework, because neither the connection between L2 teachers' actions and cognitions nor the temporal dimension should be disregarded when seeking a proper understanding of the system's operation (Feryok, 2010). Conversely, while the reflective-narrative accounts analysed in this study provided some insight into the four salient conceptual domains being intertwined in complex ways in the activity of teachers' sense-making about their (de)motivational impact, the conceptual outcomes of the study also raised further relevant questions to be examined through continued research.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

Since in Chapter 4 I argued for the possibility of exploring two major teaching-related concepts based on the written products of a specially framed reflective activity for L2 teachers (Section 4.1), I now ought to reflect on the outcomes of the study from the perspective of both concepts. Regarding the concept of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation, I contend the idea that my investigation has filled an obvious gap in TEFL/TESOL research by involving a comparison of participant views rather than a focus on L2 learners' views only. Since one of my aims has been to explore similarities and differences in L2 learners' and teachers' conceptualisations of a multi-faceted phenomenon, the frequent juxtaposition of excerpts from learners' and teachers' reflective-narrative texts (Sections 4.3.1-4.3.4) was meant to underline the fact that there appeared to be more similarities than differences (but see Tables 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5) between learners' and teachers' views. As for the differences that were nevertheless revealed, I think these outcomes should be seen as opportunities for L2 learners' and teachers' views to complement each other for the negotiated understanding of a controversial phenomenon, thereby highlighting the importance of awareness-raising for each other's opinions and dispositions and of creating the space and the means for open communication between teachers and students even about the problematic aspects that may come about in the process of L2 learning-teaching (see also Farkas, 2016a).

Regarding, in turn, the concept of LTKI, the main argument of the chapter has been that the specialised framing of Hungarian in-service L2 teachers' reflective activity allowed for LTKI as a fundamental underlying construct to be explored through the reflective-narrative accounts resulting from that activity. Based on the insights drawn from these reflective-narrative accounts, the study contended that LTKI as a specific body of

knowledge is thought to come about as a number of conceptual domains interact in L2 teachers' sense-making about their own impact on students' motivation, engagement in, and attitudes towards L2 learning, as well as on the learning-teaching interaction that comes about in the joint activity of L2 learning-teaching (Freeman & Johnson, 2005). Whereas the aim of the study was to work towards a definition of these conceptual domains (as parts of the LTKI construct) through the thematic content of L2 teachers' reflective-narrative accounts, and to frame the relationship of the domains through a CDST perspective, the outline of the emerging construct in Figure 4.2 was clearly a tentative one, hoping to set the ground for further research nevertheless.



## **Chapter 5 – Exploring LTKI through the reflective-narrative accounts of Hungarian and Turkish pre-service EFL teachers: A qualitative study embedded in a framework of reflective teaching**

### **5.1 Introduction**

In contrast with the conceptual foundations laid down in Chapter 4, the study presented in Chapter 5 introduces a different approach altogether within my exploratory work on the LTKI construct. Regarding its focus and methodology, the study grew out, in fact, from my professional coursework with a group of Hungarian pre-service EFL teachers, for which I designed a reflective activity exploring the teaching-related beliefs, dispositions, and experiences of the course members in a structured yet thought-provoking form. The instrument that I designed for this activity (and called a ‘reflective template’) was shortly after adopted for piloting with a Turkish group of pre-service EFL teachers (Dombaycı, 2016) and turned out to produce data that are highly relevant to the study of L2 teachers’ cognitions in various contexts and also in large groups (Farkas, 2016b, 2019). Since then the instrument was used for data collection in a third group of participants (Hungarian pre-service EFL teachers again), and some of the collective results were deemed relevant to the investigation of the LTKI construct as well.

To provide an explanation on the value of the gathered reflective-narrative products in theorising and in the pre-service L2 teachers’ professional development, I must refer to the rootedness of my investigation in the theories and suggested practices of reflective teaching, prompting L2 teacher education programs around the world to acknowledge the fundamental importance of reflective activity in teachers’ conceptual and professional growth (Section 1.2.3), and the role of teacher educators to engage L2 teachers in reflective activities which are appropriate, both in content and form, to their current level of professional development (Farkas, 2019). Having considered that the respondents to my reflective template would be pre-service EFL teachers going through an early stage of teacher education (i.e. attending introductory courses prior to the teaching practicum), I intended to design a thought-provoking classroom task, feasible and relevant for pre-service L2 teachers (in various contexts) as a group activity, and also ensuring that a range of their beliefs, dispositions, and experiences are expressed in a focused and structured way (see Appendix C or Figure 3.3 below). Based on these considerations and the data collection instruments of some related studies (Barkhuizen & Wette, 2008; Levin & He, 2008), the reflective template was formed as a set of ten separate sentence-starters that elicit written belief-statements in a randomised sequence, including a focus on both reflective (e.g., Statements 6, 7, 8) and narrative (e.g., Statements 5 & 9) content, as well as a freedom of choice between options in some of the statements (i.e. Statements 7 & 8).

Regarding the content of the reflective activity, a central aim was to direct pre-service EFL teachers' attention to how their past experiences as L2 learners (e.g., Statements 5 & 9; based on Borg, 2003; Korthagen, 2011) and their visions of their future professional selves (e.g., Statements 2, 3, 7; based on Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014; Kelchtermans, 2009) interact with their current beliefs about L2 teaching (e.g., Statements 4, 8, 10), and how their personal practical knowledge (Golombek, 2009) interacts with the theory- and policy-based competence standards mediated through teacher education courses. Additionally, since discussing the results of the reflective activity was part of my coursework with the Hungarian participants (cf. Johnson, 2015), it was also my aim to reveal how institutional and wider social discourses about the roles and responsibilities of L2 teachers may have impacted their beliefs (cf. Clarke, 2008; Dudás, 2006; Moore, 2004; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2015a) regarding what effective teaching consists of (e.g., Statements 1, 2, 3, 8, 10), how L2 teaching might be positioned in relation to the teaching of other subjects (e.g., Statement 7), and what types of knowledge and abilities are required in the L2 teaching profession (e.g., Statement 6). Even though the responses to all ten statements (Figure 3.3) turned out to be highly insightful in the three groups of participants, the discussion of results in the current study will only focus on those segments that have demonstrable relevance to my exploratory work on the LTKI construct.

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If I think of a good language teacher, the first thing that comes to my mind is...</li> <li>2. If I was working as a teacher, the most important thing I would teach my students is...</li> <li>3. One thing I would never do as a teacher is...</li> <li>4. If there's one thing that annoys a teacher, it is...</li> <li>5. If I could give a piece of advice to my old language teacher, it would be to...</li> <li>6. Besides the subject knowledge, a language teacher needs to know...</li> <li>7. The job of a language teacher is <i>harder</i> / <i>easier</i>, because...</li> <li>8. A teacher's personality is <i>also important</i> / <i>not so important</i>, because...</li> <li>9. I once had a language teacher who...</li> <li>10. The ideal teacher is...</li> </ol> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Figure 3.3. (repeated)** Reflective template designed for pre-service L2 teachers in Study 2

As in the case of the study presented in Chapter 4, the investigation for this study consisted of two consecutive phases. In the first phase, my aim was to get a general

overview of pre-service EFL teachers' teaching-related beliefs, dispositions, and experiences based on the responses given to all ten sentence-starters in the reflective template. The research questions I sought to answer were: What are the teaching-related beliefs and dispositions that characterise pre-service EFL teachers in an early phase of teacher education? To what extent are the expressed beliefs and dispositions similar or different in the three participating groups? In light of the insights gained and my subsequent focus on the emerging LTKI construct, in the second phase of the analytical process my aim was to examine in more detail those recurring themes that seemed to refer to underlying conceptual domains related to the construct under study. The analysis in this phase was guided by the research question: In what ways are the salient conceptual domains identified in the study related to the emerging LTKI construct? While the chapter focuses primarily on the results that were deemed relevant in the second analytical phase, in Section 5.2.2 the procedures of both analytical phases are described in more detail.

## **5.2 The study**

### **5.2.1 Participants and data collection**

As mentioned earlier, the participants of the study were Hungarian (n=12+18) and Turkish (n=17) pre-service EFL teachers, who filled in the reflective template (Appendix C; Figure 3.3) as part of their professional coursework at their home universities (two different contexts), and agreed to their responses to be used anonymously as research data. More specifically, data from the participants were collected in three consecutive stages: first from a group of 12 Hungarian pre-service EFL teachers in 2015; second from a group of 17 Turkish pre-service EFL teachers in 2016, in collaboration with Dombaycı (2016), who analysed the same dataset on a separate project; and finally from another group of 18 Hungarian pre-service EFL teachers in 2018. The age of the participants ranged from 20 to 24 years, and each group consisted of both male and female participants (though gender distribution was not specifically observed and quantified). The data from each group were collected in English and in paper-and-pencil format, and subsequently entered into electronic datasets (Section 5.2.2.1).

At the time of data collection, each group was going through the introductory phase of teacher education prior to the teaching practicum, which, under current policy, is introduced in the fourth year of studies in Hungary (Kontra, 2016), and in the third year of studies in Turkey (Toköz Göktepe, 2015). Thus, when formulating their belief-statements for the study, the participants were drawing on their knowledge and dispositions derived from their experiences as L2 learners and from their professional coursework, rather than from first-hand experience of teaching L2 classes. For further

information on the educational contexts and teacher educational models of the countries involved, see Section 1.3 concerning EFL teaching and teacher education in Hungary, and Toköz Göktepe (2015) concerning EFL teaching and teacher education in Turkey.

## **5.2.2 Data analysis**

### **5.2.2.1 Phase 1: Characteristic beliefs and dispositions in the overall dataset**

As suggested already in Section 5.1, a major benefit of using the reflective template for data collection was that the instrument itself provided a straightforward structure for the coding and categorisation of the participants' belief-statements. Thus, as a first step in the analytical process, the data from each group were entered into a separate electronic data file, in which the belief-statements were gathered under the ten sentence-starters presented in Figure 3.3. Then, in a process of qualitative content analysis similar to Barkhuizen and Wette's (2008), the belief-statements were further categorised along the themes and patterns emerging from the data itself. Subsequent to this, comparisons within and across the groups and interpretations of the results were made, thus revealing salient themes that are also discussed in this study. Whereas in Farkas (2019) I highlighted different ways in which the data might be analysed and interpreted (i.e. analysing a group profile, an individual participant's profile, or comparing two or more groups), in the current study only the latter type of results are included to provide an integrated view of the three datasets, and to better illustrate themes that were similar across groups and also the ones that were not.

In the sections to come, salient themes are presented by way of indicating the number of participants who referred to the given theme in each group specifically, and by including illustrative quotes from the three groups in parallel. To identify the authors of the quotes, each participant was given a personal identification number: HA11, for instance, refers to a participant from the first Hungarian group (n=12), HB11 refers to a participant from the second Hungarian group (n=18), and TA11 refers to a participant from the Turkish group (n=17) respectively.

### **5.2.2.2 Phase 2: Conceptual domains related to the LTKI construct**

In view of the emerging LTKI concept and the outcomes of Chapter 4, the second analytical phase of this study consisted of the re-examination of the overall datasets for themes that seemed to represent key conceptual domains related to the construct in focus. Due to the filtering and reduction of the data in this phase, the discussion of results in the current study is narrowed down to participants' responses to Statement 5 (*If I could give a piece*

of advice to my old language teacher, it would be to...), Statement 6 (*Besides the subject knowledge, a language teacher needs to know...*), and, finally, Statement 2 (*If I was working as a teacher, the most important thing I would teach my students is...*) from the reflective template. Based on the thematic content of these statements and the categories that were established from the data, my aim is to identify four underlying conceptual domains which I found integrable to the tentative framing of LTKI outlined in Chapter 4.

## 5.3 Results and discussion

### 5.3.1 Belief-statements related to what pre-service EFL teachers have learnt from past L2 learning experience

Supposing that the three focal areas selected for this study (Section 5.2.2.2) represent different underlying reflective processes, the belief-statements formulated in response to Statement 5 presuppose an essential ability in pre-service EFL teachers to use their current knowledge of L2 learning-teaching for reflecting critically on teaching behaviours and practices which they observed as part of their own L2 learning experience in the past (cf. Borg, 2003; Dudás, 2006; Korthagen, 2011). As evidence of the use of this ability for reflection, Table 5.1 offers a structured overview of the participants' responses to Statement 5, revealing the prominence of certain themes (based on the frequency counts provided alongside) across the three groups of participants.

**Table 5.1**

*Emerging themes and categories across the three groups in response to Statement 5 in the reflective template*

<b>Statement #5: If I could give a piece of advice to my old language teacher, it would be to...</b>		
Category A: Awareness of student needs	Theme 5.1.1 <i>(developmental needs)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pay more attention to those who can't learn languages that fast. (HB18)</li> <li>• be more patient with the ones who struggle with the language or are just not as talkative. (HA10)</li> </ul>
	HA(n=3)	
	HB(n=2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be more tolerant, give more help, and more time to study. (HA8)</li> </ul>
	Theme 5.1.2 <i>(relational needs)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• know about us better. (TA11)</li> <li>• be aware of the needs and motivation of your students. (TA13)</li> <li>• be more open-minded. Adolescents have a great set of new emotions, so they cannot be chilled all the time. (HA3)</li> </ul>
	TA(n=2)	
	HA(n=1)	
	HB(n=3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus on students, not on his problems. (HB2)</li> </ul>

Category B: Teaching methods	Theme 5.1.3 <i>(focusing on communication)</i> TA(n=3) HA(n=2) HB(n=4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practice communication in class a lot, and to put words in a meaningful context. (HA6)</li> <li>• change nothing but the amount of students' talking time. It should have been more. (TA16)</li> <li>• perhaps use a more communication-based approach. (HB12)</li> <li>• bring more tasks that require pair-work and more talking. (HB17)</li> </ul>
	Theme 5.1.4 <i>(improving various L2 skills)</i> TA(n=1) HA(n=2) HB(n=3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop all skills continuously: not only grammar and reading, but also speaking, listening, vocabulary, and culture. (HA4)</li> <li>• there are others in language, do not stick with grammar. (TA9)</li> <li>• do more listening and speaking tasks. (HB5)</li> </ul>
	Theme 5.1.5 <i>(using varied content)</i> TA(n=2) HA(n=3) HB(n=2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use different but new methods to teach language. (TA15)</li> <li>• use other materials as well, not only the textbook, which is boring and doesn't support language development. (HA7)</li> <li>• be more organized and creative regarding tasks. (HA9)</li> <li>• step outside the box. (HB15)</li> </ul>
	Theme 5.1.6 <i>(using L2 in class)</i> TA(n=3) HA(n=1) HB(n=2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• teach me language and not just about the language, and to use the L2 in class instead of the L1 only. (HA12)</li> <li>• please use English in the classroom. (TA14)</li> <li>• try and teach us! We came to English class to learn, not to talk about philosophical issues in our native language. (HB8)</li> </ul>
Category C: T self-awareness	Theme 5.1.7 <i>(awareness of professional wellbeing)</i> HA(n=1) HB(n=1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relax, breathe, but don't take the constant abuse that she got from students. (HA2)</li> <li>• try to make classes more interesting for her students and for herself too. (HB11)</li> </ul>

Considering that L2 teachers' responsibility in building a caring and supportive relationship with learners is a recurring theme in the dissertation and in recent TEFL/TESOL research (e.g., Henry & Thorsen, 2018; Gkonou & Mercer, 2017, 2018), it is hardly surprising that the first identified category of salient themes (Category A) in Table 5.1 demonstrated the participants' awareness for these activities as central components of effective teaching. While the framing of the reflective statements suggests that some participants in all three groups had negative learning experiences due to their L2 teachers' lack of awareness for students' developmental or personal-relational needs, the statements themselves indicate that these pre-service EFL teachers would probably pay more attention to assessing learner needs and individual differences in L2 instruction, and to expressing—through sustained teacher-student communication—an awareness for “the learner's educative well-being in the learning process” (La Ganza, 2008, p. 66).

The second and most extensive category of related themes, clearly in line with earlier findings about L2 learners' and in-service teachers' attributions of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation (Section 4.3.1), subsumed comments about L2 teachers' methods as a factor influencing the felt experience and the outcomes of the learning-teaching process (Category B). From a teacher educational perspective, it is, again, an auspicious finding that both Turkish and Hungarian pre-service EFL teachers demonstrated an awareness for concepts such as the simultaneous development of various language skills (Theme 5.1.4), the role of contextualisation and communicative tasks in L2 acquisition (Theme 5.1.3), the need for extensive L2 input in instruction that takes place in an EFL context (Theme 5.1.6), as well as the benefits of an eclectic approach to teaching methods and learning tasks (Theme 5.1.5) (cf. Bell, 2007; Harmer, 2007; Nunan, 2013, 2015). From the perspective of classroom reality, however, the recurrence of these themes in the three groups of participants can be seen as a clear indication of the L2 educational malpractices existing in the countries involved (also confirmed by larger scale studies in Hungary such as Dombi et al., 2009; Nikolov, 2002; Szabó & Nikolov, 2019), and as a call for continued teacher supervision and preparation for effective L2 teaching (e.g., Borg & Edmett, 2018).

Finally, despite being mentioned by two participants only, another salient theme (Category C) identified through the responses to Statement 5 was a visible concern about teachers' professional wellbeing as a factor influencing the effectiveness of L2 learning-teaching (Mercer, 2018, p. 508). Although the comments in Theme 5.1.7 may appear curious at first sight, their relevance to my research focus is thoroughly confirmed by qualitative studies drawing attention to the emotional vulnerability of L2 teachers (Kelchtermans, 2009) as an increasing concern for teacher education programs (Martínez Agudo, 2018), and to emotional management (or emotional labour) as a reflective activity that L2 teachers (ideally) learn to practice through experience (Calderhead & Shorrocks, 1997; Golombek & Johnson, 2004; Zembylas, 2005) and are forced to accept as an inherent part of the teaching profession (King, 2016). Additionally, if taken together with the frequent references in Study 1 to L2 teachers' lack of enthusiasm or disillusionment as a demotivator for students, the results (i.e. Theme 5.1.7) also imply that teachers' professional wellbeing has a demonstrable impact on how students experience the learning-teaching process (Mercer, 2018, p. 516), and that maintaining L2 teachers' professional wellbeing is of crucial importance.

### **5.3.2 Belief-statements related to pre-service EFL teachers' conceptions of L2 teacher knowledge**

Building to a greater extent on the instructional content of teacher education programs about the requisite competences of L2 teachers (see Chapter 1), the second focal question

included in this study (i.e. Statement 6) required pre-service EFL teachers to reflect on and express their understandings of the components that make up an L2 teacher’s knowledge. As a teacher educator, I was interested to see the range of knowledge components considered as important by pre-service EFL teachers, and whether those enlisted components correspond to the policy-based competence standards currently relevant on a European scale (Section 1.3). To provide a structured overview, again, of the participants’ responses, in Table 5.2 I summarised the salient themes and categories emerging from the three datasets.

**Table 5.2**  
*Emerging themes and categories across the three groups in response to Statement 6 in the reflective template*

<b>Statement #6: Besides the subject knowledge, a language teacher needs to know...</b>	
Category D: Knowledge of students	<p>Theme 5.2.1  <i>(students in general)</i>            TA(n=4)            HA(n=2)            HB(n=2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to deal with students of different ages, what their needs, interests are, what is entertaining and beneficial for them at the same time. (HA12)</li> <li>• how to deal with students (i.e. pedagogy). (HB5)</li> <li>• psychology, sociology, philosophy, pedagogy. (TA17)</li> </ul>
	<p>Theme 5.2.2  <i>(students as individuals)</i>            TA(n=4)            HA(n=1)            HB(n=3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• his or her students. (HA11)</li> <li>• about students’ psychological situations, and their interests, learning styles so on. (TA14)</li> <li>• how that other culture works, what is relevant for their students, and how to integrate the language into them (youtube, pop stars, etc.). (HB4)</li> <li>• the individual skill-levels of the students, and how to motivate them. (HB12)</li> </ul>
Category E: Pedagogical content knowledge	<p>Theme 5.2.3  <i>(making content comprehensible to others)</i>            TA(n=1)            HA(n=1)            HB(n=2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to pass on knowledge and how to get students interested in the material. (HA9)</li> <li>• how to teach the subject. (TA16)</li> <li>• find tricks with which students can overcome difficulties, make them learn and develop without even noticing it. (HB17)</li> </ul>
	<p>Theme 5.2.4  <i>(motivating others)</i>            HB(n=3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to motivate. (HB1)</li> <li>• how to make the class more active. (HB14)</li> </ul>



Category F: Professional communication	Theme 5.2.5 <i>(finding voice with students)</i> HA(n=1) HB(n=2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to communicate with learners so that they accept him/her. (HA7)</li> <li>• how to act around students, how to deal with them. To be determined so that the students feel that the teacher is there to teach them. (HB10)</li> </ul>
	Theme 5.2.6 <i>(classroom management)</i> TA(n=3) HA(n=3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• classroom management and communication with his/her students. (TA8)</li> <li>• how to handle situations in the classroom. (HA1)</li> <li>• how to react to the unexpected. (HA10)</li> <li>• real life situations, she/he needs to have a great amount of experience. (TA7)</li> </ul>
	Theme 5.2.7 <i>(parent-like role)</i> TA(n=2) HA(n=1) HB(n=1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the good way of raising up children. (HA5)</li> <li>• how to handle with unexpected situations about the student's lives. (TA11)</li> <li>• to be empathic. (TA12)</li> <li>• how to motivate, help with non-subject problems, be a good leader/organizer. (HB15)</li> </ul>
Category G: T as knowledgeable person	Theme 5.2.8 <i>(aspects of being knowledgeable)</i> TA(n=3) HA(n=3) HB(n=4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• universal current knowledge. (TA5)</li> <li>• technology very well. (TA2)</li> <li>• how to write in different genres and languages, and also the relevant aspects of history (e.g., Tudors). (HA4)</li> <li>• what happens in real life; I mean things about the news, for instance. (HB6)</li> <li>• as much as she can, in order to be able to engage in various topics, and to understand people, students, and the world better. (HA2)</li> </ul>

As part of the recurring pattern mentioned in the previous section, the first emerging category of salient themes (Category D) indicated the concern of Hungarian and especially Turkish pre-service EFL teachers to develop a general, pedagogically and psychologically informed knowledge of the age-groups they would teach (Theme 5.2.1), as well as a more context-specific and ad-hoc type of knowledge about the individual students in one's class (Theme 5.2.2). In this framing, it is especially the latter that requires, again, an ability for professionally communicating an awareness of students as individuals, a willingness to make negotiated classroom decisions about the content and methods of instruction, and an investment in making the L2 class a place where desired learning outcomes are made possible for the whole community of students (as manifestations of the complex pedagogy of student-centred teaching described by Nunan, 2013, 2015). Also, besides demonstrating the apparent striving of new L2 teacher generations (see, e.g., Kalaja, 2015) to revive student-centred pedagogies (Breen, 1999) and humanistic teaching philosophies (Ros i Solé, 2016), the belief-statements in Category D are in tune with the

early scholarly conceptions in which L2 teachers' knowledge comprises both propositional knowledge of pedagogy and educational psychology and first-hand experience of students' learning styles, interests, needs, strengths and difficulties (Gitomer & Zisk, 2015, p. 19).

As a continuation of this train of thought, the emerging themes in Category E were also in line with early conceptualisations of L2 teachers' knowledge, and especially with the procedural aspect emphasized in Shulman's (1986/1994) notion of pedagogical content knowledge. However, while the content of Theme 5.2.3 corresponded entirely with what Shulman's term refers to (see Gitomer & Zisk, 2015, p. 18), the original notion was supplemented with references to another well-known (though in this case rather vaguely described) role of L2 teachers as motivators (Theme 5.2.4), popularised in the early 2000s through publications of teaching strategies that induce motivated L2 learning behaviours (e.g., Brophy, 2010; Dörnyei, 2001) and adopted dutifully by L2 teachers in a variety of contexts (e.g., Csizér & Dörnyei, 1998; Farrell, 2011; Wan, Low, & Li, 2011).

Another related yet separate category of responses (Category F) was the one subsuming those aspects of professional communication that the participants (especially Hungarians) associated with effective L2 instruction (cp. Section 4.3.4). The themes assigned to this category included a general concern for professional communication as a domain of L2 teacher expertise (Theme 5.2.5; cf. Farrell, 2013), a more specific concern for classroom management as a set of skills often associated with the domain of professional communication (Theme 5.2.6; cf., Wubbels & Levy, 1993), and a highly specific concern for the parent-like role (Theme 5.2.7) that some L2 teachers are known to take on (Davis, 2003; Ho, 2005; Siegel, 2001) but experts tend to see as a matter of professional communication (Denton, 2007; Ehrman & Dörnyei, 1998; Stronge, 2007) rather than affective involvement in students' private lives and "non-subject problems" (HB15). As a critical remark on these results, some of the belief-statements in Themes 5.2.6 and 5.2.7 (e.g., TA7, HA5) seem to provide evidence for other researchers' claims about pre-service L2 teachers' tendency to hold rudimentary beliefs and conceptions that can be inhibitory to teacher motivation and professional growth (e.g., Peacock, 2001; Yuan & Lee, 2014), and should therefore be the subjects of continued reflective and narrative activity within teachers' communities of practice (Johnson, 2015; Kumaravadivelu, 2012).

Finally, the last category to address in this section (Category G) subsumed those belief-statements that expressed many participants' (in each group) conceptions of the L2 teacher as a highly knowledgeable person—an idea that has always been prevalent in conceptualisations of L2 teacher knowledge (Section 1.2.1) and in popular discourse about teaching and teacher roles (Moore, 2004). While in some cases (e.g., TA5) the beliefs

expressed seemed to be of the rudimentary, inhibitory type, most of the belief-statements in Theme 5.2.8 seemed to refer in subjective ways to L2 teachers' frequently assumed (in fact, policy-based) role as cultural transmitters (e.g., Farrell, 2011; Wan et al., 2011), capable of developing in learners a cultural and/or intercultural competence (Dombi, 2013) and keeping up an awareness for the political, social, and multilingual dimensions of L2 learners' lives (Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016).

In closing the section, and with regard to the comprehensive list of current L2 teacher competence standards in Europe and Hungary (see Chapter 1), it is perhaps interesting to note that some of the requisite competences mediated through policy and through the instructional content of L2 teacher education programs (e.g., lesson planning, assessment and evaluation, cooperation with other professionals, and devotion to professional development) were not mentioned at all by the respondents. Although it is possible that drawing on a larger sample of Hungarian and Turkish pre-service EFL teachers would have provided a different insight into this issue, the results do indicate that these knowledge components were of lower priority than others for the participants of the study, thereby indicating that L2 teacher education programs may need to put additional emphasis on the role of these competences in effective teaching. Additionally, what can also be noticed in Table 5.2 is that hardly any of the reflective statements made reference to more than one prioritised knowledge component, even though the participants were not prompted to mention one potentially salient component only. It is for this reason that reflective activities like this should also involve a collaborative discussion of the collected data, exposing pre-service teachers to a wider range of alternative responses and to opportunities for developing their earlier conceptions (Chick, 2015; Johnson, 2015; Yuan & Lee, 2014).

### **5.3.3 Belief-statements related to pre-service EFL teachers' professional future self-guides**

The third set of reflective statements deemed relevant to my current analysis (i.e. responses to Statement 2) was different from most others in the reflective template in that it did not represent the knowledge and dispositions that pre-service EFL teachers gained from previous learning and experience, but rather their visions of their future selves in the profession (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014). Growing out of recent developments in teacher cognition research (e.g., Kubanyiova, 2009) based on Dörnyei's highly appraised model of the motivational self-system (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015, pp. 87-96), the latter form of reflection represents a novel approach both in research and in L2 teacher education, postulating the view that L2 teachers' cognitions, actions and identities are not only shaped by their past experiences (cf. Borg, 2003; Korthagen, 2011) but also

their expectations about the future (Kelchtermans, 2009, p. 263) and their envisioned future selves as professionals (Kalaja, 2015). In this sense, an additional responsibility of teacher educators is to promote reflective activities through which pre-service L2 teachers' existing visions and expectations can be externalised and potentially transformed into realistic professional future self-guides (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014), which Dörnyei and Ryan (2015, p. 96) regard as one of the highest-order motivational forces in individuals.

On these grounds, as the results in Table 5.3 attest, the responses to Statement 2 did provide a brief yet conceptually significant insight into the teaching-related visions and professional future self-guides of the participants, which are related, arguably, to the concept of LTKI as well. Before taking a look at the emerging themes specifically, it should be noted that in this case the responses of all three groups of participants could be fitted into two categories only, thus indicating a clear division between two types of professional future self-guides: one in which EFL teachers' focus is on developing students' L2-related skills and knowledge (Category I), and one in which the focus is on what we might call the intra- and interpersonal skills and knowledge of the learner (Category H).

**Table 5.3**

*Emerging themes and categories across the three groups in response to Statement 2 in the reflective template*

<b>Statement #2: If I was working as a teacher, the most important thing I would teach my students is...</b>	
Category H: Intra- and inter-personal skills/knowledge	<p>Theme 5.3.1 <i>(setting personal goals)</i> TA(n=6) HA(n=2) HB(n=2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• following their dreams and finding the thing that makes them happy. (TA9)</li> <li>• how to learn, how to improve by themselves, and how to find their real interests. (HA12)</li> <li>• to find a long-term goal and go for it. (HB1)</li> </ul>
	<p>Theme 5.3.2 <i>(increasing self-efficacy)</i> TA(n=8) HA(n=2) HB(n=3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being honest and hard-working. (TA13)</li> <li>• to be confident and hard-working, because with these two they can achieve anything. (HA8)</li> <li>• that they believe in themselves. There is nothing they cannot do. (TA8)</li> </ul>
	<p>Theme 5.3.3 <i>(respecting others' lives and ideas)</i> TA(n=3) HA(n=2) HB(n=2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to be good [respectful] to each other. (HA5)</li> <li>• respecting other people's lives and ideas. (TA6)</li> <li>• how to work in pairs and teams. (HB2)</li> <li>• communication, integrity, respect for others, independence. (HB13)</li> </ul>

Category I: L2-related skills/knowledge	Theme 5.3.4 <i>(how to communicate)</i> TA(n=1) HA(n=1) HB(n=5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to communicate effectively and effortlessly in every possible scenario. (HB12)</li> <li>• how they can use language in real life. (HB7)</li> </ul>
	Theme 5.3.5 <i>(how to value the L2)</i> HA(n=2) HB(n=2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what are the benefits, why they should learn my language, how it will help them in their everyday lives. (HB4)</li> <li>• to use the target language outside the classroom, out of enjoyment, too. (HA7)</li> </ul>
	Theme 5.3.6 <i>(how to value authentic L2 input)</i> HA(n=1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the importance of native impulses, i.e. reading literature and journals, listening to music and radio, and watching films in the target language. (HA4)</li> </ul>
	Theme 5.3.7 <i>(how to use grammar)</i> HB(n=1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the grammar, because if the teacher does not take the students' grammar knowledge into account, they cannot acquire the grammar properly. (HB6)</li> </ul>

Considering that most responses (especially in the Turkish group) belonged to the latter category (i.e. Category H), it seems fair to conclude that the majority of the participants envisioned themselves not as L2 teachers only, but rather as teachers whose main responsibility is to raise motivated, self-reflective, and autonomous learners, for whom the foreign language is only a tool to achieve success in other fields of life (Breen, 1999; Nunan, 2013). These notions, in turn, bring into focus the importance of social-emotional intelligence (Mercer & Gkonou, 2017; Section 2.3), not only as an ability in L2 teachers themselves, but as an ability to nurture and develop in individual students as members of socio-culturally diverse learner groups (Warren, 2018). As part of this ability, the salient themes assigned to Category H made reference both to intrapersonal skills such as self-reflection, goal setting (Theme 5.3.1), and the construal of positive self-appraisals (Theme 5.3.2; see Papaleontiou-Louca, 2003, p. 10), and to interpersonal skills such as cooperation with others in socially responsive ways (Theme 5.3.3; see Gardner, 2011, p. 253; Warren, 2018).

Despite this predominant focus of the participants on these aspects of intra- and interpersonal skills and knowledge, it must also be noted that the themes enlisted in Category I may be seen as equally important indicators of pre-service EFL teachers' awareness for setting more realistic teaching goals and professional future self-guides, which are perhaps better substantiated by the curricular content of their teacher education programs (cf. Section 1.3; Toköz Göktepe, 2015). To put it differently, even though the mediation of moral values, attitudes, and intra- or interpersonal skills can

indeed form a part of teachers' task-perception (Kelchtermans, 2009; Korthagen, 2004), a focus on the development of L2-related skills and dispositions in learners (i.e. Themes 5.3.4, 5.3.5, 5.3.6, 5.3.7) is likely to help the formation of more tangible future self-guides and teaching goals, especially for pre-service teachers, whose teaching principles and practices are known to change substantially as they gain first-hand experience of school life and teaching (e.g., Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997; Yuan & Lee, 2014). In this sense, the results in Table 5.3 also demonstrate that the role of pre-service EFL teachers' reflective activity should be not only to bring current beliefs and understandings into focal awareness, but also to encourage the discussion and exchange of alternative understandings within local or even cross-cultural professional communities (Johnson, 2015; Kumaravadivelu, 2012), thus creating space for their existing conceptions to change in favourable ways (Feryok, 2010; Yuan & Lee, 2014).

#### **5.3.4 Identifying four underlying conceptual domains related to the LTKI construct**

As suggested in Section 5.2.2.2, the three sets of results presented so far were selected as the backbones of the current study due to their conceptual relevance to my exploratory work on the LTKI construct. More specifically, in the second analytical phase of the study a focus on a smaller number of conceptual categories (i.e. domains) was reached by grouping together those previously established categories that were related in their thematic content, and together formed conceptual units that appeared relevant in the framing of LTKI. In identifying and naming these emerging conceptual units (or domains), I relied on both the thematic content of the existing categories (see Tables 5.1, 5.2, & 5.3) and the insights I had gained from secondary research on L2 teachers' requisite competences and on L2 teachers' roles in the framework of L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity. Considering that some of the conceptual categories appearing in this study were already discussed in relation to the LTKI construct in Chapter 4 (e.g., teaching methods, the teacher's professional communication), their function here is both to support earlier claims about their relevance to the construct and to provide new insights into the conceptual content that these domains subsume. Currently, however, my aim is to focus on the conceptual domains that have not been addressed so far; a list of these domains and the thematic content from which they emerged is provided in Table 5.4 below.

**Table 5.4**  
*Summary of the emerging themes that illustrate the underlying conceptual domains*

<b>Key conceptual domains:</b>	<b>Categories containing references to the conceptual domains:</b>	
• Knowledge of language development	Category B (teaching methods)	Theme 5.1.3 ( <i>focusing on communication</i> ) Theme 5.1.4 ( <i>improving various L2 skills</i> ) Theme 5.1.6 ( <i>using L2 in class</i> )
	Category I (L2-related skills/knowledge)	Theme 5.3.4 ( <i>how to communicate</i> ) Theme 5.3.5 ( <i>how to value the L2</i> ) Theme 5.3.6 ( <i>how to value authentic L2 input</i> ) Theme 5.3.7 ( <i>how to use grammar</i> )
• Cultural knowledge	Category G (the teacher as knowledgeable person)	Theme 5.2.8 ( <i>aspects of being knowledgeable</i> )
	Category I (L2-related skills/knowledge)	Theme 5.3.6 ( <i>how to value authentic L2 input</i> )
• Intrapersonal knowledge	Category C (the teacher's self-awareness)	Theme 5.1.7 ( <i>awareness of professional wellbeing</i> )
	Category H (intra- and interpersonal skills/knowledge)	Theme 5.3.1 ( <i>setting personal goals</i> ) Theme 5.3.2 ( <i>increasing self-efficacy</i> )
• Interpersonal knowledge	Category A (awareness of students' needs)	Theme 5.1.1 ( <i>developmental needs</i> ) Theme 5.1.2 ( <i>relational needs</i> )
	Category D (knowledge of students)	Theme 5.2.2 ( <i>students as individuals</i> )
	Category H (intra- and interpersonal skills/knowledge)	Theme 5.3.3 ( <i>respecting others' lives and ideas</i> )

In framing the key conceptual domains listed in Table 5.4, it must be pointed out that each of these components of LTKI are thought to refer to both propositional knowledge that an L2 teacher possesses in a given domain, and procedural knowledge that allows the teacher to act upon his/her existing understandings in these domains to make his/her teaching more effective (Woods & Çakır, 2011). Arguably then, from the perspective of L2 teachers' impact on their students' learning, the term 'cultural knowledge', for instance, does not only refer to an L2 teacher's own battery of cultural knowledge, but also to knowing how to engender favourable dispositions in students towards 'cultural knowledge' itself and towards the way in which the teacher mediates 'cultural knowledge'. In the same vein, from an LTKI perspective an L2 teacher's 'knowledge of language development', which is supposedly appropriated through formal study and in personal-experiential ways (Feryok, 2018; Golombek, 2009; Woods & Çakır, 2011), is thought to involve understandings about how the teacher's impact on students' L2 development can be turned into a favourable one in the process of learning-teaching. Such understandings, as the results imply, start to be developed early on as individuals

progress from L2 learners to pre-service L2 teachers and on to in-service L2 teachers (Borg, 2003, 2006), thus indicating that LTKI is likely to be a relevant construct for studying L2 teachers' knowledge at any stage of their professional development.

As for the other two domains listed in Table 5.4 (i.e. 'intrapersonal knowledge' and 'interpersonal knowledge'), their framing is more difficult in that socio-emotional intelligence (e.g., Gkonou & Mercer, 2017) and relational beliefs (e.g., Gkonou & Mercer, 2018) are already used as similar alternatives in the literature (see also Gardner, 2011, pp. 253-255). In contrast with these alternative concepts though, the construct proposed in this dissertation suggests that 'intrapersonal knowledge' and 'interpersonal knowledge' should not be seen as distinct from other conceptual domains subsumed by LTKI. Rather, it is suggested that both 'intrapersonal knowledge' and 'interpersonal knowledge' refer to propositional and procedural knowledge that L2 teachers have acquired about intrapersonal factors such as being aware of one's professional wellbeing (Theme 5.1.7), setting personal goals (Theme 5.3.1), or increasing one's self-efficacy (Theme 5.3.2), and interpersonal factors such as being aware of students' developmental and relational needs (Themes 5.1.1 & 5.1.2), striving to know students as individuals (Theme 5.2.2), or respecting others' lives and ideas (Theme 5.3.3). As in the case of the previous domains, procedural knowledge is also relevant in this framing in that L2 teachers should not only have a storable knowledge of these factors, but also make sure that their underlying knowledge is manifest in their classroom actions (cp. Feryok, 2018), allowing their students as well to develop understandings in the intrapersonal and interpersonal domains.

What is also implied by the findings presented so far in Chapters 4 and 5 (also in Henry & Thorsen, 2019; Mercer, 2018) is that L2 teachers' understandings (here: knowledge) of their impact are likely to come about from these domains collectively, rather than being stored in separate structures. Despite calling to be tested through further empirical research, this claim is in line with teacher cognition researchers' (e.g., Borg, 2006; Feryok, 2010, 2018) supposition that the complexity of teaching as a profession lies in the fact that several factors influence teacher action and decision making at any moment, and not all of them can be in focal awareness at the same time (Woods, 2003, p. 207). Considering that the dissertation frames 'relating' as an activity that L2 teachers are supposed to carry out as part of their 'teaching' activity (Freeman & Johnson, 2005; Mercer, 2018), it can be seen then why LTKI, as other areas of knowledge (e.g., Feryok, 2018; Kalaja et al., 2015) or even beliefs (e.g., Basturkmen, 2012), may occasionally be difficult to operationalise in classroom action, even though it is readily available in the form of propositions when called upon in reflective-narrative activity (Bartlett, 1990). Clearly though, these claims may be far fetched in view of the empirical data that the study has provided; thus, the



framework put forward in the next section is also a tentative one, calling for continued research on LTKI.

### 5.3.5 Framing the relationship of the four conceptual domains to one another and to the emerging LTKI construct

Apart from using the results to identify conceptual domains that are relevant to the exploration of the LTKI construct, my stated aim in this study has been to describe the relationship of those domains to one another and to other components of the tentative framework outlined in Section 4.3.5. Clearly, by pointing out earlier that the identified conceptual domains were found to be integrable into that framework, I implied that a CDST perspective may also be applicable in interpreting the findings of this study. In this sense, and in line with what is known about L2 teachers' knowledge and cognition, the four conceptual domains identified in this study are also thought to co-exist and interact in complex ways to form the body of knowledge labelled as LTKI, and to change dynamically over time and in the flux of classroom situations (Feryok, 2018, p. 108) as a teacher's knowledge becomes gradually more extensive due to formal study and learning in personal-experiential ways (Feryok, 2010; Woods & Çakır, 2011). Although these claims, especially about the temporal development of LTKI, undoubtedly call for continued research, Figure 5.1 below offers a graphic representation of the four newly identified conceptual domains from a CDST perspective, which may be seen as a starting point for further conceptual work.



**Figure 5.1.** *Graphic illustration of the four main conceptual domains of Chapter 5 forming part of the complex dynamic system that LTKI entails*

Based on the above claims about the newly identified conceptual domains being integrable into the framework set up earlier, some further analytical outcomes must also be reported here. The most important of these is, arguably, the fact that the four newly identified conceptual domains also brought about a different understanding of the earlier conceptual categories (see Chapter 4) as parts of the knowledge construct being studied. More specifically, this change of understanding, as part of the recursive analysis of conceptual categories in a grounded-theory project (Moustakas, 1994, p. 3), did not concern the LTKI construct itself, but the terminology that had been used in referring to the components of the construct. Thus, in line with the terminology introduced in this study, a better emphasis on LTKI as a knowledge construct was also established by referring to all of the identified conceptual domains as congenial components in a provisional model of LTKI (see Figure 5.2).



**Figure 5.2.** *Graphic illustration and provisional model of the LTKI construct based on the conceptual domains identified in Chapters 4 and 5*

By way of the new terminology, the provisional model in Figure 5.2 highlights the notion that in an LTKI framework L2 teachers’ knowledge of teaching methods, professional communication, teaching style, and personality (i.e. the conceptual domains identified in Study 1) is thought to be of the same nature as their interpersonal knowledge, intrapersonal knowledge, cultural knowledge, and knowledge of language development (i.e. the conceptual domains identified in Study 2). In this sense, it can be stated that in the framework of LTKI an L2 teacher’s ‘knowledge of teaching style’, for instance, refers to

both propositional knowledge (i.e. knowing what characterises one's own 'teaching style') and procedural knowledge (i.e. knowing how to act upon the teacher's knowledge of his/her own teaching style in order to make the teacher's impact a favourable one). Crucially then, LTKI, as other areas of L2 teachers' knowledge, is thought to be best described as a conceptual tool (see Freeman & Johnson, 2005) that L2 teachers operationalise when engaged in L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity, and also when engaged in reflective-narrative activities that require them to draw upon this area of knowledge.

A final remark to make in this section concerns the integrated representation of the conceptual domains identified in Studies 1 and 2, and the implications of this analytical outcome for the conceptualisation of LTKI. In the latter regard, the provisional model in Figure 5.2 implies that if LTKI is to be studied as a specific area of L2 teachers' knowledge, it ought to be studied with a simultaneous focus on the conceptual domains that seem to interact in complex ways to make that area of knowledge a coherent and operational one (Woods & Çakır, 2011). Considering that such an investigation of LTKI is thought to be possible through the products of L2 teachers' reflective-narrative activity (e.g., Borg, 2006; Kumaravadivelu, 2012), it is a fundamental objective for further empirical research to involve L2 teachers in a reflective-narrative activity that provides relevant insights into the observed knowledge area (see Chapter 6), and to examine the relevance of the provisional model based on the data gained this way. As for the components of the provisional model being put together from the findings of two separate exploratory studies, it must be pointed out once again that even though the data for Studies 1 and 2 were drawn from different samples of L2 teachers (i.e. in-service L2 teachers in Study 1 and pre-service EFL teachers in Study 2), the construct that is explored in the dissertation is thought to be observable at any stage of L2 teachers' professional development. In other words, even though the analysis of reflective-narrative accounts led to the mapping of different conceptual domains in Study 1 than in Study 2, the insights that were gained from in-service and pre-service L2 teachers were thought to be equally relevant in gradually exploring LTKI as a larger underlying construct.

## **5.4 Conclusion**

To conclude with, even though the study in Chapter 5 was framed in a way to focus only on a slice of results that I considered the most relevant to my exploratory work on LTKI, the presented findings also provided insights into the teaching-related beliefs, dispositions, and experiences that characterised pre-service EFL teachers in different groups. To name only a few major findings, by putting forward a thought-provoking reflective instrument (Section 5.1) designed for pre-service EFL teachers, the study, first

of all, illustrated how different types and focal areas of reflection can be integrated within one structured reflective activity. Secondly, in the three focal areas selected for the study (Sections 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.3.3), the emerging themes and categories revealed more similarities than differences in the existing conceptions of pre-service EFL teachers, often across two different educational contexts (Section 5.2.1). While most of the results were auspicious in that they demonstrated the participants' awareness for key instructional goals, techniques, and conceptual domains in L2 teaching, in some cases the presented belief-statements drew attention to pre-service EFL teachers' tendency to hold rudimentary conceptions to be shaped in teacher education programs (Sections 5.3.2 & 5.3.3). Thirdly, drawing on the previous claim and the fact that some of the salient themes (e.g., Themes 5.1.7 & 5.3.6) were addressed by a small number of participants only, a central argument put forward in the study was that the role of pre-service EFL teachers' reflective activity should be not only to bring current beliefs and understandings of individuals into focal awareness, but also to encourage the discussion and exchange of alternative understandings in local or even cross-cultural professional communities (Chick, 2015; Johnson, 2015; Kumaravadivelu, 2012), thus creating space for their existing conceptions to change in favourable ways (Feryok, 2010; Yuan & Lee, 2014).

Regarding the study's building up to a provisional model of LTKI (Section 5.3.5), two further remarks are in order here. Firstly, since it might be argued that in Chapter 5 the number of participants and the nature of the data (see discussion on the limitations of the reflective template in Farkas, 2019) did not allow for an in-depth exploration of the conceptual domains under study, I need to emphasize that the aim of my analysis was to identify potentially relevant conceptual domains rather than to present in-depth explorations of each domain specifically. At the same time, it was my awareness for these potential limitations in my analytical and conceptual work that prompted me to conduct a third exploratory study (Chapter 6) designed with a clearer focus on the LTKI construct, and aiming to further examine the relevance of previously identified components in the provisional model. Secondly, regardless of the obvious need for further empirical research on the observed construct, the provisional model is thought to provide a relevant, data-based framing of LTKI as a specialised area of L2 teachers' knowledge, which comes about through the complex interaction of various conceptual domains as L2 teachers engage in sense-making about their impact on students' engagement in and experience of classroom L2 learning. As a product of exploratory work based on relatively small samples of data, the provisional model of LTKI is further examined and elaborated in Chapter 6.

## **Chapter 6 – Working towards a theoretical model of LTKI: Insights from a qualitative study on Hungarian in-service L2 teachers’ reflective-narrative accounts**

### **6.1 Introduction**

From a conceptual perspective, the study presented in Chapter 6 can be seen as an amalgam of the theoretical and empirical work laid out so far, and as a bridge to the final analytical stage of my grounded-theory project, in which a generally accepted outcome is the proposal of a theoretical model that aids the better understanding of a complex phenomenon and provides a framework for potential further research (Creswell, 2007; Dörnyei, 2007). Up to this stage of the project, the scope of my inquiry had been formed gradually as the exploration of L2 learners’, in-service L2 teachers’, and pre-service EFL teachers’ reflective-narrative accounts generated insights into the knowledge construct (i.e. LTKI) that is in the focus of the dissertation. Although in Chapters 4 and 5 I argued for the relevance of eight specific conceptual domains in framing the LTKI construct (see provisional model in Section 5.3.5), it was also pointed out that the studies presented so far had been designed without an explicit focus on the LTKI construct, thereby calling for a third empirical study in which the specialised framing of L2 teachers’ reflective-narrative activity could generate further exploratory data. In designing this third exploratory study, I put forward the following research questions: What insights can be gained about the LTKI construct if in-service L2 teachers are asked to reflect specifically on the impact they have on students’ learning? What does the analysis of their reflective-narrative accounts reveal about the conceptual domains represented in the provisional model of LTKI?

Knowing that my research focus on LTKI as a teaching-related concept was, again, integrable into my professional coursework with Hungarian in-service L2 teachers, at this stage of the grounded-theory project I designed another reflective writing activity (for rationale see Section 3.2.3), asking the participants to list and describe those characteristics of L2 teachers that they know to have an impact on students’ engagement in and experience of classroom L2 learning. In order to elicit reflective-narrative accounts in which the teachers would express their understandings about more than one relevant concept, I framed the reflective task in a way to ask for short descriptions of *‘Five characteristics of a language teacher that will have an influence on students’ learning’* (Appendix D), and thus ended up with a relatively extensive dataset to analyse with a focus on the emerging LTKI construct (see Section 6.2.2).

Considering that in Studies 1 and 2 similar types of reflective-narrative data could be productively used to study LTKI as an underlying construct, the products of in-service L2 teachers' reflective-narrative activity in Study 3, due to the specialised framing of the reflective writing task, were also expected to provide relevant insights into the construct being studied (Woods & Çakır, 2011). In other words, by asking the participants to reflect on L2 teachers' characteristics with a focus on the interpersonal impact that results from those characteristics, I expected to engage them in a reflective activity in which a specific area of their knowledge (i.e. LTKI) must be operationalised for completing the reflective task itself. In turn, the thematic content of the in-service L2 teachers' reflective-narrative accounts was expected to reveal whether the previously identified conceptual categories (i.e. domains) were relevant in the analysis of the exploratory data and in the continued framing of the LTKI construct.

## 6.2 The study

### 6.2.1 Participants and data collection

In contrast with the multiple learner- and teacher-groups participating in my previous research (Chapters 4 & 5), the data for this study (due to a lack of further opportunity) were collected only from one group of 15 Hungarian in-service L2 teachers (two males and 13 females), who came from various professional and demographic backgrounds to study for a university-level MA degree in TEFL/TESOL at a Hungarian university, and volunteered to participate in my project as part of their professional coursework. Although in some cases there were bits and pieces missing from the demographic data that the participants provided alongside their reflective-narrative texts, a summary of what I could learn about the 15 teachers is given in Table 6.1 below.

**Table 6.1**

*Summary of the available demographic data about the participants (Hungarian in-service L2 teachers; n=15)*

<b>Age (years):</b>				
25-29: 6	30-40: 4	41-50: 2	50+: 1	
<b>Teaching experience (years):</b>				
1-3: 5	4-10: 1	11-16: 2	17-20: 3	
<b>Subjects taught:</b>				
English: 10	Italian: 1	English & French: 1	English & Russian: 1	
<b>Age-groups taught:*</b>				
children: 3	teenagers: 2	adolescents: 1	adolescents & adults: 1	children & adults: 1
*children: 7-10 years old; teenagers: 10-14 years old; adolescents: 14-18 years old; adults: 18+ years old				

Whereas the majority (i.e. ten participants) were teachers of a younger age (between 25 and 40 years), in terms of teaching experience there was a satisfactory balance between novice L2 teachers (five of them having spent no more than three years in the profession) and more experienced practitioners (with more than ten years in the profession). Despite some missing data, it is also clear from Table 6.1 that the participants were predominantly EFL teachers, and that the sample was varied in terms of the age-groups that the participants had taught.

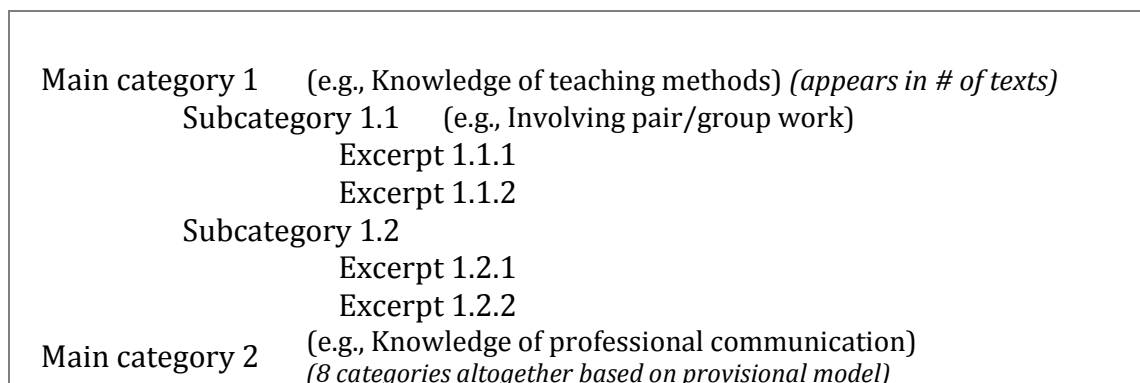
In order to provide sufficient time for the reflective-narrative activity that the study involved, the participants were asked to first read the instructions for the reflective writing task (Appendix D) in class, to continue thinking about the theme (i.e. *'Five characteristics of a language teacher that will have an influence on students' learning'*) outside the class, and then to submit their reflective-narrative text via email at their earliest convenience. The 15 texts collected for the study were all written in English and used for analysis after receiving the authors' consent. In the upcoming sections, all participants are referred to by their personal identification numbers (e.g., Teacher 15) to ensure their anonymity.

### **6.2.2 Data analysis**

Considering that the data collected for this study were similar in nature to the data collected from in-service L2 teachers in Study 1 (Chapter 4), the established procedures of qualitative content analysis were also carried over from one study to the next. In this case, however, the bottom-up process of identifying salient themes and subcategories through the reflective-narrative accounts was also subdued to a top-down focus on the key conceptual domains identified in the previous studies and represented in the provisional model of LTKI in Section 5.3.5. Clearly, the fact that these conceptual domains were used in the categorisation of the data is, on the one hand, a limitation of my analysis that should be considered when planning further research into the LTKI construct. On the other hand, a focus on the previously identified components of the LTKI construct was deliberately sought in this study, as in the last stage of a grounded-theory project the aim of the analysis is to re-examine an existing conceptual framework based on data that were collected for that purpose (Moustakas, 1994).

On these grounds, the analysis of data for this study involved a focus on the eight components of the provisional LTKI model as pre-selected analytical categories (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 253) and a focus on the emerging themes and subcategories that allowed for further understandings to be developed about the LTKI construct. As in the case of Study 1 (Chapter 4), the data that had been coded and categorised for this study were

subsequently organised into a three-level category structure, thereby making subsequent storage and analysis of the data easier and more transparent. For an illustration of this three-level category structure, see Figure 6.1 below.



**Figure 6.1.** *Illustration of the three-level category structure used for organising and storing the analysed data (main categories based on provisional model)*

As a function of the three-level category structure illustrated in Figure 6.1, the analysis of reflective-narrative texts in this study allowed for various insights to be gained about the LTKI construct. Firstly, through the thematic content and the subcategories that were assigned to the main categories, the analysis supported the continued exploration and framing of eight conceptual domains, which earlier had been identified as potential constituents of the LTKI construct. This analytical perspective resulted in an overarching focus on the conceptual domains that were manifest in the data (Section 6.3.1) and therefore relevant in putting forward a tentative model of LTKI. Secondly, and more notably than in the previous studies, the excerpts drawn from the participants' reflective-narrative accounts turned out to be particularly useful in demonstrating how the construal of abstract teaching-related concepts is a vital part of L2 teachers' reflective activity (Sections 6.3.2 & 6.3.3), and a means to observe the interrelationship of conceptual domains in the sense-making of L2 teachers as individuals or as members of professional communities. Thirdly, and similarly to the approach taken in Chapter 4, the study of an individual teacher's full-length reflective-narrative text as one larger unit of analysis provided further insights into the complex interrelationship of LTKI-related conceptual domains, and into the application of a CDST perspective in the framing of the LTKI construct (Section 6.3.4).



## 6.3 Results and discussion

### 6.3.1 An ongoing framing of eight conceptual domains as congenial components in the LTKI construct

As indicated in the outline above, a most important perspective to take on the results of this study is to look at a summary of salient themes and subcategories emerging from the data, as these are fundamental in framing the larger conceptual units (i.e. domains) that the study aimed to explore in view of the provisional model proposed earlier. Crucially, what must be first pointed out is that for all emerging themes to be categorised there was a need for each of the conceptual domains identified in Studies 1 and 2, but at the same time there was no need for additional conceptual categories to be established. This, in other words, means that the subcategories established from the thematic content of in-service L2 teachers' reflective-narrative accounts were indicating a tendency of the participants to draw on eight conceptual domains altogether when making sense of 'L2 teachers' influence on students' learning' as a larger teaching-related concept. To illustrate how the emerging themes and subcategories contributed to the framing of the eight salient conceptual domains, a summary of all emerging themes is provided in Table 6.2 below.

**Table 6.2**

*Summary of themes in in-service L2 teachers' (n=15) reflective-narrative accounts, categorised according to the components of the provisional LTKI model*

<b>Main analytical categories</b> <b>(Key conceptual domains associated with LTKI previously)</b>	<b>Emerging themes/subcategories related to the key conceptual domains</b> <i>(two columns used for economy of space)</i>	
<b>Domain 1:</b> Knowledge of teaching methods <i>(n=10)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning the pedagogical process</li> <li>• Using a variety of teaching techniques</li> <li>• Adopting a task-based approach</li> <li>• Seeking to provide useable knowledge/skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involving all students in classroom activities</li> <li>• Involving pair/group work</li> <li>• Including meaningful repetition of key content</li> <li>• Evaluating students in a clear and systematic way</li> </ul>
<b>Domain 2:</b> Knowledge of professional communication <i>(n=13)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a supportive atmosphere</li> <li>• Differentiated communication with individual students</li> <li>• Responsiveness to students' difficulties</li> <li>• Communicating empathy</li> <li>• Communicating that learning-teaching is a collaborative activity</li> <li>• Communicating and negotiating classroom norms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing how to give constructive feedback</li> <li>• Knowing how to answer students' questions</li> <li>• Knowing how to give comprehensible explanations</li> <li>• Knowing what and how one says (e.g., using direct and simple language)</li> <li>• Maintaining discipline in class</li> <li>• Knowing how to manage a class</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessing students' needs and expectations</li> <li>• Setting clear learning goals</li> <li>• Evaluating students in a clear and systematic way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handling instructional obstacles well</li> <li>• Using humour before a learning task</li> <li>• Knowing how to cooperate with colleagues</li> </ul>
<b>Domain 3:</b> <b>Knowledge of personal-professional characteristics</b> <i>(n=14)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher is devoted</li> <li>• The teacher is helpful</li> <li>• The teacher is empathic</li> <li>• The teacher is patient</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher is knowledgeable</li> <li>• The teacher is creative</li> <li>• The teacher is self-confident</li> <li>• The teacher is consistent</li> </ul>
<b>Domain 4:</b> <b>Knowledge of teaching style</b> <i>(n=12)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher is enthusiastic</li> <li>• The teacher is creative</li> <li>• The teacher can be humorous</li> <li>• The teacher is willing to experiment with new learning activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arousing students' interest</li> <li>• Involving some activities for fun</li> </ul>
<b>Domain 5:</b> <b>Interpersonal knowledge</b> <i>(n=7)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involving all students in classroom activities</li> <li>• Differentiated treatment of all students</li> <li>• Respecting students' individual differences</li> <li>• Tailoring instruction to individual needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letting students learn from each other</li> <li>• The teacher wants to learn from the students</li> <li>• Using techniques (e.g., humour, stories, games, etc.) to build relationships</li> </ul>
<b>Domain 6:</b> <b>Intrapersonal knowledge</b> <i>(n=11)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher is strongly motivated to teach</li> <li>• The teacher wants to grow as a professional</li> <li>• Promoting autonomous work</li> <li>• Having self-esteem and self-confidence in class</li> <li>• Only focusing on teaching when in class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivating oneself is important</li> <li>• Being strategic and organised is important</li> <li>• Developing expertise in a field is important</li> <li>• Seeing progress in learning-teaching takes time</li> <li>• Mistakes are part of the learning process</li> <li>• Resting is part of the learning process</li> </ul>
<b>Domain 7:</b> <b>Knowledge of language development</b> <i>(n=9)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher is a proficient user of the L2</li> <li>• Integrated teaching of the L2 and other subjects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher seeks to provide useable knowledge/skills</li> <li>• The teacher makes L2 classes communication-oriented</li> </ul>
<b>Domain 8:</b> <b>Cultural knowledge</b> <i>(n=7)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher displays culture-specific knowledge in class</li> <li>• The teacher has an up-to-date knowledge of recent affairs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting L2 learning motivation through cultural content</li> <li>• Telling cultural and life-historical stories can be motivating</li> <li>• Applying culture-specific learning materials</li> </ul>

On the basis of the results displayed in Table 6.2, a number of remarks ought to be made about the ways in which Study 3 may contribute to the exploration of LTKI as an underlying knowledge construct, observable through L2 teachers' reflective-narrative accounts. Firstly, in line with earlier suggestions about LTKI as a multi-componential knowledge construct, the results of Study 3 also imply that if LTKI is to be studied and

understood as a specific area of L2 teachers' knowledge, it ought to be studied with a simultaneous focus on the various conceptual domains that seem to interact in complex ways to make that area of knowledge a coherent and operational one (Woods & Çakır, 2011). In this understanding, the eight conceptual domains listed in Table 6.2 can be supposed to co-exist as congenial mental structures supporting L2 teachers' sense-making about the relational processes inherently involved in L2 learning-teaching, and especially about the impact that L2 teachers' behaviours, actions, and characteristics set forth in the course of their 'teaching' activity (Feryok, 2012; Freeman & Johnson, 2005). Arguably, to look more specifically into the relevance of these claims, future research should also involve more in-depth data collection from a few selected L2 teachers to see if their sense-making about 'L2 teachers' classroom impact' is actually informed by each of the eight conceptual domains listed above. For now, the claims about all eight conceptual domains co-existing in an L2 teacher's sense-making are based on the reflective-narrative accounts of 15 teachers rather than one or two teachers studied in greater detail.

Secondly, in light of the frequency counts and the subcategories listed in Table 6.2, it must be noted that in the reflective-narrative accounts of some participants more than one of the described teacher characteristics were related to the same conceptual domain, thus allowing for a more thorough exploration of those domains from an LTKI perspective. For instance, the wide range of displayed understandings in Domain 2 indicated that the participants' knowledge of professional communication (see Denton, 2007; Wubbels & Levy, 1993) informed and was intertwined substantially with their sense-making about L2 teachers' classroom impact, and thereby with LTKI as the larger underlying knowledge construct. Additionally, based on the subcategories assigned to Domain 2 it is also important to point out that L2 teachers' knowledge of professional communication (as a component of LTKI) should be seen to consist of both propositional and procedural types of knowledge: the former referring to the understandings that the participants made manifest through the thematic content of their reflective-narrative accounts, and the latter referring to the ways in which these understandings are put into practice through teachers' classroom actions. Even though the latter aspect is not something that can be directly observed through the participants' reflective-narrative accounts, from an LTKI perspective procedural knowledge is also thought to be indispensable in making an L2 teacher's classroom impact a favourable one (see process view of teacher cognition in Feryok, 2010, p. 277).

Another conceptual domain that was touched upon by nearly all (n=14) participants was what I called a knowledge of personal-professional characteristics (Domain 3). In this regard, the naming of the category shows how the framing of an earlier salient concept

(i.e. 'knowledge of teacher's personality'; Chapter 5) was subsequently refined in light of the exploratory data collected for Study 3, which indicated a focus of the participants not on personality per se but on the personal-professional characteristics that L2 teachers ought to acquire and display through their behaviours and actions in order to make a favourable classroom impact. In this sense, the personal-professional characteristics described by the participants (e.g., the teacher is patient) reflected their knowledge that students tend to categorise their teachers as 'patient', 'helpful', or 'self-confident' (see further examples in Table 6.2) based on the behaviours and actions which teachers display in (and also outside) the classroom. Moving further on this train of thought, the subcategories listed in Domain 3 also implied a duality of propositional and procedural knowledge, or, in other words, a need for L2 teachers to know which personal-professional characteristics will have a favourable impact on students' engagement in learning, and how they can construct and display those characteristics through their behaviours and actions in various classroom situations (King, 2016).

Obviously, while the subcategories attached to the other conceptual domains should also be considered as references to both propositional and procedural knowledge, it must be emphasized once again that the insights gained through the participants' reflective-narrative accounts were insights into their propositional knowledge, without direct evidence for a corresponding procedural knowledge being manifest in their classroom practices and actions. For instance, even though some of the participants expressed their propositional knowledge that L2 classes should be made communication-oriented (Domain 7) in order for the teacher to make a favourable impact on students' language development, the formulation of this statement does not guarantee that the expressed understanding is also reflected in the classroom practice of a given participant. Similarly, although a displayed element of some participants' intrapersonal knowledge (Domain 6) was the notion that being strategic and organised as an L2 teacher is likely to result in a positive classroom impact, the proposition itself did not provide evidence for this notion being manifest in the participants' teaching practice. For this reason, another objective for future research should be to establish the means for studying LTKI as both propositional and procedural knowledge, and especially to produce data through which the latter aspect can be investigated.

As a further remark on the subcategories listed in Table 6.2, it must be pointed out that in some cases the same subcategory and thematic content were assigned to more than one conceptual domain; this, however, might only be a natural outcome in the analysis of exploratory qualitative data. In the same vein, it should be noted here that the themes and subcategories enlisted in Table 6.2 are not unique to this study but also part of the empirical results and the literature presented in the previous chapters; however, my

exploratory work on the LTKI construct made it necessary to list them here in the form they were referred to by the L2 teachers participating in the current study. Considering, furthermore, that Table 6.2 provides only a condensed description of the salient themes and concepts emerging from the participants' reflective-narrative accounts, the data excerpts in Sections 6.3.2 and 6.3.3 will be crucial in providing further insights into the conceptual domains listed above.

Finally, regarding the stated aim of the study to explore and frame the conceptual domains that LTKI is thought to consist of, it must also be highlighted that the thematic content of the participants' reflective-narrative accounts provided clearer and more varied insights into the LTKI construct than the data collected for Studies 1 and 2. As a result, and in view of the summary in Table 6.2, it can be stated that the themes and subcategories identified in Study 3 were of a greater range and relevance than those of Studies 1 and 2, and also that the reflective activity designed for this study was an appropriate means for the participants to produce content through which the focal construct could be investigated. In addition to these outcomes, the reflective-narrative accounts provided further insights into the complex interrelationships of the conceptual domains (as presupposed in Section 5.3.5) and into the construal of abstract teaching-related concepts as a part of L2 teachers' sense-making about their classroom impact. In the next section, the latter results are discussed in light of some data excerpts taken from the participants' reflective-narrative accounts.

### **6.3.2 Perspectives on the construal of abstract concepts as a vital part of L2 teachers' reflective activity**

In contrast with the perspective that Table 6.2 offered on the main conceptual domains as separate categories, the results in the next two sections provide a different insight altogether into the interrelationships of these components in the participants' sense-making about an L2 teachers' classroom impact. The data excerpts presented in these sections are meant to illustrate how the reflective writing task given to the participants of this study prompted them to express their understandings through the construal of abstract teaching-related concepts, thus providing glimpses of their underlying knowledge being operationalised in the reflective act itself (Woods & Çakır, 2011). Concurrently, the presented results are also meant to illustrate why such products of L2 teachers' reflective-narrative activity are appraised for their conceptual value in the social-constructivist paradigm, prompting Johnson (2006), for instance, to suggest that the complexity of learning-teaching processes, and of L2 teachers' activities within those processes (Feryok, 2012), can be best understood through L2 teachers' emic perspectives on those processes.

As a first example of various conceptual domains being simultaneously drawn upon in a participant’s reflective activity, the excerpt in Table 6.3 illustrates how Teacher 2 construed the notion that an L2 teacher ought to be patient in order to make a favourable classroom impact. In construing a coherent understanding of ‘being patient’ as an abstract teaching-related concept, Teacher 2 was using reflective writing as a tool first to identify ‘patience’ as one of effective L2 teachers’ personal-professional characteristics, and then to explain how this characteristic is related to a framing of L2 teachers’ classroom impact. In turn, the thematic content of the reflective text seems to indicate that in the construal of this understanding Teacher 2 sought to bring together his or her underlying knowledge of personal-professional characteristics (Segment 1.1), interpersonal knowledge (Segment 1.2), and knowledge of professional communication (Segment 1.3), as these together allowed for the focal concept to be formed.

**Table 6.3**  
*Data illustration for one teacher (Teacher 2) construing ‘L2 teachers’ patience’ as an abstract concept*

<b>Concept 1: L2 teachers’ ‘patience’</b>  (Excerpt 1, Teacher 2)	<b>Conceptual domains involved</b>	
	<b>Main category</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>
<b>1.1</b> I also believe that a teacher, especially when teaching children, should always practise tolerance and patience.	• Knowledge of personal-professional characteristics	• The teacher is patient
<b>1.2</b> Children are different in so many ways and a teacher must understand that these differences should not have an influence on their attitude towards their students.	• Interpersonal knowledge	• Differentiated treatment of all students
<b>1.3</b> As I see it, this approach can create a safe and welcoming environment for students, be it young children or adults, which will definitely have an influence on their learning.	• Knowledge of professional communication	• Creating a supportive atmosphere

In another example (Table 6.4), Teacher 8 was using reflective writing as a tool to provide a framing of those classroom behaviours and actions that allow L2 teachers to position themselves as co-learners (i.e. students’ partners in learning), and thereby make a favourable impact on students’ engagement in and experience of L2 learning. Again, what the reflective text made visible was the striving of the participant to construe and grasp an abstract teaching-related concept (i.e. being a co-learner) based on some underlying knowledge that the individual must have developed through formal study and in personal-experiential ways; the latter, in this case, seemed to involve some knowledge of professional communication (Segment 2.2) as well as some intrapersonal and

interpersonal knowledge (Segment 2.1). Apart from offering these insights, Table 6.4 is also meant to illustrate that the thematic content of some data segments (e.g., Segment 2.1) was thought to be reconcilable with more than one conceptual domain, thus supporting earlier claims about the apparent interrelationship of such knowledge components in the framework of LTKI.

**Table 6.4**

*Data illustration for one teacher (Teacher 8) construing 'L2 teachers as co-learners' as an abstract concept*

<b>Concept 2: L2 teachers as 'co-learners'</b>  (Excerpt 2, Teacher 8)	<b>Conceptual domains involved</b>	
	<b>Main category</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>
2.1 He not only teaches but also learns from students. He listens and makes use of students' examples and ideas. It also means that the teacher considers the students' points of view, their activities, languages they already know, etc.	• Interpersonal knowledge	• The teacher wants to learn from students
	• Intrapersonal knowledge	• The teacher wants to grow as a professional
2.2 Therefore, students can contribute to the teaching activity, which in turn gives them confidence and encourages them to make effort to be "famous" (i.e. to be quoted, to be referred to even in other classes), to become the co-author of the teacher.	• Knowledge of professional communication	• Communicating that learning-teaching is a collaborative activity

In the penultimate example of this section (Table 6.5), excerpts from three participants' reflective-narrative accounts are juxtaposed in order to highlight the similarities and the differences that could be observed in cases when the same teaching-related concept was construed by more than one participant as a constituent of L2 teachers' classroom impact. The three participants (i.e. Teachers 15, 2, 10), in this case, were all construing and expressing an understanding of L2 teachers' sense of humour as a prominent source of their classroom impact. However, while the three excerpts were similar in that they framed humour as a tool used by those L2 teachers who know how one's teaching style can make an impact on students' engagement (Dörnyei, 2019), they also differed in describing the purposes and outcomes of using humour in L2 teaching. In other words, while each excerpt referred to humour as a tool for construing a teaching style that is attractive to students, some also framed it as a tool for creating a supportive classroom atmosphere (Segment 3.1), enhancing students' engagement in learning tasks (Segments 3.2 & 4.1), or forging a better relationship between the students and the teacher (Segment 4.3). Arguably then, the excerpts in Table 6.7 show that in framing L2 teacher's sense of

humour as a source of one's classroom impact, the participants drew upon various components (i.e. conceptual domains) of a larger underlying knowledge construct (i.e. LTKI), and put forward understandings of the same teaching-related concept that were varied, to some extent, in subjective ways.

**Table 6.5**

*Data illustration for three teachers (Teachers 15, 2, 10) construing 'L2 teachers' sense of humour' as an abstract concept*

<b>Concept 3: L2 teacher's 'sense of humour'</b>  (Excerpt 3, Teacher 15)	<b>Conceptual domains involved</b>	
	<b>Main category</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>
<b>3.1</b> Good sense of humour is essential to create a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. In a relaxed, stress-free atmosphere students can perform better, it helps the proper input (and output also).	• Knowledge of teaching style	• The teacher can be humorous
	• Knowledge of professional communication	• Creating a supportive atmosphere
<b>3.2</b> Humorous situations and humorous sentences can help the students remember the vocabulary and the grammar. They have nice memories of learning and of the situation and this helps the students activate the vocabulary or grammar easily when it is necessary.	• Knowledge of teaching methods • Knowledge of professional communication	• Using humour before a learning task
(Excerpt 4, Teacher 2)	<b>Main category</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>
<b>4.1</b> Finally, a good (or at least some) sense of humour can lighten up the atmosphere helping students to ease up a little and to concentrate on the tasks ahead.	• Knowledge of teaching style	• The teacher can be humorous
	• Knowledge of teaching methods • Knowledge of professional communication	• Using humour before a learning task
<b>4.2</b> Teaching and learning are complex processes and they tire the minds of those who do it properly.	• Intrapersonal knowledge	• Resting is part of the learning process
<b>4.3</b> A little fun does not hurt anyone and can also contribute to the development of student-teacher relationships.	• Interpersonal knowledge	• Using humour to build relationships
(Excerpt 5, Teacher 10)	<b>Main category</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>
<b>5.1</b> A good sense of humor can lift you up from any bad situation during the lessons.	• Knowledge of teaching style	• The teacher can be humorous



5.2 If you are able to laugh at almost everything you win.	• Intrapersonal knowledge	• Motivating oneself is important
5.3 Cheerfulness is also important during my lessons but it is so hard to be happy all the time. You can't do anything else when you teach young children. If you're happy, your students will enjoy your lessons so much.	• Knowledge of teaching style	• The teacher is enthusiastic

Finally, the fourth example of the section (Table 6.6) is meant to illustrate that despite the small number of L2 teachers involved in this study, the thematic content of their reflective-narrative accounts did provide insights into each conceptual domain associated with the LTKI construct, even if some of these (e.g., cultural knowledge; Domain 8 in Table 6.2) were framed less thoroughly by the participants in the current sample. As in the case of the previous examples, the excerpts presented in Table 6.6 are supposed to show how two of the participants (Teachers 11 & 6) construed and expressed an understanding in which L2 teachers' cultural knowledge constitutes a vital part of their classroom impact. Again, the thematic content itself is crucial in indicating how cultural knowledge is used by some L2 teachers as a tool for making their classroom impact a favourable one, and also in confirming the earlier claim that in the framework of LTKI 'cultural knowledge' does not only refer to an L2 teacher's own battery of cultural knowledge, but also to knowing how to engender favourable dispositions in students towards 'cultural knowledge' itself and towards the way in which the teacher mediates 'cultural knowledge'.

**Table 6.6**

*Data illustration for two teachers (Teachers 11 & 6) construing 'L2 teachers' cultural knowledge' as an abstract concept*

Concept 4: L2 teacher's 'cultural knowledge' (Excerpt 6, Teacher 11)	Conceptual domains involved	
	Main category	Subcategory
6.1 The third on my list is <b>cultural awareness</b> . When teaching a foreign language it is crucial to have background knowledge of a culture we are teaching about. Culture and language cannot be separated and treated as two different things. They belong together especially in modern language teaching. There are so many ways nowadays to present students with cultural materials that will raise their cultural awareness and will make the	• Cultural knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displaying culture-specific knowledge in class</li> <li>• Applying culture-specific learning materials</li> </ul>

language learning process and language lessons more interesting and more enjoyable.		
<b>(Excerpt 7, Teacher 6)</b>	<b>Main category</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>
7.1 The second characteristic is <i>eloquence and literacy</i> . I have only began my career as an elementary school teacher and in my short experience I have already encountered several occasions when I had to attest to my literacy. Language teaching is not limited to grammar and vocabulary, it concerns social and cultural knowledge as well. Teachers must be prepared on many subjects if they teach a certain language, this concerns culture, cuisine, arts, history, health, sciences and even geography.	• Cultural knowledge	• Displaying culture-specific knowledge in class
	• Knowledge of personal-professional characteristics	• The teacher is knowledgeable

In drawing some interim conclusions from the results presented above, it must be first pointed out that the comparison of multiple participants' perspectives on the same teaching-related concepts was certainly relevant in the exploration of the LTKI construct, both because it drew attention to the similarities in the participants' understandings and underlying knowledge, and because the varied thematic content of the reflective-narrative accounts allowed for a wider range of insights to be gained about the interrelationship of various conceptual domains in L2 teachers' sense-making. In turn, due to these differences in the analysed thematic content, the results also seemed to corroborate my earlier claim that the role of L2 teachers' reflective activity should be not only to bring current beliefs and understandings of individuals into focal awareness, but also to encourage the discussion and exchange of alternative understandings in local or even cross-cultural professional communities (Chick, 2015; Johnson, 2015; Kumaravadivelu, 2012), thus creating space for their existing conceptions to change in favourable ways (Feryok, 2010; Yuan & Lee, 2014). Finally, a crucial methodological implication of the results in this section seemed to be that if LTKI is to be explored through L2 teachers' written reflective-narrative accounts, then the participants should be provided with a sufficient amount of space for the construal of abstract teaching-related concepts, and the units of analysis need to be longer, conceptually intertwined segments of text rather than the same segments viewed in separation from one another. In the next section, the latter claim is to be supported by framing a participant's full-length reflective text as a larger unit of analysis.

### 6.3.3 Finalising a tentative model of LTKI as a composite of multiple conceptual domains

Since in Section 6.3.1 it was already argued that the exploration of LTKI should involve the in-depth analysis of a few selected teachers' sense-making, the focus of this study is hereupon shifted to one Hungarian in-service L2 teacher's full-length reflective-narrative text as a larger unit of analysis. Clearly, the insights that can be gained from one short reflective-narrative text of a participant are still limited. However, by putting Teacher 11's description of five different teacher characteristics in perspective, the results in Table 6.7 are thought to demonstrate, again, the complex interconnectedness of various conceptual domains in the participant's sense-making, and to provide further ground for my framing of LTKI from a CDST perspective.

**Table 6.7**

*Data illustration for the interaction of multiple LTKI-related conceptual domains in an in-service L2 teacher's full-length reflective text*

<b>Concept 5: Five characteristics of a language teacher that will have an influence on students' learning</b> (Full text, Teacher 11: female, aged 40, had taught English to teenagers for 16 years)	<b>Conceptual domains involved</b>	
	<b>Main category</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>
<b>8.1</b> In my opinion, there are several qualities that a good teacher must have regardless of what he or she teaches. But let us concentrate on teaching foreign languages.	None	None
<b>8.2</b> So, the first I would mention is <b>patience</b> . You can be the best teacher in the world with all the necessary characteristics if you do not have patience. Patience with children, patience with colleagues and usually just a whole lot of patience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of personal-professional characteristics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher is patient</li> </ul>
<b>8.3</b> A teacher should never give up on children; if they do not understand one way he should try out another.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of professional communication</li> <li>• Interpersonal knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differentiated communication with individuals</li> </ul>
<b>8.4 Classroom management and discipline</b> is very important as it can boost students' motivation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of professional communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining classroom discipline</li> <li>• Knowing how to manage a class</li> </ul>

<p><b>8.5</b> A successful teacher should be well-organized both in his/her mind and in the classroom as in a well-managed classroom teaching can be more effective and the atmosphere is more relaxed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intrapersonal knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being strategic and organised is important</li> <li>• Only focusing on teaching when in class</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of professional communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a supportive atmosphere</li> </ul>
<p><b>8.6</b> I think it is necessary to sit down with a new class on the very first lesson and set up the rules the class will have to keep. I personally make the students set up their own rules regarding discipline, homework, being late etc. as in this way they feel they can add something to the class also and they feel more important.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of professional communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicating and negotiating classroom norms</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of personal-professional characteristics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher is consistent</li> </ul>
<p><b>8.7</b> The third on my list is <b>cultural awareness</b>. When teaching a foreign language it is crucial to have background knowledge of a culture we are teaching about. Culture and language cannot be separated and treated as two different things. They belong together especially in modern language teaching. There are so many ways nowadays to present students with cultural materials that will raise their cultural awareness and will make the language learning process and language lessons more interesting and more enjoyable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displaying culture-specific knowledge in class</li> <li>• Applying culture-specific learning materials</li> </ul>
<p><b>8.8</b> <b>Meaningful lessons</b> are also part of a successful teacher's plan: lessons that make sense, teachers using the right course material.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of teaching methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning the pedagogical process</li> </ul>
<p><b>8.9</b> Bigger chunks of grammar should always be broken down to smaller bits so that all students can understand it language lessons should always be communication-oriented, student-friendly, exciting and interesting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of language development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making L2 classes communication-oriented</li> </ul>
<p><b>8.10</b> A good teacher <b>loves teaching</b> and loves her job as a teacher. A good teacher is enjoying her lessons and if she is enjoying her own lessons, the students will too. A teacher cannot be effective if she does not like her job and is always passionate because if students do not like the teacher, they will not like the subject either.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intrapersonal knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher is strongly motivated to teach</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of teaching style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher is enthusiastic</li> </ul>

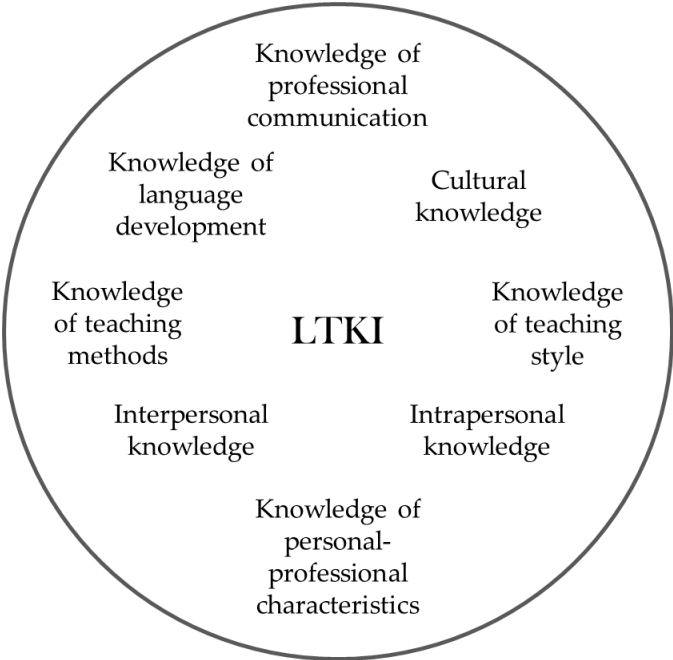
In view of the thematic content and the categories shown in Table 6.7, it is most important to note that the analysis of Teacher 11's reflective-narrative text produced results that seemed to corroborate a number of earlier claims about the LTKI construct. The first of

these claims, based on the findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5 (also in Henry & Thorsen, 2019; Mercer, 2018), was that L2 teachers' understandings (here: knowledge) of their impact are likely to come about from the understandings they have developed in various conceptual domains, and that these domains should be understood as congenial constituents of LTKI rather than as separable mental structures. In this sense, what the reflective-narrative text of Teacher 11 (and of other participants; see Appendix E) seemed to indicate was that in making sense about an L2 teacher's classroom impact, the participant tried to construe a coherent understanding by drawing on various conceptual domains, suggesting that a simultaneous focus on those domains is necessary for LTKI to emerge as an operational knowledge construct. As the space for and the content of the participant's reflective activity were, to some extent, limited by the framing of the reflective writing task itself, it is apparent from Table 6.7 that Teacher 11's reflective text did not make reference to all eight conceptual domains identified in Section 6.3.1. However, in contrast with the shorter excerpts presented in Section 6.3.2, the text above provides a better illustration of the range of conceptual domains that the participant drew on while engaged in the reflective activity.

Apart from this perspective on the range of conceptual domains involved in the participant's sense-making, the analysis of the participant's full-length reflective-narrative account provided additional insights into the complex interrelationships of the conceptual domains as well. More specifically, in light of the composite categories displayed in Table 6.7 and the alternation of the conceptual domains throughout the text, the results drew renewed attention to our earlier claim that the conceptual domains identified in this and the previous studies can be supposed to co-exist and interact in complex ways to form the body of knowledge labelled as LTKI, and to change dynamically over time and in the flux of classroom situations (Feryok, 2018, p. 108) as a teacher's knowledge becomes gradually more extensive due to formal study and learning in personal-experiential ways (Feryok, 2010; Woods & Çakır, 2011). Again, considering the nature of the data collected for Study 3, it must be acknowledged that the results did not provide sufficient insight into the presupposed temporal development of LTKI, and neither into the way in which LTKI is related to L2 teachers' classroom actions and practices. Still, in view of the growing number of studies that have described L2 teachers' cognition as a complex dynamic system (e.g., Borg, 2006; Feryok, 2010, 2018; Woods & Çakır, 2011), it seemed appropriate to maintain a CDST perspective when framing the LTKI construct, rather than to rely on complexity theory (e.g., Larsen-Freeman, 2002) only.

In light of these insights, and also the ones gained from Studies 1 and 2, the eight salient conceptual domains are graphically represented in Figure 6.2 as congenial components in

the LTKI construct, contending that LTKI as a specific area of L2 teachers' knowledge is currently thought to be best framed as a complex dynamic system, in which the complex interrelationships of the components allow L2 teachers to develop coherent understandings of their roles and impact in L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity. In turn, these understandings and LTKI itself are thought to be best framed as conceptual tools (Freeman & Johnson, 2005) that L2 teachers operationalise when engaged in L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity, and also when engaged in reflective-narrative activities that require them to draw upon this area of knowledge. Considering, however, that the exploratory data in Studies 1-3 only allowed for limited insights into the participants' sense-making through their written reflective-narrative accounts, it must be emphasised that the theoretical model in Figure 6.2 is still a tentative one, calling for further research into the eight conceptual domains and their framing from a CDST perspective.



**Figure 6.2.** *Graphic illustration and tentative theoretical model of the LTKI construct based on the conceptual domains identified in Chapters 4, 5, and 6*

**6.4 Conclusion**

In view of the current study as the last stage of my grounded-theory project (Section 6.1), its contribution to my exploratory work on the LTKI concept has been a major one in both content and methodology. Concerning the latter, the study is different from the previous two (i.e. Chapters 4 & 5) and from the ones I came across during secondary research in that the reflective-narrative accounts collected from Hungarian in-service L2 teachers

focused specifically on the impact they have on students' engagement in and experience of L2 learning, and that the units of analysis were larger, conceptually intertwined segments of text rather than decontextualized chunks focusing on one salient concept at a time. As of these methodological and analytical features, the study focused on the exploration of key conceptual domains through qualitative data, and on the construal of abstract teaching-related concepts as a characteristic feature of L2 teachers' sense-making, rather than on frequencies of occurrence; the latter, however, is also a realistic objective for future research in which the relevance of the tentative LTKI model is to be tested.

At the same time, the results presented in the study allowed for the emerging LTKI construct to be further explored through the products of a specially framed reflective activity, and led to a data-based framing of eight conceptual domains as congenial components in the LTKI construct, in which the complex interrelationships of these domains are thought to result in the emergence of LTKI as a body of L2 teachers' knowledge. Together with the results of Studies 1 and 2, the questions raised for further research, and the tentative LTKI model that was put forward as a major outcome of my grounded-theory project, Study 3 is hoped to serve as a basis for conceptual work concerning L2 teachers' sense-making about L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity, and especially about their roles and impact in classroom interpersonal processes.

## **Final conclusions**

### **Summarising the main findings of the exploratory research into LTKI**

In drawing some conclusions about the main findings of the dissertation, the first note must be taken of the LTKI construct, and the concept itself as a viable alternative to other concepts that are currently used in research focusing on the relational processes involved in L2 learning-teaching and the ways in which L2 teachers make sense of these processes. Crucially, even though the studies in this line of research have now started to substantiate a perspective on L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity of students and teachers (Freeman & Johnson, 2005) and on 'relating' as an activity that L2 teachers are supposed to carry out as part of their 'teaching' activity (Mercer, 2018), they are also characterised by an apparent conceptual and terminological disparity concerning the forms of underlying knowledge that L2 teachers operationalise when engaged in or reflecting on L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity.

Thus, as a response to recent research into L2 teachers' socio-emotional intelligence (Dewaele et al., 2018; Gkonou & Mercer, 2017), relational beliefs (Gkonou & Mercer, 2018), or empathy and responsiveness (Henry & Thorsen, 2019; Warren, 2018), the dissertation proposes a narrower focus on LTKI as a specific area of L2 teachers' knowledge (Woods & Çakır, 2011), and as a construct that underlies L2 teachers' sense-making about their own impact on students' engagement in and experience of classroom L2 learning (Hattie, 2012). Arguably, by proposing and elaborating this conceptual focus, the dissertation indicates that my exploratory research on the LTKI construct is situated in a social-constructivist framing of L2 learning-teaching (Lantolf, 2011; Ortega, 2011) and L2 teachers' knowledge (Golombek, 2009; Johnson, 2006, 2009, 2015), in which LTKI is regarded as a conceptual tool (Freeman & Johnson, 2005) that L2 teachers operationalise when engaged in L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity, and also when engaged in reflective-narrative activities that require them to draw upon this area of knowledge. In the latter regard, and in line with what researchers of reflective teaching suggest (e.g., Bartlett, 1990; Kalaja et al., 2015; Kumaravadivelu, 2012), a main methodological finding of the dissertation is that the exploration of LTKI as a knowledge construct can be carried out through the written products of L2 teachers' reflective-narrative activity; even though this often means that the salient conceptual categories are inferred from the data by one or more analysts (Nunan & Bailey, 2009).

As for the insights that were gained about the LTKI construct through the analysis of in-service L2 teachers' and pre-service EFL teachers' reflective-narrative accounts, a number of conceptual outcomes ought to be recounted here. The most important of these is,



arguably, the framing of LTKI as a multi-componential construct in which the complex interrelationships of eight salient conceptual domains result in the emergence of a collective body of knowledge, allowing L2 teachers, at any level of professional development, to make sense of their own impact on students' engagement in and experience of classroom L2 learning. In line with what other studies have suggested about the nature and development of L2 teachers' knowledge and cognition (e.g., Borg, 2006; Feryok, 2010, 2018; Woods & Çakır, 2011), the dissertation also contends that LTKI is likely to subsume both propositional and procedural knowledge (Shulman, 1986/1994), which L2 teachers develop and appropriate through the formal study of L2 learning-teaching, through learning in personal-experiential ways, and through the reflective-narrative activities in which these forms of sense-making are brought together (Borg, 2003).

To support these claims with a concrete example, in Chapter 5 it was suggested that the terms 'intrapersonal knowledge' and 'interpersonal knowledge' (i.e. two components in the LTKI construct) refer to both propositional and procedural knowledge that L2 teachers have acquired about intrapersonal factors such as being aware of one's professional wellbeing, setting personal-professional goals, or increasing one's self-efficacy, and interpersonal factors such as being aware of students' developmental and relational needs, striving to know students as individuals, or respecting others' lives and ideas. As in the case of the other conceptual domains (see theoretical model in Section 6.3.3), procedural knowledge is also relevant in the framing of intrapersonal and interpersonal knowledge in that L2 teachers should not only have a storable knowledge of the factors listed above, but also make sure that their underlying knowledge is manifest in their classroom actions (cp. Feryok, 2018), allowing their students as well to develop understandings in the intrapersonal and interpersonal domains. At the same time, it must be noted here that the insights gained through the participants' reflective-narrative accounts were insights into their propositional knowledge only, thereby calling for further research in which the procedural aspects of LTKI can also be examined in more detail.

In addition to supporting the framing and identification of the eight conceptual domains as congenial components in the LTKI construct, the analysis of the participants' reflective-narrative accounts also gave insights into the apparently complex interconnectedness of those components in L2 teachers' sense-making about their classroom impact. These insights, in turn, led to a tentative framing of the LTKI construct as a complex dynamic system, contending that the eight conceptual domains identified in the dissertation can be supposed to co-exist and interact in complex ways to form the body of knowledge labelled as LTKI, and to change dynamically over time (Feryok, 2018, p. 108) as a teacher's

knowledge becomes gradually more extensive due to formal study and learning in personal-experiential ways (Feryok, 2010; Woods & Çakır, 2011). Again, while this CDST perspective on the LTKI construct has fundamentally influenced the conceptual outcomes of my exploratory research, it must be noted that neither of the three empirical studies (Chapters 4-6) provided sufficient insight into the way in which LTKI is related to L2 teachers' classroom actions and practices, and the way in which the prominence of the identified conceptual domains may change over time within the system. To look further into the relevance of CDST in the framing of LTKI is, in this sense, a crucial task for future research.

Finally, if examined from the perspective of the requisite L2 teacher competences discussed in Chapter 1, the results of the dissertation also indicate that L2 teachers' familiarity with and expertise in those competence areas is likely to impinge on their sense-making about an L2 teacher's classroom impact as well. For instance, while in Chapter 5 it was lamented that Hungarian and Turkish pre-service EFL teachers showed hardly any concern for L2 teacher competences such as lesson planning, assessment and evaluation, cooperation with other professionals, and devotion to professional development, the reflective-narrative accounts of Hungarian in-service L2 teachers in Chapter 6 indicated a clear awareness for each of these competences (see Borg & Edmett, 2018) as potential constituents of an L2 teacher's classroom impact. In this sense, the findings of the dissertation seem to corroborate that those L2 teachers who have developed an expertise in a wider range of competence areas are more able to develop understandings about the relational processes involved in L2 learning-teaching as well, and about the ways in which their own competences may shape the impact that they, as teachers, have on their students' engagement in and experience of L2 learning.

### **Reflecting on the limitations of the research**

As for the limitations of the research, a most important one to reflect on is the way in which the different groups of participants were represented in two of the empirical studies (Studies 1 & 2), and particularly in the sections where the data from these groups were presented and interpreted. In Study 1, for instance, data excerpts from L2 learners' and in-service L2 teachers' reflective-narrative accounts were frequently juxtaposed in order to highlight similarities in their thematic content, even though the stated aim of the study was to focus primarily on the in-service teachers' perspectives and sense-making. For the latter reason, the contextual differences existing in the learner group (i.e. Austrian and Hungarian L2 learners) were also disregarded. Similarly, in Study 2 the data excerpts from Hungarian and Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' reflective-narrative accounts were mostly presented in joint thematic units and conceptual categories, as the underlying

concepts were considered more important than the contextual differences. Considering, however, that the research aimed to accurately represent the emic perspectives of the participants, it can be concluded that the data from different groups of participants should have been better separated in Studies 1 and 2, and the Austrian and Turkish educational contexts should have been introduced in more detail as well.

The second obvious limitation to reflect on is that the exploratory research in this dissertation was entirely based on the written reflective-narrative accounts of the participants, even though a focus on different types of data would also be desirable in gaining further insights into the LTKI construct. In this regard, it must be noted that the reflective writing tasks that were used for data collection (Appendices A-D) invited the participants to produce short written reflective-narrative accounts, and did not allow for individual cases to be explored in sufficient detail or over a longer period of time. To counterbalance these limitations, it should also be pointed out that the reflective writing tasks were crucial tools for the participants to express their understandings of various teaching-related concepts in a structured and coherent way, and also for the researcher to collect exploratory qualitative data from relatively large groups of participants in a variety of contexts.

Finally, a third substantial limitation to address is that even though the conceptual work in this dissertation was grounded entirely in qualitative data, the analytical procedures were carried out by a single researcher rather than by two or more analysts focusing on the same dataset. This, in the case of a grounded-theory project, is a major limitation because even if the researcher had developed a thorough understanding of the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of a given field, the reliability of coding and data analysis can be fundamentally enhanced if two or more experts collaborate in framing the emerging construct (Nunan & Bailey, 2009, pp. 429-430). Thus, although the recursive analysis of the participants' reflective-narrative accounts was thoroughly supported by secondary research into L2 teachers' cognition and knowledge (Chapters 1 & 2), L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity (Chapter 2), and the methodological principles of qualitative inquiry and grounded theory (Chapter 3), future research into LTKI through new or the existing data must be clearly based on a collaborative approach to the conceptual work involved.

### **Reflecting on the pedagogical implications of the research**

Despite the limitations highlighted above, it can be concluded that both the results of the dissertation and the procedures employed for data collection are important to consider from the perspective of L2 teachers and L2 teacher educators as well. Regarding the

results, and also the theoretical framework in which the results are embedded, the dissertation is hoped to draw attention to the importance of awareness raising among L2 teachers for the relational processes that are inherently involved in L2 learning-teaching, to 'relating' as an activity that L2 teachers are supposed to carry out as part of their 'teaching' activity (Freeman & Johnson, 2005; Mercer, 2018), and to the fundamental impact that L2 teachers have on their students' engagement in and experience of L2 learning. In the latter regard, the accumulated reflective-narrative data and the outline of the LTKI construct can be seen as fundamental guidelines for L2 teachers to understand what their own classroom impact consists of, and how to focus on LTKI as an area of their knowledge that might be developed in deliberate ways.

With regard to the data collection instruments and procedures employed, the most important implications for L2 teacher educators are that the presented reflective writing tasks can not only serve as tools for eliciting L2 teachers' reflections on key teaching-related concepts, but also as tools for promoting the subsequent discussion of alternative understandings within local or even cross-cultural professional communities (Chick, 2015; Johnson, 2015; Kumaravadivelu, 2012). By encouraging L2 teachers to participate in such collective reflective activities, L2 teacher educators have the opportunity to create space for the teachers' existing conceptions to change in favourable ways (Feryok, 2010; Kalaja et al., 2015; Yuan & Lee, 2014), and to enhance the skills and willingness of L2 teachers for collaboration (Barócsi, 2014), which is thought to fundamentally support teacher learning and professional growth.

### **Suggesting directions for further research**

Altogether, it can be concluded that the conceptual outcomes of the dissertation are relevant in the exploration of L2 teachers' sense-making about their roles and impact in L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity, and in providing a basis for further research conducted in this area after the relational turn in SLA and TEFL/TESOL research. Although in the empirical chapters it was repeatedly pointed out that the current research design has only allowed for a tentative model of LTKI to be put forward, this model is thought to be applicable as a framework for coding, categorising, and interpreting additional reflective-narrative data collected for case studies of a few selected teachers.

This, arguably, is one of the main directions for future research on LTKI: it involves a more in-depth investigation of L2 teachers' sense-making through self-report data and through the observation of the teachers during classroom teaching and over a longer period of time. The reason for this is that different types of self-report data, including written reflective-narrative accounts, teacher journals, or interview data (Borg, 2006), may

provide different and more in-depth insights into L2 teachers' sense-making about the relational processes involved in L2 learning-teaching, about their roles and impact in those processes, and thereby into LTKI as a construct that underlies that sense-making. If the collection of such data is carried out repeatedly over a longer period of time, the results will also provide a better insight into the temporal changes that supposedly characterise LTKI as a complex dynamic system; this aspect of the tentative theoretical model must clearly be examined through further research. Additionally, if future case studies involve the collection of observational data as well, they may provide an insight into how the expressed understandings of L2 teachers are related to their classroom behaviours and actions; such insights would also be crucial in the framing of LTKI from a CDST perspective.

Finally, another main direction to consider is the formulation of a quantitative research framework, in which a data collection instrument is designed based on the components of the tentative LTKI model, and then administered to a larger number of L2 teachers in Hungary, or possibly in a wider variety of contexts. This way, the understandings that were gained about the LTKI construct through exploratory qualitative data could be tested and further developed, thus creating space for the tentative LTKI model to be re-examined in light of large-scale empirical evidence.

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## Appendix A – Reflective writing task for L2 learners as a data collection instrument (Study 1, Chapter 4)

Your age:                      You are:    male / female                      Number of languages you've learned:

Are you studying to be a language teacher?    Yes / No

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*Dear Student,*

*This task is a key constituent of a Master's Degree research project conducted at the University of Pécs, Hungary. The aim of this project is to explore and describe how university students of English as a foreign language think about demotivation, and especially demotivating features or practices of teachers in the language classroom. In order to gain an insight, participants are kindly asked to express their ideas through a short written composition. All the texts and data produced by the participants will be used anonymously and exclusively for the purposes of the present research project.*

*If you agree to participate in this research project under the above conditions, please sign this paper before you submit it. Don't forget to attach this sheet to any printed or hand-written compositions that you hand in. In case you send an e-mail, please include your name and the above required personal information. Thank you for your contribution.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Task: I am interested in finding out more about what trainee teachers and language learners think makes a demotivating teacher.

Please write a short text entitled: **“The most demotivating language teacher ever.”** You can focus on a real language teacher or an imagined person. The important thing is to make clear in your story what it is that makes this teacher such a bad, demotivating language teacher in your eyes.

As I am interested in the detailed descriptions of such teachers, it would be great if you could write at least 1 page (300 words). Feel free to write longer if you have more ideas to share. 😊

When to submit: [deadline].

Where to submit: in class or via e-mail.



## Appendix B – Reflective writing task for in-service L2 teachers as a data collection instrument (Study 1, Chapter 4)

*Dear colleague,*

*Hereby I invite you to participate in my PhD research project conducted at the University of Pécs. My aim is to explore how teachers of English or other foreign languages think about student demotivation. If you agree to share your thoughts, experiences, stories, and opinion in the form of short written texts, please read and follow the instructions below. All texts and data of the participants will be used anonymously and exclusively for the purposes of the present research project.*

*Thank you for your participation.*

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### Part 1: Characterize a demotivating language teacher from students' perspective

In this part, please think about students similar to the ones you teach and try to put yourself into their shoes. Write a short text about a language teacher whom you think students find absolutely demotivating. The title of your text could be:



*The most demotivating language teacher for students*

Please list **5 reasons** why students think that the teacher you characterize is so demotivating.

As I am interested in the detailed descriptions of such teachers, please try to write at least 1 page (300 words). Feel free to write longer if you have more ideas to share. 😊

Where to submit: in class or via e-mail (Subject: demotivation)

When to submit: [deadline]

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Background information (necessary):

Your age: \_\_\_\_\_ You are: male / female

You have been a teacher of the \_\_\_\_\_ language(s) for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

Most of your students are: children / teenagers / adolescents / adults

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## Appendix C – Reflective template for pre-service EFL teachers as a data collection instrument (Study 2, Chapter 5)

**My views as a teacher:** Complete the sentences below to form statements about your views as a teacher. In sentences that offer you a choice between two options (marked with a slash), please, underline the one that you will argue for. There are no right and wrong answers, the point is that the statements hold true for you.

Statement of consent (required):

I accept that my answers will be anonymously used up as research data:     **YES / NO**

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1. If I think of a good language teacher, the first thing that comes to my mind is...
2. If I was working as a teacher, the most important thing I would teach my students is...
3. One thing I would never do as a teacher is...
4. If there's one thing that annoys a teacher, it is...
5. If I could give a piece of advice to my old language teacher, it would be to...
6. Besides the subject knowledge, a language teacher needs to know...
7. The job of a language teacher is *harder / easier*, because...
8. A teacher's personality is *also important / not so important*, because...
9. I once had a language teacher who...
10. The ideal teacher is...

## Appendix D – Reflective writing task for in-service L2 teachers as a data collection instrument (Study 3, Chapter 6)

Dear colleague,

Hereby I invite you to participate in my PhD research project conducted at the University of Pécs. My aim is to explore how teachers of English or other foreign languages think about the roles and tasks of language teachers. If you agree to share your thoughts, experiences, stories, and opinion in the form of short written texts, please read and follow the instructions below. All texts and data of the participants will be used anonymously and exclusively for the purposes of the present research project.

Thank you for your participation.

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### Concept: Language teacher influences



To clarify this concept, please think about students similar to the ones you teach and try to put yourself into their shoes. Write a short text in which you list **five** characteristics of a language teacher that are likely to influence students' learning, motivation, or their attitudes to language learning. The title of your text could be:

*5 characteristics of a language teacher that will have an influence on students' learning*

As I am interested in the detailed descriptions of these characteristics, please explain how these can influence students' learning, or how they are related to your own teaching experience. Try to write at least 1 page (300 words). Feel free to write longer if you have more ideas to share. 😊

Where to submit: in class or via e-mail (Subject: Language teacher influences)

When to submit: [deadline]

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Background information (required):

Your age: \_\_\_\_\_ You are: male / female

You have been a teacher of the \_\_\_\_\_ language(s) for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

Most of your students are: children / teenagers / adolescents / adults

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## Appendix E – Samples of reflective-narrative texts collected for Studies 1 and 3

### Part 1: Samples of L2 learners' reflective-narrative accounts (n=5) related to teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation (Study 1; Appendix A)

#### Sample 1.1 (Student 1)

##### The most demotivating language teacher ever

I personally had a lot of different language teachers. Starting from amazing, motivated teachers, who encouraged me to become a teacher myself, to boring, monotone teachers, who made me think about the real aim of a teacher. The most demotivating tasks are always those which do not show the goal of the activity.

Demotivating teachers were especially those who started most of their language courses with a DVD or movie. It didn't seem as they were prepared for the session. It was a clear case of "occupation therapy". Of course these teachers didn't miss out on the phrase: "Please make notes so we can discuss it next week!" but this never actually happened. Movies are mostly boring and should be discussed in class beforehand. The aim of the movie should be clear and the students would be interested instead of bored.

Another demotivating task of language teachers is copying from a book into your own exercise book. This was the most frequent task in primary school. Especially grammar exercises were the teacher's favourite. We did not understand the grammar field nor did we understand the aim of the actual action. I think the teacher thought we would be able to learn all the grammar rules without further explanations through the magic of our pens.

Finally, the worst thing I experienced in school was the exam preparation by teachers who solely focus on the school book. I hated it if we had not a clear outcome of school sessions. Some teachers just told stories throughout the semester and when it came to exam week he/she opened the book and told us which chapters of the book will be covered in the exam. Sometimes we had to study things we have never got an input in class. Studying for these exams was so depressing. Of course the teacher's statement was that we had to figure out what's important in high school and university ourselves and we just get prepared for that. I don't believe that this is a good system in primary or secondary school. But the most annoying thing about these exams, the questions were never based on general things or important facts but tiny foot notes in the book which led to depressing and demotivating results for the students.

## Sample 1.2 (Student 4)

### The most demotivating language teacher

A demotivating teacher is one who makes fun of my errors in public. This is a real humiliation and only creates tension between me and the teacher. For me it is very important that I like the teacher also on a personal level in order to have respect. If the teacher ridicules me I will definitely lose respect and will not work hard for the course.

If I try very hard to improve and the teacher, irrespective of my improvement, carries on criticising my work constantly I will lose interest in his/her course. I remember one teacher who gave us a really detailed feedback of our homework. It was really helpful on the one hand as every minor mistake was corrected and as the teacher also tried to improve each sentence. However, it was really demotivating to receive a correction and feedback that was longer than the entire text. As a result, I did not have the impression that I learned a lot because it was more frustrating to see all the negative comments and improvements but never to get a positive feedback too.

A demotivating teacher is also someone who does not explain certain grammar rules or exceptions but just states: "Learn it by heart." if I cannot see a logical structure behind a certain pattern it is more difficult to learn and I will progress less.

A demotivating teacher has no variety of tasks and activities and likes to listen to him/her all the time and is not interested in the pupil's own ideas and opinions. If a course is based on a certain routine it can be helpful to create a comfortable and silent classroom atmosphere but if there is no variety of tasks, this might be really frustrating and boring. I like a great variety of different activities ranging from reading, writing, listening and speaking activities and it is important to do group or pair work too as it supports classroom dynamics, reduces tensions and help to develop fluency. If a teacher only distributes texts I am supposed to read and to summarize in silence, this is definitely demotivating as I would not see any purpose to it.

It is also demotivating for me if teachers do not keep to promises or are really unjust when it comes to grades. If teachers do not respect my own ideas or point of view I will contribute less to the lesson as I have the impression that the teacher is not really interested in what I am saying.

## Sample 1.3 (Student 5)

### „The most demotivating language teacher“

The most demotivating language teacher I know is my own English teacher from commercial college. In general, he was a nice man and he was always interested in what was going on in the lives of my classmates and me. Unfortunately, he was a bit too interested into these side issues and often forgot to focus on the more important things a teacher has to do in school: teaching kids how to talk and write English for example.

What annoyed me the most about my teacher was the fact that we did not talk in English during his classes. We usually talked in German and our discussions often went off-topic. In fact, we mostly ended up talking with our teacher about what we had done at the weekend or during the holidays. We did not learn nearly any new vocabulary or grammar during his lessons. In the few cases, in which our teacher actually tried to teach us something, he explained everything in German. During exam situations, however, only writing or speaking in English was allowed. To me, that seemed quite unfair as we never had the chance to practice our language skills before exams. Somehow my teacher did not see the connection between practice and learning.

In contrast to my classmates I was lucky: I have always been pretty good in language subjects at school and I always managed to write As on my English exams. However, my classmates did not do so well during these exams – especially because they lacked practice. The grades of my classmates, therefore, ranged from C to F most of the time. When giving back the corrected exams, our teacher usually held a lecture to them about studying more and reading more books. However, everybody in the class room – apart from my teacher – knew whose fault it really was. Unfortunately, we could never tell him about the problems we had with his teaching method (if there was a method behind his teaching at all) as we simply were too scared to offend him and to get even worse grades as a punishment. Fortunately, all my classmates somehow managed to pass the “Matura” exam in English – although most of them could barely speak English at all.



## Sample 1.4 (Student 17)

### The most demotivating teachers

Yawning like Chewbacca, got scribbles all over your exercise book, having piles of undone homework and still being indifferent of your tutor's presence at class? These are the basic symptoms of having a "demotivating" teacher. Let's see how you can identify such a tinker amongst the professionals. Don't worry, you won't need any magnifying glasses or DNA analyzer, because the features of the most demotivating teachers can be easily detected. Just open your eyes and ears and observe the followings:

First of all, their lessons are deadly dull. Why? Because either they apply wrong teaching methods (for instance, despising the blessings of the modern world's technology and making you do monotonous tasks) or they are anti-talents in presenting and imparting their knowledge – if they have any -, it can turn out they don't even have a solid knowledge of their own scope of duty... The speed of their talk is also influential: if it's too fast, it makes you give up making notes in order to avoid inflammation in your joints; if it's too slow, you're sure to be end up in your ice cream castle playing on a seesaw with Archie, the piglet, as you continue your dream you've started the night before.

The teachers' attitude is very important, as well. If they cancel classes more than 2-3 times, keep "forgetting" agreements, or they are low-spirited, bored and don't bother to make any effort to help you making progress during the course, then these should ring the bell that something is utterly wrong. Or they just simply hate younger generations because of their age. In this case, only a psychologist can be called to the rescue.

Personality is another crucial point which is closely connected to attitude. "Loser" teachers usually are not respected as much as their colleagues, they have weak personality, cannot communicate properly with students and they are irresolute. Another negative trait is when they have high demands, but are not willing to help you in any way. It means the lowest point in student-teacher relationship when they don't know your name yet after staring at your face 1,5 hours a week for 2-3 months. The last step in "How to be 100% demotivated" is when you have a huge space between the teacher and yourself. To get motivation, you need to sympathize to some degree with your teacher.

I have met many teachers during my studies. Unfortunately, 2/3 of them belonged to this category discussed above. Incompetent teachers have always existed, always do and always will. What I hope is that the amount of such bunglers will reduce with time, so the future generation can enjoy learning and not just "survive" the school years.

### Sample 1.5 (Student 24)

Patrik -- "The most demotivating language teacher ever."

The most demotivating language teacher I have ever had was probably one of my German teachers during my primary school years. I had not been especially fond of languages when I was 6-10 but I liked my German class. However, when I was 10-14 years old, I had become so demotivated, I wanted to give up completely studying this language. At the secondary school, I had a chance to study English which changed my point of view on languages and I even started to learn German again.

I was thinking so many times on my primary school language education: what was wrong with it and why I left it in a demotivated manner? Unfortunately, one of the reasons was my language teacher. There were some students in my class who did not really have problems with studying this language which was an interesting phenomenon, because the rest of the class was struggling and could not really build up even a simple sentence. This part of the group did not have a considerable vocabulary, knowledge of grammar and practise in application. As a classroom activity the group was dealing with a topic on every lesson, we were given a list of words we needed to learn but after the tests, we did not really know how to apply this newly received knowledge. On one hand, our teacher was satisfied with the efficiency of the pupils who could cope with the language more easily and was happy that they knew how to express themselves on a particular level. On the other hand, she was happy that the rest of the class could mug the subject somehow. Another demotivating factor we experienced was that she did not really concentrate on helping us or to give some advice or motivation. The curriculum was on the board and the lessons were conducted but without any significant success.

To summarize, our language teacher did not really give us inspiration to apply this language and did not really helped or motivated us to ask questions. In addition, she held the lessons but we were only listening without any common activity; therefore, the classes were very boring. (360 w)

## Part 2: Samples of in-service L2 teachers' reflective-narrative accounts (n=5) related to teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation (Study 1; Appendix B)

### Sample 2.1 (Teacher 3)

#### Demotivating teachers

*The personality of the teacher.* To my mind teachers are role models, either positive or negative, to some extent. Even if students are not conscious of it, their teachers inevitably

influence them in many levels, due to the amount of time they spend together in the classroom. A teacher who is overall negative (pessimistic, aggressive, incalculable, alienating or ignorant) does not have a good chance to involve students actively in classroom activities. If a teacher is not approachable to some extent he or she cannot create a relaxed atmosphere to support learning. On the other hand, he or she should not be too lenient, undetermined or disorganized. It is also advisable not to have a shabby appearance or bad hygiene.

***Personal attitude towards teaching.*** At the beginning of their careers teachers tend to have a lot of enthusiasm for their subjects and teaching in general. But if the amount of energy and creativity one puts into preparing for classes seem fruitless, due to the lack of motivation on part of the students or some other factors, with time the excitement of teaching wears off. The teacher then might feel disillusioned and restricts him or herself to the bare minimum of what it takes to do his or her daily job. The quality of the classroom work drops and as students realize how bored their teacher is it is likely that they stop caring for the subject.

***Treatment of students.*** A demotivating teacher is condescending, rude or impatient. He or she might categorize students according to stereotypes or show favoritism, for example disciplined students get better marks than talkative ones. He uses degrading terms to evaluate students or students' performance (e.g. What a stupid thing to say! But I can't expect better from you....). He constantly shows his negative opinion about the general abilities of the group. He or she might ignore some students, does not appreciate students' opinion on the topics in class or does not deal with problems students may have. The disinterest of the teacher can hugely damage students' motivation to excel.

***Delivery of the class.*** If classes are monotonous, the classroom techniques are old fashioned and not too varied, students lose interest very quickly. Nowadays students live in a world driven by technology, so course book-based, frontal approaches to teaching are ineffective. It is much harder to capture students' attention, so teachers who confine to traditional methods cannot succeed. I believe more in group work and task based learning, and it is also important to make use of technology in class. The atmosphere of the classroom also matters to a great degree. If it is unpleasant (e.g. full of tension because of a rigid teacher), students might just opt for "survival".

The worst teacher I have ever had was my Italian teacher in grammar school. I was full of anticipation when it turned out that I would be able to take up Italian, I liked the sound of the language and I was interested in the culture. Unfortunately after a few weeks of going to classes my positive attitude changed for the worse. We had a real old course book from the socialist era, it was about a working class family and it contained a lot of descriptions of Italian towns and spectacles (honestly, it was a sort of a guidebook). On top of that, our teacher had a very strange manner of running classroom activities. She did not tolerate any questions apart from the tasks, we had to follow the book strictly. She did not care how boring the texts were, she did not provide any extra material and we did not get a chance listen to authentic speech. Her classroom language was restricted to the repetition of the instructions of the book. She did not like volunteering, she preferred students who never asked questions and were generally disciplined on the surface. Overall, she kept a distance from us, she assumed the role of authority. Later, when an Italian group came to visit our school, I realized the reason for her behavior. She turned out to have a very bad command of the language, she could hardly speak to the Italian group. After that I made sure I would get a good grade, and took up Spanish, which was much easier to study. I have an B2 certificate of Italian, but I do not really speak well or care for the language.

## Sample 2.2 (Teacher 6)

### *The most demotivating language teacher for students*

Motivation is one of the most significant factors in the process of learning a foreign language. It is crucial for a language teacher to understand that the students' attitude towards the language learning should never be ignored. If the students do not feel the essence and benefits of the language they study, the outcome might never be positive. In case they are not motivated their failure can be predicted. In this case, the students are not likely to achieve the desired level of competence. They are not likely to put enough effort in the learning process.

A teacher has quite an important role in motivating students. Consequently, they can not effectively teach the language if they do not understand the relationship between motivation and success in language acquisition. Teachers should struggle to avoid the attitude that negatively affects students and through it under motivate them. A demotivating teacher can discourage students who will lose interest in learning.

There are some demotivating teachers I know. I have heard for many times from my students that some of their teachers are not only unable to teach them anything but they make them hate the respective subject. From what I could overhear or what they sometimes told me, I can think of a range of reasons a teacher can be demotivating.

One reason is the teacher's personality. In case the educator has a boring personality, he is never humorous, can not understand or perform slight jokes, he is always rigid and inflexible his lessons remain boring and uninteresting. These kinds of classrooms are never motivating for students.

Another reason why a teacher can be demotivating in a lesson could be the monotonous teaching techniques he chooses. If a lesson is monotonous the students lose intrinsic motivation in paying attention or even to take part in activities. Why to struggle if neither the teacher nor the peers enjoy the activity and nothing exceptional happens during the whole lesson.

In case a teacher does not offer enough feedback or does not clarify the requirements, can be demotivating as well. This attitude might be considered by the students as disinterest from the part of the teacher. So, the only aim for them is to survive the lesson and wait anxiously until the bell rings. In his case neither intrinsic, nor extrinsic motivation is provided.

I've heard about teachers who have a favourite topic which they like to deal with for quite a long period of time. For instance, a colleague of mine likes the thematic of daily routine. She usually takes plenty of extra material downloaded from the internet throughout a semester and teaches only the mentioned topic. Consequently, only one grammar structure is thought, the present simple. I think, this attitude is really demotivating. For the students this behaviour might represent a complete discouragement. They might feel the teacher does not have any interest to teach them the English language (they told me that they felt like this).

As a contrast for such a negligent personality I mentioned above, I can think of another extreme case, namely the very strict, insensitive and inflexible teacher. Such a person can be really discouraging and demotivating. Anxiety and fear eliminate motivation. A student would never be so courageous as to voluntarily venture to talk in English with such a rigorous teacher present. In this case neither intrinsic nor extrinsic motivation is provided. In such cases students might lose desire to get good marks or their excitement in learning a foreign language.

### **Sample 2.3 (Teacher 8)**

#### **The most demotivating language teacher for students**

When I try to put myself into the shoes of similar students I teach and I have to think of the most demotivating language teacher, of course I can visualize an imaginary person because I can not imagine that a such type of human creature exists who commits all these types of mistaken behaviour and proofs a such shocking lack of competence at the same time.

In my list there are some negative, demotivating and absolutely harmful attitudes which do students disservice in language acquisition on the long run (not in order of importance). I find very useful this task in order to examine and understand how we do certain things in the classroom and what attitudes are to avoid.

- a demotivated teacher who is visible bored of the proper job, seems to be indifferent towards the development and the efficiency of the students. This teacher does not provide the students of homework regularly or if he or she does, the homework is not controlled.

- a teacher who does not show to be enough smart and potent to handle in a proper way the trouble-maker students, lets them affray regularly in his classroom and seems to be unable to stop them.

- an overly self-confident teacher who visualize himself or herself to be perfect and infallible, tends to think to be superior and be the only one who knows about the language or any other things in life, talking to the students in an inappropriate way, treating them sardonically, criticizing or humiliating them. Summing up, who is unambiguously and completely prive of empathy and who does not create a calm atmosphere in the classroom.

- a teacher who practises only an old methodology (e.g. merely the grammar-translating method and nothing else) and does not use the modern and what is more, the newest technologies (in case the classroom would be provided of these). Summing up, who does boring and apparently endless lessons and does not seem to aim to improve and to change.

- a teacher who shows to be light-minded and irresponsible towards the students and the school which he or she works for: who does not keep the rules of the school policy, shows a negative attitude towards the coursebook and the curriculum, uses regularly “four-letter” words in order to discipline students, who does not give clear instructions or does not answer the questions, who does not prepare smart and motivated students to academic competitions or to language exams.

### **Sample 2.4 (Teacher 19)**

#### **The most demotivating language teacher for students**

(Mr. Johnson in my text is an imaginary character.)

Mr. Johnson is probably the most negative person in my life. He is my English teacher. Unfortunately we have five lessons a week with him: Five unbelievably boring and stressful lessons. None of my classmates likes him – I guess – and there are too many reasons for that.

Mr. Johnson’s lessons are more boring than you could imagine. There are not any interesting and exciting tasks. All of our English lessons follow the same construction: Mr. Johnson tries to teach us English grammar, but he speaks too fast, monotonic and in an illogical way, so we usually do not understand too much. Than we have to complete different kind of texts according to the “taught” grammar. If we have questions he usually gets angry because in his opinion if we do not

understand anything that is our fault. Of course, if we have too many mistakes in a task we get a 1, so we often try to work – in secret – together with our classmates. He neither tells us the meaning of words because – according to his theory – we have the opportunity to use the dictionary at home and look up those words.

He is very intolerant and impatient, he gets angry too easily and quickly. It is horrible if he is angry because he behaves very rude and he abuses students. He shouts with us, curses and blusters. Most of us are really afraid of him.

He does not even like children. He told us that fact many times but of course, we can experience it, as well. To his mind children are stupid, obtuse creatures, furthermore most of them are ill-behaved and nerve-racking. That is why he does not want to have own children and why he did not actually wanted to become a teacher. He usually begins our English lessons with sentences like the previous ones.

You never see Mr. Johnson smiling. He is always bad-tempered, unfriendly, crabby, in addition he is sometimes hangoverish (!) that makes things worse. I reckon he has serious problems in his private life (like family problems) and he is kind of depressed. That can be the reason for he is so stressful and cross all the time.

All things considered, Mr. Johnson is the most demotivating teacher I have ever known. His lessons are **boring** and not creative at all, he **teaches too monotonic and fast** so we cannot understand anything. However hard you try, **you usually get a bad grade**, so most of us have already lost the motivation of learning English. Mr. Johnson is a **very pessimistic, unfriendly** person who **never smiles** at you and he is always **bad-tempered**. He **gets angry too easily** and he is **chiding students** all the time because he **hates children**.

### Sample 2.5 (Teacher 21)

#### The most demotivating language teacher for students

I teach young children, from the age of one to nine. In my opinion, this is a quite unusual situation, since not very many children start to learn a language at such a young age. According to my experience, a teacher, who teaches very young kids, is demotivating if he/she looks bored. When teaching young students, it is very important to show that the teacher enjoys the lesson very much, since children always imitate him/her. If they see that the teacher does not really want to do the tasks, for instance, he/she tells them to sing a song, but he/she does not sing, they will sing neither. However, if the teacher always smiles and is enthusiastic, students feel that he/she does something great and they want to do it as well. This is one point.

Secondly, I think the teacher should keep giving positive feedback. Some students might be unsure about him/her. If the teacher does not encourage him/her, and simply has a 'poker face' when the kid, for instance, talks, he/she will feel more unsure than he/she felt before.

Thirdly, if the teacher keeps discipline by 'punishing' students, not by reward, children might feel threatened by him/her. If learners know that they will not be punished if they do something wrong, however, they will be rewarded if they do something good, it motivates them more. That is my experience.

Moreover, the teacher should use varied tasks during the lesson. If students do similar tasks for 45 minutes, they easily get bored. Therefore, there should be several different activities in one lesson. For instance, after playing a board game for ten minutes, and colouring something according to the teacher's instructions, students should stand up and do some TPR activities.

Finally, students need to know that they can trust the teacher, since he/she is a man too. If they feel that the teacher is someone who is unapproachable and he/she represents a kind of authority, they will not go to him/her with their problems, also, in connection with language learning difficulties. They will not trust him/her; therefore, they will not be honest with him/her. In my

opinion, a teacher can be more motivating and effective if the students trust him/her and accordingly, like him/her.

### **Part 3: Samples of in-service L2 teachers' reflective-narrative accounts (n=5) related to L2 teachers' impact on students' learning (Study 3; Appendix D)**

#### **Sample 3.1 (Teacher 2)**

##### **5 characteristics of a language teacher that will have an influence on students' learning**

###### Enthusiasm

A teacher's enthusiasm can, I believe, influence students' learning to a great extent. Gaining learners' attention and then maintaining it seems hardly possible without the teacher's genuine interest in their field of study and the teaching process as well. A teacher's sincere devotion to their students, to what they teach, and to how they teach it is essential.

###### Tolerance

I also believe that a teacher, especially when teaching children, should always practise tolerance and patience. Children are different in so many ways and a teacher must understand that these differences should not have an influence on their attitude towards their students. As I see it, this approach can create a safe and welcoming environment for students, be it young children or adults, which will definitely have an influence on their learning.

###### Creativity

Creativity helps teachers to plan lessons that are interesting and fun for the learners. It is so much easier to learn when the tasks students have to complete are stimulating and also entertaining, even better if they can relate to the tasks and use real life experiences to do them. Creativity will also help teachers to use compulsory materials in a more meaningful way. It is not always easy to go through a text book that was assigned to be used, but with being open-minded to new ideas and to trying new things one could make the most of what is available. Again, focusing on what students would benefit from the most and on the ways the learning process could be achieved through meaningful activities is more useful than any textbook I have ever seen.

###### Consistency

Teachers should be consistent in the matter of what, how, when, and in what order to teach. This seems like an obvious criterion, and it is, but it takes a lot of work to be able to achieve it. Not to mention that it is not just the planning of the learning and teaching material and their sequence that one needs to be aware of. To my understanding, paying attention to what and how one says or keeping promises for example can also influence the learning process to a great extent.

###### A sense of humour

Finally, a good (or at least some) sense of humour can lighten up the atmosphere helping students to ease up a little and to concentrate on the tasks ahead. Teaching and learning are complex processes and they tire the minds of those who do it properly. A little fun does not hurt anyone and can also contribute to the development of student-teacher relationships.

### Sample 3.2 (Teacher 6)

#### Five characteristics of a language teacher that will have an influence on students' learning

The first characteristic is *direct and simple language*. I learned this the hard way, when I was assigning a task to my pupils and I met their confused gazes. The longer I would talk, the more confused they got. Therefore, I had to start from the beginning and instruct them by giving simple requests and explanations in a short and concise way.

The second characteristic is *eloquence and literacy*. I have only begun my career as an elementary school teacher and in my short experience I have already encountered several occasions when I had to attest to my literacy. Language teaching is not limited to grammar and vocabulary, it concerns social and cultural knowledge as well. Teachers must be prepared on many subjects if they teach a certain language, this concerns culture, cuisine, arts, history, health, sciences and even geography.

The third characteristic is *inspiration*. When you teach language, the main goal is to hand over a knowledge that students can apply to their everyday lives and could put to use whenever needed. Language teachers must seek and shine light on these opportunities. If they are successful, children will discover joy and purpose in their language education.

The fourth characteristic is *encouragement*. Language teachers must create a safe and encouraging environment in class and have to give as many positive feedbacks as possible, even the failed efforts should be appreciated. It is easy to call on students who have raised their hands, they are confident and motivated already. The challenge is to achieve collaboration from and a willingness to communicate with low achieving or insecure students.

The fifth and last characteristic is *discipline*. Much like with instructions, discipline should be direct and simple. Indirect language can hinder the pedagogical work and drive a wedge between teacher and students. Teachers may not even be aware if they embarrassed a student by accident. I always review my classes, this starts the minute I leave the classroom and several times I've arrived to the same conclusion; I should have been just firm and brief. It is the best way to handle any problematic scenario.

### Sample 3.3 (Teacher 7)

#### 5 characteristics of a language teacher that will have an influence on students' learning

In my opinion the personality of the teacher highly influences the motivation, thus also the efficiency of the learning of the students. I would prefer to list 5 characteristics that influence the learning of the students in a positive way.

The first necessary characteristic that a teacher should have is empathy. If the teacher shows empathy towards the feelings, difficulties and success of the students, they will be more likely to be open and turn to the teacher in case of problems. This confidential relationship can boost the learning of the students.

The second important factor that I would mention is the motivation of the teacher towards his or her own subject. I think that if the teachers themselves are motivated, they are more able to make their subject attractive for the learners.

Patience is another necessary characteristic that a good teacher should have. In a class, there are students with different backgrounds, different competences and the teacher has to deal with this situation. Explanation also requires a patient attitude. In case of language teaching, I think that patience has a bigger emphasis, as students have to try the use of spoken language and they make mistakes. If the teacher encourages them to try in spite of their mistakes, they will become much



more successful in language learning than those students whose teacher is not cooperative and patient during the teaching-learning process.

A language teacher should be self-confident to act as an example for their students. It's important to improve the language proficiency, but it's also necessary to be brave enough to use the foreign language. That is something that a self-confident language teacher can show to the students.

The enthusiasm of the teacher is very influential with regard to the students' learning. It determines the atmosphere of the lessons. If the lessons of the teacher are boring, it is less likely that the students will become interested in the subject. An enthusiastic language teacher can make his or her students engaged both in the language and the culture of the area where the given language is spoken.

### Sample 3.4 (Teacher 11)

#### 5 characteristics of a language teacher that will have an influence on students' learning

In my opinion, there are several qualities that a good teacher must have regardless of what he or she teaches. But let us concentrate on teaching foreign languages.

So, the first I would mention is **patience**. You can be the best teacher in the world with all the necessary characteristics if you do not have patience. Patience with children, patience with colleagues and usually just a whole lot of patience. A teacher should never give up on children if they do not understand one way he should try out another.

**Classroom management and discipline** is very important as it can boost students' motivation. A successful teacher should be well-organized both in his/her mind and in the classroom as in a well-managed classroom teaching can be more effective and the atmosphere is more relaxed. I think it is necessary to sit down with a new class on the very first lesson and set up the rules the class will have to keep. I personally make the students set up their own rules regarding discipline, homework, being late etc. as in this way they feel they can add something to the class also and they feel more important.

The third on my list is **cultural awareness**. When teaching a foreign language it is crucial to have background knowledge of a culture we are teaching about. Culture and language cannot be separated and treated as two different things. They belong together especially in modern language teaching. There are so many ways nowadays to present students with cultural materials that will raise their cultural awareness and will make the language learning process and language lessons more interesting and more enjoyable.

**Meaningful lessons** are also part of a successful teacher's plan: lessons that make sense, teachers using the right course material, Bigger chunks of grammar should always be broken down to smaller bits so that all students can understand it language lessons should always be communication-oriented, student-friendly, exciting and interesting.

A good teacher **loves teaching** and loves her job as a teacher. A good teacher is enjoying her lessons and if she is enjoying her own lessons, the students will too. A teacher cannot be effective if she does not like her job and is always passionate because if students do not like the teacher, they will not like the subject either.

### Sample 3.5 (Teacher 15)

#### 5 characteristics of a language teacher that will have an influence on students' learning

- *good sense of humour*

Good sense of humour is essential to create a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. In a relaxed, stress-free atmosphere students can perform better, it helps the proper input (and output also). Humorous situations and humorous sentences can help the students remember the vocabulary and the grammar. They have nice memories of learning and of the situation and this helps the students activate the vocabulary or grammar easily when it is necessary. Example: This summer I had a 'laughing group' – It consisted of six advanced learners (5 male students between 15 and 22 and one female, aged 19). They were preparing to their C1 level English language exam on an intensive summer course. Luckily, I could create a really relaxed atmosphere by using my sense of humour, choosing humorous texts to read and humorous tasks (both oral and written ones) to do. We simply had fun while they were preparing for the language exam. The 'laughing group' name was given to us by the leader of the language school – she could hear our laughter through two closed doors and once she said: 'I love this laughing group. They are so brilliant and good to hear.' All the students successfully passed their language exam with brilliant results – the 'worst result' was 75% and the best was 98%. They all thanked me afterwards not just for 'training them for the exam' but also for the happy hours. As you can see it is again proved that learning a language can be fun.

- ***creativity***

A teacher has to be creative in his/her methods and using different supplementary materials to entertain both his/her students and himself/herself. I am convinced that you can only achieve your goals as a teacher if you are creative. A person can be a teacher without this trait of character but he will not be a good teacher. There will be 'something missing'. Creativity in teaching is as important as a pinch of salt in the soup. It brings the dynamics, the positive attitude into the lessons – creativity helps to raise and maintain interest and motivation in students which is essential in the learning process.

- ***innovativeness***

As a teacher you are not allowed to stick at a certain level and become 'dusty'. You always have to be innovative, search for and try new methods, find new paths (ways) of teaching to renew yourself as a teacher, adapt to new sources or equipments. You have to be like an experimenting professor – at first your idea can sound silly or unrealistic, however, it can work as an acceptable method later on.

e.g. We have to accept that we live in a virtual world and our students are the Z-generation, they were born to the world of gadgets, so we have to be able to use these gadgets and find out in what way they can help us to make students learn more efficiently.

- ***being well-organized***

If you are conscious and well-organized students feel comfortable and safe. They know that you know what to do and they accept logical arguments. During a well-organized lesson they can rely on the schemes and logics, they now 'what comes next' and you can easily and creatively fill the 'skeleton' with content. During a well-organized lesson students are capable to learn grammar or vocabulary or both without any special effort. They know what are the requirements and the tasks, they can more easily build up their own mental lexicon and understand the grammar. Being well-organized also means that you are able to maintain discipline and order.

- ***being enthusiastic***

When students can see that their teacher loves what he/she does and he/she is interested in it they are also get interested in that subject. Being enthusiastic is contagious in a special way. If you are interested in a subject you can always tell some interesting facts or anecdotes about it. It is also easier to do something which you are interested in it and you can find the proper methods

and materials which can catch and maintain your students interest and you can easily motivate your students.

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

**Exploring L2 teachers' knowledge of their impact:**

**Working towards a theoretical model based on pre-service  
and in-service L2 teachers' reflective-narrative accounts**

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## **1. The focus of the dissertation and the main chapters**

The research in this dissertation is exploratory in nature: it aims to explore the underlying knowledge that L2 teachers rely on when engaged in and reflecting upon L2 learning-teaching as an inherently relational activity, in which the teacher's impact fundamentally shapes students' engagement in learning and in the activity itself. In line with this aim, the dissertation positions L2 teachers' knowledge of their impact (LTKI) as a construct to be used for framing the knowledge that allows L2 teachers to make their classroom impact a favourable one (Hattie, 2012), to engage in 'relating' as a specific and regular classroom activity (Mercer, 2018), and thereby to increase the effectiveness of their teaching.

Regarding its theoretical focus, the dissertation looks primarily into the historical and paradigmatic roots of how L2 teachers' knowledge is conceptualised today, as well as into the growing amount of research that seeks to understand the relational processes involved in L2 learning-teaching and the ways in which L2 teachers make sense of these processes. Concurrently, the theoretical chapters (Chapters 1-3) draw attention to the conceptual and terminological disparity that now characterises research into L2 teachers' sense-making about their roles and impact in L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity (Freeman & Johnson, 2005), and present LTKI as a more fitting conceptual focus for such research. In setting up this research agenda, the theoretical chapters also lay out the rationale for using L2 teachers' reflective-narrative accounts as a means to explore and conceptualise the knowledge they relied on while carrying out the reflective activity (Borg, 2006; Kumaravadivelu, 2012; Woods & Çakır, 2011), and introduce grounded theory as an analytical framework for doing such exploratory work in the qualitative research tradition (Creswell, 2007; Dörnyei, 2007).

As the central underlying assumption of my exploratory work is that L2 teachers rely on a specialised body of knowledge (i.e. L2 teachers' knowledge of their impact; henceforth LTKI) when reasoning about and acting upon their own interpersonal impact within L2 learning-teaching (see Section 2.3), in the first three chapters I frame my research and argue for its relevance by reviewing current conceptualisations of L2 teachers' knowledge (Chapter 1) and of L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity (Chapter 2), and by setting up a theoretical-methodological framework for my grounded-theory project in which LTKI as a theoretical construct is examined through the reflective-narrative accounts of pre-service and in-service L2 teachers primarily (Chapter 3). Then, based on this multi-faceted theoretical-methodological framework, the focus of the dissertation is shifted to the three empirical studies (Chapters 4-6) through which my exploration of the LTKI construct has been carried out thus far.

More specifically, the empirical part of the dissertation (Chapters 4-6) comprises three separate but conceptually intertwined qualitative studies, in which the recursive analysis of reflective-narrative data gradually led to a better understanding of the LTKI construct. In each study, the exploration of key conceptual units is underpinned by data excerpts drawn from different groups of participants, including Hungarian in-service L2 teachers (n=22) as well as Austrian and Hungarian L2 learners (n=24) in Chapter 4, Hungarian (n=12+18) and Turkish (n=17) pre-service EFL teachers in Chapter 5, and another group of Hungarian in-service L2 teachers (n=15) in Chapter 6. Crucially, despite the participants and their reflective tasks being different in the three studies, the presented results allow for a better understanding of eight conceptual units (i.e. domains) that are thought to form part of LTKI as a larger underlying construct. To provide a better insight into the multi-phased analytical process that runs through the empirical chapters of the dissertation, a structured overview of my exploratory research is put forward in Table 1 below.

**Table 1**

*Overview of the three qualitative studies as parts of my grounded-theory project and presented in the empirical chapters of the dissertation*

	<b>Participants and type of data</b>	<b>Research questions</b>	<b>Main outcomes</b>
<b>Study 1</b> <i>(2014-2016)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 Austrian university-level EFL learners</li> <li>• 14 Hungarian university-level EFL learners</li> <li>• 22 Hungarian in-service L2 teachers</li> </ul> <p><i>Type of data:</i> reflective-narrative texts (essay format)</p>	<p><b>Phase 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the characteristics that L2 learners and in-service L2 teachers attribute to demotivating L2 teachers?</li> <li>• To what extent are learners' and teachers' beliefs and attributions similar or different from each other?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring the concept of teacher-induced L2 learning demotivation from the perspective of L2 learners and teachers</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Phase 2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can the conceptual categories of the study be used for exploratory work on the LTKI construct?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying four conceptual domains as components of LTKI</li> <li>• Framing the relationship of the components as a complex dynamic system</li> </ul>

<b>Study 2</b> <i>(2016-2018)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12+18 Hungarian pre-service EFL teachers (two groups)</li> <li>• 17 Turkish pre-service EFL teachers</li> </ul>	<b>Phase 1:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the teaching-related beliefs and dispositions that characterise pre-service EFL teachers in an early phase of teacher education?</li> <li>• To what extent are the expressed beliefs and dispositions similar or different in the three examined groups?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing an overview of salient themes and categories in pre-service EFL teachers' teaching-related conceptions</li> </ul>
	<i>Type of data:</i> short reflective-narrative statements (reflective template)	<b>Phase 2:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what ways are the salient conceptual domains identified in the study related to the emerging LTKI construct?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying five other conceptual domains as components of LTKI</li> <li>• Proposing a provisional model of LTKI</li> </ul>
<b>Study 3</b> <i>(2017-2019)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 Hungarian in-service L2 teachers</li> </ul> <i>Type of data:</i> reflective-narrative texts (essay format)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What insights can be gained about the LTKI construct if in-service L2 teachers are asked to reflect specifically on the impact they have on students' learning?</li> <li>• What does the analysis of their reflective-narrative accounts reveal about the conceptual domains represented in the provisional model of LTKI?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-examining the identified conceptual domains and their relationship</li> <li>• Finalising a tentative model of LTKI</li> </ul>

## 2. The findings of the exploratory research into LTKI

In summarising the main findings of the dissertation, the first note must be taken of the LTKI construct, and the concept itself as a viable alternative to other concepts that are currently used in research focusing on the relational processes involved in L2 learning-teaching and the ways in which L2 teachers make sense of these processes. Crucially, even though the studies in this line of research have now started to substantiate a perspective on L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity of students and teachers (Freeman & Johnson, 2005) and on 'relating' as an activity that L2 teachers are supposed to carry out as part of their 'teaching' activity (Mercer, 2018), they are also characterised by an apparent conceptual and terminological disparity concerning the forms of underlying knowledge that L2 teachers operationalise when engaged in or reflecting on L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity.

Thus, as a response to recent research into L2 teachers' socio-emotional intelligence (Dewaele, Gkonou, & Mercer, 2018; Gkonou & Mercer, 2017), relational beliefs (Gkonou & Mercer, 2018), or empathy and responsiveness (Henry & Thorsen, 2019; Warren,

2018), the dissertation proposes a narrower focus on LTKI as a specific area of L2 teachers' knowledge (Woods & Çakır, 2011), and as a construct that underlies L2 teachers' sense-making about their own impact on students' engagement in and experience of classroom L2 learning (Hattie, 2012). Arguably, by proposing and elaborating this conceptual focus, the dissertation indicates that my exploratory research on the LTKI construct is situated in a social-constructivist framing of L2 learning-teaching (Lantolf, 2011; Ortega, 2011) and L2 teachers' knowledge (Golombek, 2009; Johnson, 2006, 2009, 2015), in which LTKI is regarded as a conceptual tool (Freeman & Johnson, 2005) that L2 teachers operationalise when engaged in L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity, and also when engaged in reflective-narrative activities that require them to draw upon this area of knowledge. In the latter regard, and in line with what researchers of reflective teaching suggest (e.g., Bartlett, 1990; Kalaja, Barcelos, Aro, Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2015; Kumaravadivelu, 2012), a main methodological finding of the dissertation is that the exploration of LTKI as a knowledge construct can be carried out through the written products of L2 teachers' reflective-narrative activity; even though this often means that the salient conceptual categories are inferred from the data by one or more analysts (Nunan & Bailey, 2009).

As for the insights that were gained about the LTKI construct through the analysis of in-service L2 teachers' and pre-service EFL teachers' reflective-narrative accounts, a number of conceptual outcomes ought to be recounted here. The most important of these is, arguably, the framing of LTKI as a multi-componential construct in which the complex interrelationships of eight salient conceptual domains result in the emergence of a collective body of knowledge, allowing L2 teachers, at any level of professional development, to make sense of their own impact on students' engagement in and experience of classroom L2 learning. In line with what other studies have suggested about the nature and development of L2 teachers' knowledge and cognition (e.g., Borg, 2006; Feryok, 2010, 2018; Woods & Çakır, 2011), the dissertation also contends that LTKI is likely to subsume both propositional and procedural knowledge (Shulman, 1986/1994), which L2 teachers develop and appropriate through the formal study of L2 learning-teaching, through learning in personal-experiential ways, and through the reflective-narrative activities in which these forms of sense-making are brought together (Borg, 2003).

To support these claims with a concrete example, in one of the empirical chapters it is suggested that the terms 'intrapersonal knowledge' and 'interpersonal knowledge' (i.e. two components in the LTKI construct) refer to both propositional and procedural knowledge that L2 teachers have acquired about intrapersonal factors such as being aware of one's professional wellbeing, setting personal-professional goals, or increasing



one's self-efficacy, and interpersonal factors such as being aware of students' developmental and relational needs, striving to know students as individuals, or respecting others' lives and ideas. As in the case of the other conceptual domains, procedural knowledge is also relevant in the framing of intrapersonal and interpersonal knowledge in that L2 teachers should not only have a storable knowledge of the factors listed above, but also make sure that their underlying knowledge is manifest in their classroom actions (cp. Feryok, 2018), allowing their students as well to develop understandings in the intrapersonal and interpersonal domains. At the same time, it must be noted that the insights gained through the participants' reflective-narrative accounts were insights into their propositional knowledge only, thereby calling for further research in which the procedural aspects of LTKI can also be examined in more detail.

In addition to supporting the framing and identification of the eight conceptual domains as congenial components in the LTKI construct, the analysis of the participants' reflective-narrative accounts also gave insights into the apparently complex interconnectedness of those components in L2 teachers' sense-making about their classroom impact. These insights, in turn, led to a tentative framing of the LTKI construct as a complex dynamic system, contending that the eight conceptual domains identified in the dissertation can be supposed to co-exist and interact in complex ways to form the body of knowledge labelled as LTKI, and to change dynamically over time (Feryok, 2018, p. 108) as a teacher's knowledge becomes gradually more extensive due to formal study and learning in personal-experiential ways (Feryok, 2010; Woods & Çakır, 2011). Again, while this CDST (i.e. complex dynamic systems theory) perspective on the LTKI construct has fundamentally influenced the conceptual outcomes of my exploratory research, it must be noted that neither of the three empirical studies (Chapters 4-6) provided sufficient insight into the way in which LTKI is related to L2 teachers' classroom actions and practices, and the way in which the prominence of the identified conceptual domains may change over time within the system. To look further into the relevance of CDST in the framing of LTKI is, in this sense, a crucial task for future research.

Despite these limitations and questions raised for further research, it must be emphasised that the three studies of the dissertation allowed for a tentative model of LTKI to be put forward as a major outcome of my grounded-theory project. In this model (Figure 1 below), the eight salient conceptual domains are graphically represented as congenial components in the LTKI construct, contending that LTKI as a specific area of L2 teachers' knowledge is currently thought to be best framed as a complex dynamic system, in which the complex interrelationships of the components allow L2 teachers to develop coherent understandings of their roles and impact in L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity. In turn, these understandings and LTKI itself are thought to be best framed as conceptual

tools (Freeman & Johnson, 2005) that L2 teachers operationalise when engaged in L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity, and also when engaged in reflective-narrative activities that require them to draw upon this area of knowledge. Considering, however, that the exploratory data the three studies provided only limited insights into the participants' sense-making through their written reflective-narrative accounts, it must be highlighted that the theoretical model in Figure 1 is still a tentative one, calling for further research into the eight conceptual domains and their framing from a CDST perspective.



**Figure 1.** *Graphic illustration and tentative theoretical model of the LTKI construct based on the conceptual domains identified in Chapters 4, 5, and 6*

**3. The limitations of the research**

As for the limitations of the research, a most important one to reflect on is the way in which the different groups of participants were represented in two of the empirical studies (Studies 1 & 2), and particularly in the sections where the data from these groups were presented and interpreted. In Study 1, for instance, data excerpts from L2 learners' and in-service L2 teachers' reflective-narrative accounts were frequently juxtaposed in order to highlight similarities in their thematic content, even though the stated aim of the study was to focus primarily on the in-service teachers' perspectives and sense-making. For the latter reason, the contextual differences existing in the learner group (i.e. Austrian and Hungarian L2 learners) were also disregarded. Similarly, in Study 2 the data excerpts from Hungarian and Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' reflective-narrative accounts were

mostly presented in joint thematic units and conceptual categories, as the underlying concepts were considered more important than the contextual differences. Considering, however, that the research aimed to accurately represent the emic perspectives of the participants, it can be concluded that the data from different groups of participants should have been better separated in Studies 1 and 2, and the Austrian and Turkish educational contexts should have been introduced in more detail as well.

The second obvious limitation to reflect on is that the exploratory research in this dissertation was entirely based on the written reflective-narrative accounts of the participants, even though a focus on different types of data would also be desirable in gaining further insights into the LTKI construct. In this regard, it must be noted that the reflective writing tasks that were used for data collection invited the participants to produce short written reflective-narrative accounts, and did not allow for individual cases to be explored in sufficient detail or over a longer period of time. To counterbalance these limitations, it should also be pointed out that the reflective writing tasks were crucial tools for the participants to express their understandings of various teaching-related concepts in a structured and coherent way, and also for the researcher to collect exploratory qualitative data from relatively large groups of participants in a variety of contexts.

Finally, a third substantial limitation to address is that even though the conceptual work in this dissertation was grounded entirely in qualitative data, the analytical procedures were carried out by a single researcher rather than by two or more analysts focusing on the same dataset. This, in the case of a grounded-theory project, is a major limitation because even if the researcher had developed a thorough understanding of the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of a given field, the reliability of coding and data analysis can be fundamentally enhanced if two or more experts collaborate in framing the emerging construct (Nunan & Bailey, 2009, pp. 429-430). Thus, although the recursive analysis of the participants' reflective-narrative accounts was thoroughly supported by secondary research into L2 teachers' cognition and knowledge (Chapters 1 & 2), L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity (Chapter 2), and the methodological principles of qualitative inquiry and grounded theory (Chapter 3), future research into LTKI through new or the existing data must be clearly based on a collaborative approach to the conceptual work involved.

#### **4. The pedagogical implications of the research**

Despite the limitations highlighted above, it can be concluded that both the results of the dissertation and the procedures employed for data collection are important to consider from the perspective of L2 teachers and L2 teacher educators as well. Regarding the

results, and also the theoretical framework in which the results are embedded, the dissertation is hoped to draw attention to the importance of awareness raising among L2 teachers for the relational processes that are inherently involved in L2 learning-teaching, to 'relating' as an activity that L2 teachers are supposed to carry out as part of their 'teaching' activity (Freeman & Johnson, 2005; Mercer, 2018), and to the fundamental impact that L2 teachers have on their students' engagement in and experience of L2 learning. In the latter regard, the accumulated reflective-narrative data and the outline of the LTKI construct can be seen as fundamental guidelines for L2 teachers to understand what their own classroom impact consists of, and how to focus on LTKI as an area of their knowledge that might be developed in deliberate ways.

With regard to the data collection instruments and procedures employed, the most important implications for L2 teacher educators are that the presented reflective writing tasks can not only serve as tools for eliciting L2 teachers' reflections on key teaching-related concepts, but also as tools for promoting the subsequent discussion of alternative understandings within local or even cross-cultural professional communities (Chick, 2015; Johnson, 2015; Kumaravadivelu, 2012). By encouraging L2 teachers to participate in such collective reflective activities, L2 teacher educators have the opportunity to create space for the teachers' existing conceptions to change in favourable ways (Feryok, 2010; Kalaja et al., 2015; Yuan & Lee, 2014), and to enhance the skills and willingness of L2 teachers for collaboration (Barócsi, 2014), which is thought to fundamentally support teacher learning and professional growth.

## **5. Possible directions for further research**

Altogether, it can be concluded that the conceptual outcomes of the dissertation are relevant in the exploration of L2 teachers' sense-making about their roles and impact in L2 learning-teaching as a relational activity, and in providing a basis for further research conducted in this area after the relational turn in SLA and TEFL/TESOL research. Although in the empirical chapters it was repeatedly pointed out that the current research design has only allowed for a tentative model of LTKI to be put forward, this model is thought to be applicable as a framework for coding, categorising, and interpreting additional reflective-narrative data collected for case studies of a few selected teachers.

This, arguably, is one of the main directions for future research on LTKI: it involves a more in-depth investigation of L2 teachers' sense-making through self-report data and through the observation of the teachers during classroom teaching and over a longer period of time. The reason for this is that different types of self-report data, including written reflective-narrative accounts, teacher journals, or interview data (Borg, 2006), may

provide different and more in-depth insights into L2 teachers' sense-making about the relational processes involved in L2 learning-teaching, about their roles and impact in those processes, and thereby into LTKI as a construct that underlies that sense-making. If the collection of such data is carried out repeatedly over a longer period of time, the results will also provide a better insight into the temporal changes that supposedly characterise LTKI as a complex dynamic system; this aspect of the tentative theoretical model must clearly be examined through further research. Additionally, if future case studies involve the collection of observational data as well, they may provide an insight into how the expressed understandings of L2 teachers are related to their classroom behaviours and actions; such insights would also be crucial in the framing of LTKI from a CDST perspective.

Finally, another main direction to consider is the formulation of a quantitative research framework, in which a data collection instrument is designed based on the components of the tentative LTKI model, and then administered to a larger number of L2 teachers in Hungary, or possibly in a wider variety of contexts. This way, the understandings that were gained about the LTKI construct through exploratory qualitative data could be tested and further developed, thus creating space for the tentative LTKI model to be re-examined in light of large-scale empirical evidence.

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**Témavezetői nyilatkozat a dolgozat benyújtásához**

Alulírott LUGOSSY RÉKA PhD, habil nyilatkozom,  
hogy FARKAS KORNEL doktorjelölt

Exploring L2 teachers' knowledge of their impact:  
Working towards a theoretical model based on pre-service and  
in-service L2 teachers' reflective-narrative accounts

című doktori értekezését megismertem, nyilvános vitára bocsátását támogatom.

Dátum: 2019. augusztus 30.

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témavezető aláírása